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Holiness Writers

**THE GOSPEL OF
THE COMFORTER**

(Abridged)

By

Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

*“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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THE GOSPEL OF THE COMFORTER

By Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

Erstwhile Professor of Theology and Greek at Boston University

An abridgment by Ross L Price, D.D.

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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book is experimental and practical rather than theological. But since every scriptural experience must be based on the truth apprehended by the intellect, there should be a clear and scientific statement of this truth. Hence the first few chapters of this volume on the various offices of the Holy Spirit are filled with arguments in proof of His personality and divinity, after the style of the systematic theologians.

One of the favorable signs of the times is the increasing number of books on the Holy Spirit. Quite an extended examination of these recent volumes reveals in nearly all of them one obvious defect, the omission of the direct witness of the Spirit to the believer's adoption into the family of God, and His agency in entire sanctification in this life. In guarding against these omissions, we ourselves may have omitted some important topics in a theme so vast as that which is the subject of this volume. If we have done so, we ask the forbearance of the Christian public for our inadequate treatment of a theme which has occupied our thoughts during more than a quarter of a century.

Daniel Steele

Milton, Mass., Nov. 8, 1897

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Daniel Steele, S.T.D., was one of the ablest exponents of the scriptural doctrine of heart purity ever to grace a university chair. His most important work on this theme, *The Gospel of the Comforter*, has long been out of print. Written in 1897, it was reprinted by the Christian Witness Co., at Chicago, in 1917. For some time many of the friends of this glorious doctrine have wished that it might once again be made available to the general public. No single book has had a more lasting influence upon the spiritual and intellectual pilgrimage of this writer. So when approached by the book committee about making an abridgment of it to be added to the series of abridged holiness classics, our response was with mingled feelings of willingness and responsibility.

How to reduce the 371 pages of valuable material to the desired smaller size posed no small problem. We have taken the liberty of regrouping Dr. Steele's chapters around central major themes and in each case included a number of his chapters under one heading. The original chapter headings appear in the italicized side headings. But in the main the style and wording of the original have been preserved throughout. This means that editing was kept to a minimum.

In this volume the heart of Steele's teaching about the work of the Holy Spirit as related to the salvation, sanctification, and assurance of the believer is set forth.

Those who are fortunate enough to own the original volume by Steele will be disappointed that some of the lesser chapters and all of the fine notes of the appendix had to be omitted, but anyone who will read the present volume with an open mind and seeking heart will find a message here that will help him enter the deeper spiritual life of victory over, and scriptural freedom from, sin. Serious Christians must agree with Steele's declaration. "We cannot believe that God is pleased with an average piety." This volume is sent forth with the prayer that each reader will find the fullness of the indwelling Spirit as a personal Comforter.

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Chapter 1 THE SPIRIT AS A PERSON

Names of the Holy Spirit: The first name that is found in the Bible is Ruach Elohim, the Spirit of God. He moved upon the face of the waters. The word spirit literally signifies breath. All nations express things immaterial by the use of the most subtle material representatives. The best symbol for the invisible, immaterial thinking agent in man is the wind or breath, the kind of matter which is the thinnest and has least of the grosser elements. Says Martin Luther: "They who desire to speak of God without these material envelopes strive to scale heaven without ladders. For it is necessary, when God reveals Himself to us that He should do this through some veil or kind of wrapper, and say, 'Lo, under this involucrum, or cover, you certainly grasp me.'" The Old Testament form of statement is not that God is spirit, but rather that he has the Spirit and sends Him forth out of Himself.

This may have suggested to the thoughtful Hebrew that the Spirit is God and is a personality distinct from Him from whom He proceeds.

The only other Old Testament designation is the Holy Spirit. This occurs only in Ps. 51:11 and Isa. 63:10-11.

In the New it is very common. The adjective holy cannot be distinctive of the quality of purity which is not found in equal degree in the Father and the Son. Both are holy. Hence, as it is not descriptive of an attribute peculiar to the Spirit, we infer that it points to the peculiar office of the Spirit, in the redemptive scheme, to make men holy. The Holy Spirit, then, is the scriptural term for the Sanctifier, a term not found in the Scriptures as a designation of the Spirit. Holy Spirit is a name in English preferable to Holy Ghost, for the reason that words like men flourish and decay. Ghost and ghostly were once dignified words, as "ghostly adviser" for spiritual adviser. But these words have become degraded so that it would sound strange to us and repulsive to hear the words "the Ghost of God."

When the time came for Christ to depart He introduced a new name to designate the Spirit whom He would send to continue His work-the Paraclete, a term used only four times in the four Gospels, and all of them in the consolatory address in John 14-15 and translated "Comforter," strengthener, from the Latin confortare, to strengthen. In I John 2:1 it is translated "advocate" and is descriptive of Christ, our intercessor in heaven. Paraclete is a Greek word signifying either, passively, the near called, as an assistant, monitor, teacher and guide; or, actively, the near caller, calling the believer near to God, or giving access to Him by inspiring confidence and strength. He is also called the Spirit of truth or reality, because He is the inspirer of revealed truth, which He makes blessedly real to the believer in Christ.

Twice He is styled the Spirit of grace, since He is the dispenser of the divine favor to all men.

He is called also the Spirit of supplication because He teaches us how to pray and for what to pray; the Spirit of revelation because He reveals Christ to the eye of faith; the Spirit of wisdom because He imparts wisdom; the Spirit of adoption because He certifies the believer's sonship; and the Spirit of Christ because He was sent by the Father through the mediation of the Son. He is called the Spirit of God because He is one with God in His nature. This leads us to the scriptural proofs that the Holy Spirit is consubstantial with God and is a person. The two doctrines of the personality and the divinity of the Spirit go together. The identity of God and the Spirit of God runs through the Holy Scriptures. Whoever the Spirit is, there is no distinction between Him and God, just as there is no distinction between the man and the spirit of the man (I Cor. 2:11).

The importance of the Spirit's office in human salvation cannot be overestimated. The Father's love and the Son's self-sacrifice in the scheme of redemption are ineffectual without the Spirit's personal agency in applying the provisions of salvation. He is the appointed and indispensable dispenser of the divine bounty and messenger of the King's pardon. If a city has a bureau of charities, its poor who proudly refuse its help and rely on the general benevolence of the city government, and starve because of their folly, are no more unreasonable than are those who admit that they are sinners, but are trusting in the fatherhood of God for forgiveness, ignoring His bureau of pardon, through the mediation of His Son, as administered by His accredited commissioner, the Spirit of grace. Many Christians who are almost destitute of spiritual strength might become strong through the more abundant life which Christ came to bestow, if they would honor with an intelligent faith that personality whom He has appointed as the Lord and giver of life.

He is also styled the Spirit of truth. It is His office in respect to the truth revealed by Christ to make it real and vivid to men bewildered and seduced by falsehoods. Sinful pleasures sway them because they are near and present. The Holy Spirit brings eternal verities near and makes them outweigh the vanities of this life. He supplies a new measuring rod, a sense of eternity, and convicts the soul of folly in neglecting its happiness millions of ages hence.

The most precious hour in a sinner's life is this hour of correct spiritual vision commonly spoken of as conviction of sin. Then it is that the Spirit of truth becomes the reprover by holding up to the soul two pictures, the dark reality of what it is, and the bright possibility of what it still may be by being "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Again, the designation Spirit of truth might have been translated Spirit of reality. He is thus called by Jesus because He works in human souls only through the instrumentality of truth. He regenerates only through Christian truth. Men are begotten children of God through the word of God. They are sanctified through the truth. The truth is the instrument; the Spirit is the efficient worker. The stability of the new life consists in having the "loins girt about with truth." Victory in warfare is through a vigorous wielding of "the sword of the Spirit ... the word of God."

When the Spirit convicts of sin, He takes such religious truth as He finds in the mind and makes it vivid and real. Conviction is the distinct realization of the person's lack of conformity to the requirement of the truth. There is no proof that the Holy Spirit ever acts immediately upon the soul without the medium of some truth lodged in the intellect, affording light for the activity of the will. Successful preaching is by manifestation of the truth accompanied by the demonstration of the Spirit. The failure of many preachers arises from their dependence solely on the saving efficacy of the truth

without the Spirit's office to make it real. Orthodoxy without the unction of the Spirit never saves, but always damns. John Wesley asserts that an impenitent man may be as orthodox as the devil, who believes and trembles, but is not improved in character by his faith and his fear.

The Spirit gives reality to the Old Testament, the prophetic record, and to the New Testament, the historic record of Christ's life. He impresses upon us the fact that Jesus is living and present—that He is what He was. His birth, His sermon on the mount, His parables, His miracles, His farewell discourse, His high-priestly prayer, His words on the cross, to Spirit-illuminated souls do not belong to a distant antiquity, but are perpetually as fresh as the morning paper. We are to be on our guard against commingling the risen Son of God with the Spirit. They are distinct personalities while one in substance.

The Spirit is the organ through which the Son now communicates with the believer and with the world. He is the revealer by whose activity in human hearts redemptive truth is transformed into knowledge in such a manner that faith becomes knowledge (Eph. 4:13). The Holy Spirit is the channel of reality. He gives eyesight to the spiritually blind. He gives visibility, substance, color and weight to truths which are as airy nothings to the sense-imprisoned soul. Granite realities indeed are gospel truths to him who has received the Comforter. Thus the Holy Spirit leads us up to that mount of vision where we see things with God's eyes, where the world's reals become the believer's unrels, and the things unreal to blind unbelief become real to open-eyed faith.

In attempting to awaken and call forth from the tomb dead souls, the great purpose of gospel preaching, it is a fatal mistake to neglect the Spirit of reality. The truth, however clearly unfolded and eloquently applied, will be no substitute for this grand factor in human salvation. Here again is the failure of much Sunday-school teaching and preaching which is evangelical in doctrine. It is unevangelical in spirit because it does not depend on the Spirit of truth to give vividness and reality to the gospel. The picture is thrown upon the canvas, but in the absence of the eye-opener who purges the film from blind eyes there is no vision. The day of judgment, heaven and hell are fables to the natural man till made solid realities by the Holy Ghost. Rhetoric is no substitute. Pyrotechnics are not power. They may fill the pews with admirers; they will never crowd the altar with penitents.

The Holy Spirit and the Trinity: The doctrine of the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit is intimately connected with the most mysterious yet most practical fact of revelation—the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity of God. It is mysterious because it is above reason, not contrary to it, and lies wholly in the realm of faith. It is practical because it is inseparably involved in all true Christian worship and is the mainspring of all effective evangelism. It is fundamental because its removal from the Christian system subverts every distinctive doctrine. It protects all such truths, especially the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the efficacy of the atonement.

The Trinity is not a doctrine which has been arbitrarily imposed upon faith by external authority overriding reason, but it is one which accords with reason, after it is revealed, and explains and supports Christian experience. Every evangelical believer who through faith in Christ by the illumination and impulse of the Holy Spirit has had conscious access to the Father resulting in forgiveness and communion, has tested the doctrine of the Trinity and found it true.

Its deniers must reckon with the best philosophy representing the demands of the highest intelligence; then they must convince of their stupendous delusion the millions who have through faith in the divine Christ experienced the witness of the Spirit attesting their adoption and assuring them of forgiveness. But every growing Christian verifies the truth of the Trinity every day of his life. He comes to the Father through the mediation of the Son and receives the Holy Spirit as the comforter, helper, guide, light, life and wellspring of joy, just as every astronomer proves the truth of the Copernican theory of the solar system by using it and arriving at results experimentally verified by the use of his telescope. "Through him [Christ] we [Jews and Gentiles] both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2:18).

The best statement of the Scriptures about God is that He is one in nature with a threefoldness which we call personality, that He has a Son who is not a creature, whose existence is grounded not in the divine will, as our existence is, but His being is grounded in the divine nature so that He has all the attributes of God. His sonship dates not from His human birth but from eternity, being the I AM before Abraham was born (John 8:58). The Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, having their nature; the Father is self-existent. The Son's being is grounded in the Father, and the Spirit's existence rests on the Father and the Son from whom He proceeds.

The Trinity, dimly disclosed in the Old Testament, is clearly revealed in the New Testament after Pentecost, when the Third Person came with power as the successor of the Son in the administration of the kingdom of God on the earth. The succession, which is indicated by the words Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is a philosophical progress and culmination. God reveals Himself to all men in His Son; He communicates Himself in the Holy Spirit to all who believe in the Son; He reveals Himself to man's intellect that through it He may transform the heart and make it a partaker of the divine nature, not divine as He is divine, but holy as He is holy. This succession also intimates the order of the dispensations unfolded on the earth. We have every reason to believe that the dispensation of the Spirit is the last and most glorious era of Christianity on the earth, that the second coming of Christ will be to judge the world and wind up human history on this planet.

We are living in the best era for spiritual development which that world will ever see-the era of Pentecost. Let us make the best possible use of it and profit by its wonderful privileges, the indwelling Comforter bringing the Father and the Son to abide in us forever. Just note the gradation of honor in respect to the dwelling of God among men: First, One nation was specially honored when Jehovah made His dwelling in the midst of the camp and the pillar of cloud and of fire betokened the presence of the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Second, God selects one human body and soul for His abode; for in Jesus dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And, lastly, we reach the climax, the whole Trinity dwelling in every true believer who evinces perfect love by unhesitating obedience. The descent of the Holy Ghost is the completion of Christian theology, and His indwelling in the believer is the crowning honor and blessedness.

The Personality of the Holy Spirit: It may be impossible to give an exhaustive and accurate definition of personality as applied to the distinctions in the Godhead. The term "person," borrowed from the stage as its Latin derivation shows, *per* and *sonare*, to sound through, or to speak through a mask, hence a character in a play, may not be the best word to denote these distinctions. Be that as it may, the Christian world has accepted it, and it is now impossible for any one man to displace

it by a better word. As applied to a human being, it implies that the body is not the real man, but the spirit which acts through the material organism. Thus we infer that spirituality is one element of personality, which implies self-consciousness, intelligence, desire, moral discrimination, identity and freedom of will. To these attributes of personality we may add power, or causality, which cannot originate in matter. The free agent in a limited sphere is a first cause. He causes his own moral acts. He is the sole creator of character.

Now if we examine the Holy Scriptures we will find that these marks of personality are all applied to the Holy Spirit. This is not clearly seen in the Old Testament, though when it is read in the light of the New it is manifestly there also. We know that there are personifications of qualities in Hebrew poetry, and that Wisdom is described figuratively as speaking and acting as a person dwelling with God from eternity, and giving counsel to Him in creation.

But in the Gospels and Epistles we have no poetic flights of the imagination, but the most simple prose statement of facts and truths. There is no trace of poetry in the last discourse of Jesus in the solemn and tender hour between the Paschal supper and the agony in the garden, when He sought to prepare His disciples for the sadness, loneliness, despair and fear which they would experience in a few hours. Then He used no dark parables, no vague generalizations, no doleful elegies. He spoke plainly and definitely of another Comforter to take His place, do the same work that He had done in teaching and guiding, and that He would stay forever. He would be a presence, a person who though invisible would be really nearer to them than He had been, because He would be in them, more than compensating for the withdrawal of His bodily form. Note the personal pronouns relating to the Holy Spirit in the following brief promise, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter [Paraclete], that he [not it] may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not ... but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you ... he shall teach you all things" (John 14:16-17, 26). Count the times the masculine personal pronoun is used, he and him. We are aware that *pneuma*, spirit, is grammatically neuter, but it has no more a neuter signification when applied to the Comforter than it has when applied to man (I Cor. 2:11) and to God the Father (John 4:24). Hence the pronoun relating to the Holy Spirit should never be it or itself as in Rom. 8:16, rightly changed to himself in the American Revised Version. In the words "He shall glorify me," by no just law of interpretation can personality be denied of the first word while predicated of the last.

Says Dr. John Owen: "It is impossible to prove the Father to be a Person, or the Son to be a Person, in any other way than we may prove the Holy Ghost to be so. For He to whom all personal properties, attributes, adjuncts and operations are ascribed, and to whom nothing is ascribed but what properly belongs to a person, He is a Person; and so are we taught to believe Him to be. Thus we know the Father to be a Person, and the Son also ... There is no personal property belonging to the divine nature that is not equally ascribed to the Holy Ghost." "The Holy Ghost ... spake" (Acts 1:16); "it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost" (Mark 13:11). The Paraclete speaks of Himself as having authority in the Church. "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." In their journey Paul and Silas "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." The Holy Ghost made elders at Ephesus, bishops "to feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28).

Such verbs as these describe His personal acts. He teaches, comforts, guides, sanctifies, testifies, glorifies, distributes gifts as He wills, makes intercession and is grieved. "If a wise and honest man should come and tell you that in a certain country where he has been there is an excellent governor who wisely discharges the duties of his office, who hears causes, discerns right, distributes justice, relieves the poor and comforts the distressed, would you not believe that he intended by this description a righteous, wise, diligent, intelligent person? Could you imagine him to mean that the sun or the wind, by their benign influences, rendered the country fruitful and temperate, and disposed the inhabitants to mutual kindness and benignity; and that the governor is a mere figure of speech? It is exactly thus in the case before us.

"The Scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit governs the Church, appoints overseers, discerns, comforts, strengthens and disposes all things according to the counsel of His own will. Can any man credit this testimony and conceive otherwise of the Spirit than as a holy, wise, intelligent Person? Can such expressions refer to quality, an effect or influence of the power of God, who doeth all these things figuratively; that He has a will and understanding figuratively, is sinned against figuratively, and so of all that is said of Him?

"It is true that some things peculiar to persons are sometimes ascribed to things; as charity is said to hope, to believe, to bear; the Scripture is said to see and foresee, to speak and to judge. The heavens and the earth are said to hear, and the fields to be joyful, and the trees to clap their hands. But these ascriptions are only occasional, and a plain description of the things themselves is given us in other places. But as to the Spirit of God, the constant uniform expressions concerning Him are such as declare Him to be a Person, endowed with all personal properties. [1]

Our final proof of the personality of the Spirit is derived from the requirement of faith, which is the only door through which God comes into the human soul. The stronger the faith the larger the capacity to receive the divine guest. Faith attains its highest vigor when it grasps a personal object and not an abstraction, the blesser and not the blessing. God in Christ awakens faith in a higher degree than the attempted conception of an infinite Being boundless and vague. Faith culminates in its strength where it addresses a personal Father revealed in a personal incarnate Son and claims the personal Paraclete. Grace then flows into the soul in largest streams, in Mississippis and Amazons "of living water."

The Executive of the Godhead: For several years our mind has been laboring to invent some concise expression for the sum of all the offices of the Third Person of the Trinity in the transformation, sanctification and habitation of souls who fully believe in Christ Jesus. At last Dr. Hodge has struck out with his die the very coin which our own mint has failed to stamp and contribute to the currency of Christian experience and theological discussion. "The Holy Ghost is the executive of the Godhead." This clear-cut conception and expression of the work of the Spirit is exceedingly beautiful because it is indisputably true. Law emanates from the Father, mercy and judgment are committed to the Son, while the executive of both Persons is the ever-blessed Spirit.

Here we have the three departments of government -- the legislative, the judicial and the executive. Through the Holy Spirit the Father and the Son operate on human souls, reproofing, regenerating, witnessing and sanctifying. We now see how a person may honor the Father and in a

measure the Son and yet fail of attaining the highest spiritual grace through a failure to honor the Holy Ghost, the blessed Comforter; just as a man may show all proper respect to the lawmaking and law-interpreting departments of our own government, and secure their action, and then miss his purpose at last by ignoring the last link necessary to its realization-the executive officer, without whose agency statutes and courts are ineffectual. We fear that there are many Christians who inadvertently fail in their tribute of respect, faith and worship to the Holy Ghost, regarding Him as an impersonal emanation or influence streaming from God, or as only another name for the Father, who can just as well without Him reach and transfigure their sin-stained souls through the blood of the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world.

To human reason this looks very plausible. But Christian experience, especially in its advanced stages, has proved it to be fallacious. We must believe in the Holy Ghost as an indispensable agent in the production of spiritual life both in its incipency and in its fullness. There is a sense in which He is now the most important active factor in the production of Christian character. The work of the Father in the gift of the Son and the work of the Son in pouring out His own blood as a sin offering are completed past acts.

But the work of the Spirit in each individual believer is incomplete. They very greatly mistake who suppose that He fully accomplished His mission to our world on the day of Pentecost, or at the farthest when He had inspired the last word of the New Testament, and that He then withdrew, leaving the Church under the reign of fixed spiritual laws. Such a creed as this chills the soul and deadens all the fires of faith and love. Let the entire Church come to a full realization that the Comforter came to abide and that He is now descending in personal Pentecosts as certainly and as demonstrably in the consciousness of every perfect believer as He did in the upper room in Jerusalem, then will the glory of the dispensation of the Spirit begin to be generally seen and "the executive of the Godhead" receive fitting honor.

We suspect that much of the repugnance among good Christian people to an instantaneous sanctification comes from a sort of a naturalistic view of the kingdom of grace left to the operation of fixed laws in the absence of the King. They forget that the King has left in His stead a personal successor and vicegerent clothed with omnipotent power. That was not a mere dash of rhetoric which fell from the pen of John Fletcher when he spoke of the Pentecost as the opening of "the kingdom of the Holy Ghost." He has the signet ring of our glorified King Jesus, and reigns over the family on earth as the Son of man reigns over the family above. He has not shut Himself up as an impersonal force in the tomb of uniform law, but He walks through the earth a glorious personality, with the keys of divine power attached to His girdle and with the rod of empire in His right hand.

To make the Church realize the presence of "the executive of the Godhead," there must be more praying in the Holy Ghost, more preaching with the demonstration of the Spirit more singing with the Spirit and testifying as the Spirit giveth utterance, with the attesting fruits of the Spirit, love, joy and peace. There must be more faith in the Holy Spirit as the greatest gift that men can wish or that heaven can send. We belie His presence when in our fruitless lives we present Him as a barren tree with no golden fruit to attract and feed hungry souls. This poor, blind world, which apprehends only sensible things, physical causes and effects, must be lifted up by the lever of sanctified character from the low plane of naturalism to apprehend the presence of the supernatural on earth, the standing

miracle of Christianity-the Holy Spirit dwelling in human hearts and transfiguring human lives. How glorious will be that era when the brief credo, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," has descended from the head into the heart of the Church, or has ascended from an intellectual assent into assured knowledge (John 14:17). How cheering the thought that this period of intense spiritual illumination and power is not fixed by the decree of God in the distant future, but that it may be inaugurated in our own day by a simple, all-surrendering faith in Christ's promise of the Comforter.

Reader, the perfect restoration of the reign of the Spirit over the Church involves your personal co-operation, the entire consecration of your heart, your victory over the world, your crucifixion with Christ, the entire cleansing of your heart and the transformation of your body into a "temple of the Holy Ghost," the "habitation of God through the Spirit." Are you ready to be nailed to the cross? By the "you" I mean the old self-life. You should be willing to enter into that state of conscious deadness to self in which the great German reformer was when he said, "If any one knocks at the door of my breast and says, Who lives here? I will answer, Not Martin Luther, but Jesus Christ."

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Chapter 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRY TO THE WORLD

The Paraclete's Conviction of Sin: "And he, when he is come, will convict the world ... of sin" (John 16:8, A.R.V.). Of what form of sin? Not of those social offenses called crimes, violations of the precepts and prohibitions of the decalogue, the basis of the criminal code in all civilized countries. Human courts are competent to convict of crime. Nor does the Spirit convict of those injuries to ourselves known as vices, moral delinquencies not named in the Ten Commandments. Conscience is sufficient to convict of these, aided by self-love and self-respect. But human law and conscience combined cannot eradicate evil from the heart. Philosophy has tried it and failed. Poetry, especially comedy and satire, have ineffectually attempted to convict the world of sin in all past ages. They have chastised cutaneous sins, denouncing the drunkard, the glutton, the opium user, the fornicator. All these were self-condemned before the shaft of ridicule was hurled at them. Each of them could say:

"I see the right, and I approve it too;
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

But is not God's law thundering from Sinai a sufficient witness to convict of sin? No, it never did convince the world that sin is evil per se, a thing to be abominated, to be abhorred and shunned because of its inherent hatefulness and unspeakable vileness. The divine law is effectual only as it causes sin to be dreaded and avoided merely because of the punishment which will surely visit it. There is needed more than an accuser and punisher of sin, a power which can not only probe and search the heart and turn it inside out, exposing to the sunlight all its loathsome leprosies, but a power which can effect a radical cure. The sinful heart needs a surgeon so sharp-sighted as to detect this deadly disease under all its disguises of euphonious names, and a physician so skillful as to apply an effectual remedy. That healer of the sinful soul is the divine Comforter, mercifully sent, not to torment the world by forbidding its pleasures, but to bless the world by turning it away from its iniquities.

Sins of every kind are the fruit of an invisible root to which they bear no outward resemblance. This root is too subtle for human laws to see. It requires anointed eyes. No human philosophy had ever found the sum and substance, the poisonous essence of sin, in unbelief. How can this be the all-inclusive sin? Is not historic doubt respecting persons and events innocent and even commendable? To such questions of a shallow rationalism we answer that unbelief in respect to Christ is more than withholding intellectual assent to a historic record. It is ingratitude towards a Benefactor and Saviour, and rebellion against a rightful Ruler, a refusal to bow the knee to the personal revelation of God. The cause of this unbelief is not intellectual, arising from a lack of evidences, but moral, arising from a lack of willingness. Christ is rejected because He lays the axe at the root sin, plants a hedge of thorns across the path of sinful pleasure, and kindles a consuming

flame in the house of the worldling's idols. The Holy Spirit convicts unbelievers of a lie when they pretend that their unbelief toward Christ is merely honest doubt. It is because faith in Him draws after it what is conceived to be the unpleasant obligation to obey Him, that they are unbelieving. In fact, the Greek Testament has but one word for unbelief and disobedience. In truth and verity, however boldly and persistently the world may deny it, the fact is that unbelief in respect to Christ lies in the will so corrupt that it hugs sin and will not let it be taken away by the Son of God, who came into the world and submitted to the shame and agony of the cross for this very purpose.

Not all unbelievers are as honest as the African chief, Sekeletu, with whom David Livingstone met in his explorations. Says that great missionary: "Sekeletu pressed me to name anything I desired, and it should be given. I explained that my object was to elevate him and his people to be Christians. He replied, 'I do not wish to learn to read the Book, for I am afraid it might change my heart and make me content with one wife, like Sechele [a converted chief]. No, no, I want always to have five wives at least.'" Here is a frank admission that the difficulty in believing in Christ does not lie in defective evidence of His right to rule the heart and life, but in the purpose of the sinner to have his own way.

The Spirit of inspiration teaches that the sin of unbelief denies God's moral attribute of truth. "He that believeth not God's witness concerning his Son, that eternal life is in him [and in Him only], hath made him a liar" (I John 5:9-12).

It is a favorite plea of those who reject Christ as their personal Saviour that faith is not in the province of the will, and that consequently we are not accountable for it as the pivot of destiny. But this falsehood is shown up by the Holy Ghost, who ever insists that the culpability of unbelief lies in the fact that it is a willful, obstinate and persistent aversion to Christ's requirements. It is this activity of the Spirit in demonstrating the truth to every mind and conscience by showing the things of Christ, His divinity, His sinlessness, His condescending love evinced by His self-sacrificing life and atoning death, that renders every hearer of the gospel accountable to the Judge of the quick and the dead for his acceptance or his rejection of Jesus Christ as his rightful King. "He that believeth ... shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The convicting debate which the Spirit carries on with the world has this surprising peculiarity: The momentous question of eternal destiny does not turn upon man's treatment of God the Father, but rather his disposition towards His Son. This is the sin which towers above all and comprises all. "Because they believe not on me." That is to say, the world did not believe in Him as God manifest in the flesh in the person of His only begotten Son, the appointed King and Redeemer of mankind.

Underlying the Spirit's argument in the inmost depths of the soul where character originates from free choice, is the doctrine of the supreme Godhood (corrupted into Godhead) of Jesus Christ. For if He were a creature, the highest in the universe next to the throne of God (Channing), it would be a sin to trust in Him rather than solely in the Creator. The Spirit recognizes the supreme divinity and not the creaturehood of the Son of man, the Son of God. For this reason orthodoxy in all the Christian ages has emphasized and exalted that primary truth which Luther, after the theological errors of the dark ages, so fully apprehended and so lucidly proclaimed, that evangelical, saving faith is the ground of all good in man, and the lack of it is the source of all evil. This truth the Spirit's

convincing agency always implies when He gives a clear perception of the deformity and damnableness of the absence of faith in Christ as the chosen state of heart. The Spirit demolishes all the subterfuges and excuses by which depravity endeavors to palliate unbelief and to whitewash the vileness of his ingratitude to Jesus Christ, his best friend and benefactor.

Another truth implied in the Spirit's conviction of the world is that present salvation and eternal life depend solely on faith in Christ for which there can be no substitute. By this declaration the pious, God-fearing pagan living up to his best light is not excluded from salvation. He evinces that he has the spirit of faith and the purpose of righteousness which are accepted in the involuntary absence of a knowledge of the historic Christ. He has engraven on his own character, through co-operation with the universal activity of the Holy Spirit, the imperfect outlines of the image of Christ, styled by Joseph Cook "the essential Christ."

When the apostles demonstrated to the conscience of the Jews that there was salvation in no other name, not even in Abraham their father nor in Moses their lawgiver, they were convicted of the most stupendous crime possible, but not beyond the forgiving grace of their disowned and crucified Messiah. Great as was their first crime of murdering their King, their second offense of rejecting His claims did not place them individually beyond His pardoning mercy, if they would repent and believe, although it sealed their national doom. Their unbelief vitiated all their fancied righteousness sought from the law and rendered it detestable and all their sacrifices abominable to the searcher of hearts. They were pre-eminently guilty of unbelief. The temporal consequences to their nation manifestly confirm the assertion that it was the most heinous of all sins.

The Spirit not only convicts unbelievers of willful sin, but He also convicts the regenerate of "sin improperly so called" (Wesley), a wrong state of the sensibilities lying back of the will. Even after the will has, through the new birth, been brought into the attitude of submission to Christ, there remain tendencies and propensities perilous to the spiritual life and antagonistic to the new principle of love to God which is now enthroned within. This rendered many of the Corinthians "carnal," so that Paul hesitated to call them "spiritual," though they were, "as babes in Christ," possessing a feeble spiritual life instead of that more abundant life which Christ came to impart. This lingering carnality, "the easily besetting" or closely clinging sin, styled by Delitzsch "the indwelling evil," was the force which was impelling many of the Galatians downward instead of upward; for, having begun in the Spirit, they were ending in the flesh.

We must ascribe to the same cause that lack of perfect loyalty and perfect devotion to Christ in all of Paul's band of missionary helpers in Rome, Timothy excepted, of whom the sorrowful apostle says, "For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ." By such a remark as this the apostle to the Gentiles does not deChristianize those members of Christ's body who are still actuated by selfishness. Rather he represents them as weak and defective believers who have not yet submitted to a total self-crucifixion as a prerequisite to perfect love to Christ. Paul does not include himself and Timothy in this class (Phil. 2:19-21).

A light estimate of sin is the bane of modern Christian thought. It is attended by a depreciation of the moral law. Since the law underlies the atonement, whatever lessens the majesty of the law detracts from the necessity and value of the atonement. Thus these fundamentals all suffer loss when

one of them, sin, law, atonement, is discounted. To these three vital doctrines we may add the pardon of sin and sanctification, together with eternal retribution. When one of these doctrines is undervalued, all are soon weakened. Says Principal Moule: "A full, strong current of opinion in the professing Church of Christ runs at the present day directly against a grave, thoroughgoing doctrine of sin and its correlative truths of eternal judgment and of the unspeakable need of the atoning blood and of a living personal faith in the crucified and risen One. One would think that some earnest teachers had learned, by some other path surely than that of the Word of God, to look with temperate eyes upon sin as a phenomenon sure at last to disappear under long processes of divine order."

The final evanescence of moral evil is a pleasing delusion of liberalism which cannot endure the idea of sin as an eternal blot on the face of the universe. Moral evil as a finality under the government of omnipotent goodness is a problem of less difficulty than the permission of sin by absolute holiness. The argument which justifies the arbitrary non-prevention of sin will justify its sovereign non-extinction. But we need no such argument. God has only one way for the extinction of sin, the blood of His Son presented by penitent faith. He will never crush sin with an almighty trip hammer, as Universalists desire; nor will He crush the sinner into nonentity to suit annihilationism. Hence final impenitence can have no other sequence than everlasting misery.

What is the remedy for inadequate and superficial views of sin as a transient, cutaneous disease soon to be outgrown by the soul? Preach earnestly and persistently the office of the Paraclete as the convincer of the stupendous sin of unbelief toward Christ, of righteousness and of judgment to come. Liberalism can be cured only by the awakening truths of Christ's gospel. No office of the Comforter can be neglected without moral disaster, which always overtakes those who advance beyond the New Testament in their fancied progress. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God" (II John 9, A.R.V.).

The Paraclete's Conviction of Righteousness: The Spirit's conviction of righteousness -- His exhibition of a perfect model of righteous human character--was as necessary for the moral recovery of fallen men as the conviction of sin. By the dark picture of what the sinner is, must be suspended the bright ideal of what he ought to be. This ideal no fallen man is able, without the Spirit's aid, correctly to portray. He alone can photograph it upon the prepared tablet of the soul. Conviction of sin prepares the tablet. In the normal unfolding of the child there arises the ability to discover the distinction between right and wrong. But this moral sense is so drugged from childhood upward with the threefold opiates, selfishness, worldliness and fleshly-mindedness, that the soul has no conception of the high moral attainments for which it was created, and looks upon it as becoming and inevitable to desire sensual pleasures, to seek after them and indulge in them with only such limitation as self-love may suggest.

The ordinary course of education in all pagan families, and in many homes nominally Christian, is such as tends more and more to inflame the worldly and fleshly stimulants of action, more and more to draw the youth out of quiet meditation into the race-course of intellectual emulation, athletic strife, business competition, or the whirlpool of sensual pleasure. The world is full of false notions of honor and false estimates of interest. Hence the natural man knows nothing of a perfect attainable righteousness. Study the moral character of the pagan gods of the most cultured nations; for here, if anywhere, we may find among the gods worshipped by these nations an expression of their highest

ideals of righteousness. But we find on Mount Olympus among the gods of Grecian and Roman mythology only deified lust, deified hatred, deified theft, deified jealousy and deified bloodthirstiness.

Nor is there anything in the best human philosophies in heathenism that can be safely held up as the pattern of perfect righteousness. Ignoring the fact that man at his climax reflects the image of his Creator, philosophy denudes Him of all the human virtues, piles up a lot of abstractions and negations powerless to purify and elevate human society, and then wonders that it is steadily sinking into the depths of hopeless moral degeneracy.

Study the pagan poets, their epics and tragedies, their satires and comedies, and their lyrics also, and you will no longer express your surprise at Plato's exclusion of the poets from his ideal republic. Instead of delineating the portrait of spotless righteousness, they glorify human vices, and with all the splendors of genius they so adorn the contentions and debasing passions of men as to incite to their imitation.

Even in Christian lands some modern writers who reject Christ have gone back to paganism, and have raised from the dead the idea that might is right, a monstrous idea which was laid in its grave by Socrates more than twenty-two hundred years ago. But what is the Comforter's irrefutable proof of the perfect righteousness of Christ? He Himself answers, "Because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." The world placed Him between two thieves; but God, who cannot err, has set Him between Himself and the Holy Spirit, far above all principality and power.

Never was the righteousness of the world so contradicted as when He to whom Barabbas was preferred, was received by the Father amid the acclamations of all the holy orders of intelligences around His throne. The pure and perfect righteousness of Jesus is now forever vindicated. "Despised and rejected of men," yea, of all men, for what the Jews, the best nation, did, all other nations would have done, -- He has been received and adored by all the heavenly world. This is a sufficient proof of His righteousness.

It may be that "the fulness of time" for which God waited before He "sent forth his Son" (Gal. 4:4) was the period required for the demonstration of the world's utter inability to originate those moral ideals which could turn men from sin to righteousness. Then God permitted His well-beloved Son to unite Himself with humanity, to present to all men the perfect model of character, and to teach every man the duty of reproducing that sinless character in himself. Then, as a crowning gift, to render the gift of His Son available in the highest degree, He sent down the divine Paraclete to assist man's wandering eye to gaze steadfastly upon this divine and human model of holiness, and to steady his hand to copy the matchless beauties of that heavenly pattern. This was the second work of the Comforter, to convince the world of righteousness, because this too was a work which He alone could accomplish.

The Paraclete's Conviction of Judgment: Judgment is the sanction of law. Since Jesus came not to destroy the law but to fill it full of meaning, His commission to the Paraclete must effect the same purpose to honor the law by declaring its sentence against sin. The atoning death of Christ declaring God's abhorrence of sin and His mercy to sinners was the defeat of Satan, the usurping ruler called

"the god of this world." Christ Jesus through death conditionally emancipated every human soul from Satanic bondage, and thus destroyed "him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil."

All who take on the Satanic character must expect the Satanic doom; all who bear the devil's image must share his destiny. So all who bear the likeness of Christ will share His glory. Satan is condemned now for our benefit if we yield to the Spirit's voice in our hearts and accept the righteousness which Christ provides and the Comforter inworks; or we abide with God's great adversary in the judgment if we continue in sin with the world. This third and last conviction of the Spirit clearly implies that in the estimation of the Spirit of truth the existence of the devil must needs belong to some fundamental article of saving truth without which we cannot correctly estimate the enormity of sin, the value of righteousness and the necessity of the atonement by which it was procured. In this third conviction the victory of righteousness over sin is completed. In this our salvation is infallibly secured if we but will it. The Spirit never coerces a free agent.

Truth separate from a sense of the authority of God does not convict of sin and spiritually vitalize man's moral nature. Says Dr. Walker, "Conscience will enforce no moral duty unless it sees God in it." It will respond to no other voice than that of the moral Ruler and final Judge of all free moral agents. So long as Jesus was regarded as a man only, His preaching had meager results in the number of His disciples. But after His supreme divinity was demonstrated by His conquest of death, ascension to heaven and effusion of the Holy Spirit, men were converted by the thousands in a day. Like causes produce effects in every age. Wherever in dependence on the Spirit of truth the whole gospel is preached, including Christ's triumph over the grave in proof of His Godhead, unbelievers are convinced of sin, righteousness and judgment. But wherever Jesus Christ is presented as a model of moral excellence, but a mere man like ourselves, there is no conscience awakened to see the enormity of sin and to turn from it with a perfect loathing. Revivals can no more come from such preaching than orange groves can spring up and bear fruit among the glaciers of Alaska.

Genuine conversions must be preceded by a painful sense of the enormity of sin, which comes only from the belief that Christ is the divine Saviour. This belief, though not saving, is the necessary stepping-stone to that all-surrendering reliance on Him as both Saviour and Lord which is the condition of salvation. It is not enough to know Him historically as the Son of man. He must be known as the Son of God. This knowledge flesh and blood cannot impart. Thus the Comforter glorified Christ by attesting His perfect power to save from the guilt of sin through faith in His blood shed as a conditional substitute for the punishment of sin.

Then the Comforter, as "the Spirit of adoption," glorifies Christ as the Saviour by crying in the believer's heart, "Abba, Father." This inspired feeling of sonship is the gift of Christ. "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12, A.R.V.). Thus the three divine Persons are glorified in the new birth of a soul.

In entire sanctification the Holy Spirit violates no law of mental philosophy, but strictly conforms His work to the nature and faculties of the mind. The stronger affection expels the weaker. To expel all proneness to sin, all that is required is to inspire an unconquerable love of holiness, not in the abstract, but as embodied in a person in the sphere of the human affections, a person who by his self-sacrifice has laid in our minds a foundation for eternal gratitude. Then will this new affection

instantly expel all base loves and keep them out so long as this new affection is enthroned within. Now it is the office of the Paraclete to inspire this affection. This He does by putting light upon the person of the divine Christ, making Him a bright reality, a sun above the king of day, infinitely superior in splendors.

This manifestation of Christ in the heart was an experience of Paul in addition to His revelation of Himself to the eye and the ear of the chief persecutor as he drew near to Damascus. The outward manifestation arrested his career of hostility to Christ; the inward revelation awakened an undying love, the motive power of that heroic course of labors, privations, perils and sufferings which ended when Rome's imperial axe severed his head from his body.

The Pentecostal Attestation: The gift of the Paraclete, not merely as a solitary event, but as a perpetual dispensation of grace and power, is absolutely necessary to the perfection of the Christian evidences. The resurrection of Christ, according to Paul in I Cor. 15 and all Christian apologists, is the fundamental proof of His divine mission. It is my purpose to show that this greatest miracle, taken by itself as an isolated event, without the standing and perpetual attestation of the Pentecostal dispensation as a predicted sequence, would have been insufficient for the establishment of Christianity against the universal opposition of Jews and Gentiles, including ten imperial edicts of persecution and extermination beginning with Nero, A.D. 64, and ending with Diocletian, A.D. 313. Much less would have been sufficient to perpetuate the gospel eighteen hundred years as a system dominating the world's best thought and keeping in advance of the progress of the ages. We mean to say that the empty tomb without the tongues of fire descending from generation to generation on Spirit-baptized believers would have been inadequate to the permanent enthronement of Christianity over mankind. If "another Comforter" had not succeeded Christ, His mission, with all His miracles, including His victory over the tomb, would have been a failure, and His sermons and parables would long since have been forgotten.

But He proceeded from the Father and the Son specially charged with the office of testifying of the Son, yea, of glorifying Him, not only in the gospel record, which He should inspire, and in the doctrines to be unfolded in apostolic sermons and epistles, but by his indwelling presence in the consciousness of believers, revealing Christ in them in a manner wholly indescribable but blessedly real and certain.

This intimate identification of the Spirit's mission with the person of Christ and the success of His work was because in the wisdom of God it was seen to be necessary to the establishment and universal spread of His kingdom. There is truth in the argument that the existence of the Church as the visible exponent of Christ's kingdom is the great proof of the resurrection and divinity of its Founder. This is true. But our contention is that the Church, which was not organized when Jesus Christ, its living head, ascended, would not have had a beginning on the earth without the Pentecostal gift. This dates the founding of the Church on the day of Pentecost.

Without Pentecost the resurrection of Christ would soon have been confounded with the prodigies of the Greek and Roman mythologies. There would, after few years or generations, have been no one interested in defending this historic fact, and after the death of the apostles there would have been no witnesses to the resurrection power as a transforming spiritual experience. The historical facts

without a spiritual life built on them, preaching and defending them and dying for them a martyr's death, would have had no champion to advocate them and to perpetuate the remembrance of them.

Facts alone, though miraculous, and truth alone, though undoubted, have no regenerating power. Only life can beget life. Something must have happened. There is no effect without a cause. In this hidden cause lies the secret of the final triumph of Christ.

In every generation there are needed living witnesses to corroborate the resurrection of Christ. For these on the witness stand of every age He has made provision in the gift of the Holy Ghost. Every Christian who has had a personal Pentecost is a new attestation of the basal proof of Christianity, the resurrection of its Author.

Are not heaven and earth waiting, groaning, travailing for such a testimony to the crucified and risen Saviour as has not yet been given in the Church on earth? To reveal Christ the believer is in the world and the Spirit is in the believer. Am I thus revealing Christ, His condescension, purity, love, unworldliness, meekness, all-suffering and unchangeableness, in every part and parcel of my life? Are my talents, tastes and opportunities made over to Christ to witness for Him? Only when the witnessing Spirit came down were the apostles, though brimful of ten thousand facts in the life of Jesus, able to testify to Him effectively. "Modern Christians have enough materials stored in their minds to make thousands of discourses about Christ, but our lips are sealed and our lives ineloquent until the Spirit of Pentecost come upon us and make Christ's truth live in us and shine through our transfigured lives."

The Gain of the Paraclete: The withdrawal of the visible Christ and the substitution of His invisible presence in the Paraclete whom He sent was the introduction of His disciples into a higher school of faith. Hitherto they had walked chiefly by sight. The miracles of their Master had appealed to their reason through the senses. They were not entirely destitute of faith, else they would not have forsaken their fish-nets and followed the Man of Nazareth. But their faith was weak; it needed to be exercised and developed by struggles in a far different arena. They must be taught the spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom. The visible presence of Christ as a veritable man had been a help to the primary lesson they had already learned; it would be a hindrance to the advanced lesson now to be learned. They must learn that deliverance from sin and restoration to true holiness consist not in outward ceremonials and prescribed rituals, nor in abstract truths grasped by the intellect, but in a vital union with a personal Saviour effected by the Spirit.

The visible, tangible Messiah was the false foundation of all their erroneous notions about a splendid worldly kingdom. The ascension of Christ, the removal of His human form from the eyes of His disciples, was necessary to initiate a purely spiritual kingdom, the basis of which is faith in a risen and invisible Messiah enthroned in heaven.

It is quite obvious that Christ's efficiency in His saving contact with human souls is infinitely increased by His representative, the Comforter. While on the earth in the limits of the body His range of beneficent effort must be restricted to a few of the many millions of mankind. His method was to individualize. In healing He laid His hands on every one. There was no healing in the mass. If men's diseased bodies required individualization, much more do their depraved souls. Through the

Paraclete the Great Physician can simultaneously medicate millions of sin-sick souls on all the islands of the sea and in both hemispheres wherever His gospel is preached.

But not only is the quantity of His work multiplied infinitely, but the quality is vastly improved through the mission of the Spirit. While in the body on the earth the work of reconstructing fallen human nature must be done from the outside, at a distance from the center of personality within. But the Spirit can interpenetrate the soul, impart spiritual life, and lodge transforming principle in the very core of our being. Yea, He himself, with my free consent makes my heart His domicile, His earthly holy of holies, thus imparting and conserving holiness at the fountain of action and character. This He can more effectually do than did Jesus in the flesh. For the Comforter does not take up His abode in my body merely, nor in my intellect, nor in any one of my mental powers; but in my spirit, which He found as a mere unused capacity and filled with His subtle energies which stream forth, quickening intellect, sensibilities and will, chastening every bodily appetite, and in this way sanctifying the material organism through which my spirit acts. Not in what we know, but in what we are, does the Spirit take up His abode. Taking possession of the unexplored recesses of my spirit, the Holy Spirit, after my voluntary surrender and self-effacement, is in a position to inspire and safely guide me individually through all the perils and turning points of my probation.

The radical dissimilarity between the old and the new dispensation is seen in the following particulars: In the old dispensation the Spirit externally wrought upon men, but He did not in His person dwell in believers; His working was occasional and for a short time; He did not permanently abide in them. He was external; He did not incarnate Himself in believers. His action was intermittent, irregular, and apparently without any law. He came and went like Noah's dove, finding no abiding place. But in the new dispensation there is a "law of the Spirit" by which all believers may receive Him as a permanent dweller in the heart, as another dove seen by John the Baptist descending upon Jesus and abiding on Him as a part of His person. In the Old Testament the Spirit bestowed gifts of an intellectual and physical nature -- prophecy to the seventy elders, skill to Bezaleel, the kingly feeling to Saul, and strength to Samson. But the Comforter dispenses the various graces, such as saintly inward virtues, love, gentleness, goodness, etc.

Another great gain to the disciples in the exchange of the bodily presence of Christ on the earth for His spiritual presence in their hearts, by the Comforter's coming and indwelling, was in the clearer evidence of His Messiahship and divinity. Little could they possibly comprehend that an invisible divine Person could descend from heaven, enter into their very being, pouring a light more resplendent than the sun upon the person of Christ, giving an intuitive perception of His supreme Godhood as indisputable as any self-evident truth of the human reason. They knew nothing of the self-evidencing power of the Spirit to glorify the Son of God in their consciousness and to plant their feet for evermore on the sunlit summit of full assurance and certain knowledge so frequently spoken of by Paul under the strengthened word epignosis.

The death of Christ was deemed by His disciples as the greatest possible disaster, but it redeemed a world of sinners lost. So the departure of their Master was deemed a privation for which they could imagine no compensation, but it removed the barrier which kept Him from access to their inmost selves. Hitherto He had been imprisoned within walls of flesh obstructing the full communication

of Himself to their hearts, just as the unbroken alabaster flask kept the delicious perfumes from filling all the house, every crack and crevice, with its pervasive odors.

When the God-Man was on the earth He was farther from His disciples, even when He washed their feet, than the sun is from the earth, 93,000,000 miles away. But when He came in the form of the Comforter this distance was annihilated. The disciples now have an eternal sunrise within their hearts. They are ensphered in the Spirit, who reveals Christ. They are enveloped in His personality; they are "in Christ."

There are many evangelical Christians who are resting in a head-knowledge of Christ to the exclusion of that heart-knowledge which comes from the presence of the Paraclete. It is in a sense true of them that "the letter killeth," while they might have the Spirit that giveth the more abundant life. The external knowledge of Christ is valuable; but it may be used as a bar to that intimate internal knowledge of Him who dwells only where He is welcomed and enthroned. He comes to reign. Orthodoxy is commendable; but a trust in it and a reliance on the sufficiency of religious knowledge may obstruct the fullness of the Spirit.

Resting in the external knowledge of Christ attained on the plane of nature is a life akin to legalism, a life of effort and failure which must be abandoned to open the door for the incoming and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. What power would come to the Church if its members would imitate the apostles in acquiring this new, efficacious and transforming knowledge of Christ imparted by the indwelling Spirit! Doubt would then find no dwelling place. Worldly pleasures would lose their seductive power.

As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly pleasures fade away
When Jesus is revealed.

The work of the Holy Spirit in my heart is God's credential to me individually. All that Christ did for me profits me nothing if the Holy Spirit does not come into my heart and bring it all home to me.

THE GOSPEL OF THE COMFORTER

By Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

An abridgment by Ross L Price, D.D.

Chapter 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRY OF SALVATION

The Spirit's Work in Regeneration: Regeneration is the lodgment by the Holy Spirit of the new principle of life. This is love to God, which is the ruling motive of every genuine Christian. There is a radical and an essential difference between those who are born again and the best of those who lay claim to only natural goodness, a beautiful moral character revolving around self as a center. But the great transition from spiritual death to spiritual life does not make the child of God at once complete in holiness. The Holy Spirit in sanctification does not work magically, nor mechanically like a washing machine, "but by the influence of grace, in accordance with the essential constitution of man, and in the way of a vital process, only by degrees completely renewing the soul." While the Spirit in the new birth touches the whole nature, the thoughts, the feelings and the will, so that the man is a new creature, his renewal is not complete in any part. At first he is in spiritual knowledge only a babe. His faith is unsteady and often mingled with distrust, while his love is not usually strong enough to secure uninterrupted victory over temptation. The enthronement of love does not immediately render the pleasures of sin unattractive, nor destroy the painfulness of self-denial, nor instantaneously change sinful habits. Such is the state of immature converts to Christ, "the flesh lust [ing] against the Spirit." The Corinthians were characterized as "carnal, walk as men." We know that John says that he that has been "born of God sinneth not" when he is describing those whom he styles "fathers" or adult believers, just as Paul describes the same class as having crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts. Neither of these apostles is describing an ideal Christian, as some teach who deny the possibility of complete deliverance from depravity in this life. They are describing regeneration at its climax, the glorious possibilities of the birth from above, when it has culminated in perfected holiness.

Bishop Foster sums up the defects of the experience of regeneration in a more comprehensive manner than we remember seeing in any theological treatise. He does not minify the experience of regeneration, but declares it to be a glorious experience. He, however, shows its defects in this manner: "I note, third, that dissatisfiedness of the soul with itself is a common experience of all regenerate souls, varying from intense distress at times to mild regret. Its experiences are not satisfactory. It has a prevailing consciousness of inexcusable defects. It does not reach its ideal. It feels the chiding of the Holy Spirit. It lashes itself with reprovings. It often carries an unhealed wound because of its unfaithfulness or failure to be what it feels it ought to be. There is the abiding consciousness that there is something better for it.

"When it is upheld and sustained in an average experience, and others think well of it, and there is no external failure visible to other eyes, it discerns inward poverties which grieve and distress it. It would love more, be more patient, more brave, more trusting, more cheerful, stronger, more robust; it would work more and do more and be more. There are holy yearnings in it after something higher and nobler. There is often a distressing sense of remaining evil in it. I think I am safe in saying this is universal experience, subsequent to the experience of regeneration. This has been called in

our theologizing and in the theologizing of all the Christian schools, 'the remains of the carnal mind,' 'unextracted roots of inbred sin,' 'the spirit of the flesh,' 'natural corruption,' 'seeds of depravity,' 'the old man,' and by various other semi scriptural names.

"These phrases all point to a fact, but not infrequently a sensuous meaning is attached to them which leads wide apart from the truth which they aim to represent. They are supposed to represent some sediment or infusion in the soul or in the body, or in both, which must be washed out. What is meant and what is true is this: when the soul is forgiven and its affections are turned to righteousness, so that it passes from under the dominion of evil, impulses and inclination to evil are not completely eradicated. They still arise and assert themselves. They assail and disturb the peace of the soul. They have a constant tendency to prevail with it. They find support in its old habits and in its native lusts-that is, desires and cravings. [2]

In the above truthful condensation of experience it will be noticed that the bishop teaches that we are not entirely sanctified at conversion-a doctrine often denied in the Church today. He teaches as John Wesley did, that there remains yet that which needs a farther work of the Spirit, which is called, in the language of theology, entire sanctification, which supplements the defects of the soul still remaining after regeneration.

The adverse influences and tendencies which continue after the new birth imperil the very existence of the new principle of love to God by overcoming and choking it, unless it is continually nourished and strengthened by divine grace. Strength is supplied to the believer by the inner presence of the Holy Spirit. His indwelling is by faith. If faith declines, the Spirit's sphere in the soul is narrowed. If confidence in God is "cast away" -- a possible act against which we are warned in the Scriptures (Heb. 10:35) -- then the Spirit withdraws, or rather, is excluded by unbelief, and love, the vital spark of the spiritual life, expires. Hence the question whether the Spirit shall be a merely transient impulse toward purity, or a lasting power, depends on the free will of the regenerate soul. The parable of the sower is exemplified today in the case of those who have no depth of earth. Their love to Christ soon degenerates into a mere sentiment with little or no influence on practical life, and in a short time the sentiment itself entirely evaporates, and the soul becomes "twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 12).

What is the safeguard against such a disaster? It is such an indwelling of the fullness of the Spirit as excludes everything contrary to the divine nature by filling and flooding the soul with a love that is ever enlarging the vessel and ever filling it to the brim. Then love is perfect in the sense that it is no longer mixed in kind and so weak in degree as to be unable to encounter the temptation successfully. Says Prof. Candlish: "The new life of Christianity is a unity, and though, on account of the imperfect and abnormal condition of most Christians, it does not show itself with perfect symmetry, yet it tends toward moral excellence and perfection in every direction, and the more vigorous the central principle of religious life is, the more will particular virtues be developed and increased." This is progress toward entire sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and is a necessary condition of that crowning work.

The question is often asked, "Why does not the Spirit entirely sanctify when He regenerates?" We answer, it is because that neither the consecration nor the faith of the penitent sinner is adequate to

this complete work. The person then surrenders his bad things, he lays down his arms, quits his rebellion and sues for pardon. This is all that his faith grasps. But he soon learns that a deeper consecration is requisite, that all his good things, his possessions, his bodily powers, his intellectual faculties must be fully consecrated to Christ. To pour all his money into the treasury of his imperiled country and to give his life by enlisting in her military service is far different from the act of surrender as a prisoner of war. In the next place, faith for entire sanctification is a far higher act, involving a deeper knowledge of one's spiritual needs and a larger comprehension of the vastness of the supply found in Jesus Christ. This deeper knowledge is not found in the spiritual babe.

If our distinction between these works of the Spirit is correct, it affords a sufficient reason why entire sanctification could not be wrought by the Spirit at the time of the new birth. The old man cannot be crucified without the co-operation of the new man. He must sign the death warrant of that sin in the flesh which the Son of God by His sacrifice for sin has condemned, in order to make that condemnation effectual for the destruction of "the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6). In sanctification "we are God's fellow-workers" (I Cor. 3:9, A.R.V.). Hence the momentous import of the exhortation of Paul, "Carry out with fear and trembling your own salvation. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure." [3] The occasion for fear and trembling arises from the fact that God's work in me may fail to reach perfection because of my failure to work perfectly with Him. It is indeed a solemn and awful thing to be fellow-workers with the holy God in the production of the most valuable thing in the universe, a holy character. I am responsible not only for all that I can do towards completed holiness, which is perfect consecration, but I am also responsible for all that the Holy Ghost can do with my co-operation.

The work of the Holy Spirit in the progressive sanctification of the newborn soul is indirect: in opening the heart to receive the truth, the instrument of purification; in giving vigor to the spiritual life; in strengthening the will to resist temptation, and in diminishing the power of evil habits. It is repressive of depravity rather than totally destructive.

The entire eradication of the propensity to sin is by the direct and instantaneous act of the Holy Spirit responsive to a special act of faith in Christ claiming the full heritage of the believer. It is in reference to this distinctive act of the Sanctifier that it is noted by an eminent expositor "that in the New Testament we never read expressly and unmistakably of sanctification as a gradual process." This is said in view of the almost universal use of the aorist tense of the verbs to sanctify and to cleanse.

To this distinct and decisive action of the Holy Spirit in the extinction of proneness to sin, bringing the believer into the land of rest, in marvelous contrast with his previous wilderness experience, after his regeneration, there are too many intelligent and trustworthy witnesses to be lightly passed by as of no account. They assure us that they were truly converted and received the direct witness of the Spirit to their adoption; that they did not backslide, but grew in grace; that they were not conscious of living in willful violation of any known law of God, and that they could testify that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. But they solemnly aver that through all their regenerate life, before receiving Christ for their entire sanctification, they were conscious of a strong inward enemy whom they were striving to bind and cast out but always failed; that by the

study of the Scriptures they found that this rebel within was called "the old man," whom theologians style "original sin;" that after reading or hearing the testimony of those entirely consecrated souls who had through specific faith and importunate prayer found complete deliverance, they definitely sought for this distinctive work of the Holy Ghost, and at an ever-memorable date they emerged into a blissful consciousness of inward purity and profound peace far beyond all former experiences.

The Lord be praised! There is a power which not only cleanses but also keeps. It is to be noted that the witnesses to whom we refer agree in testifying that this entire sanctification was subsequent to regeneration, and that it was accomplished by the Spirit in an instant, and not by the processes of growth.

This negative work of the Spirit in the eradication of inherited proneness to sin is followed by an illimitable development of all the Christian graces. One may reach the point where sin is all destroyed and love become perfect, i. e., pure and unmixed, and yet his power of moral discernment and his mental enlargement be capable of increase through time and through eternity. His spiritual development will be commensurate.

Perfection in degree of love is never to be attained.

Perfection in kind is the gift of the Holy Ghost to the believer now.

There prevails in certain religious circles the doctrine that in the new birth a new nature is created, while that old nature, or old man, continues till physical death extinguishes his life. It is said that the old nature is nailed to the cross, but he does not die so long as the human spirit acts through a material organism. Denial of the possibility of entire sanctification in the present life is an obvious inference. Another outcome of this error is that depravity is necessary, and that it is beyond the reach of the Holy Spirit in the application of the blood of Christ which cleanses from all sin. Hence the notion of two natures existing in every Christian, however consecrated, so long as he is in the body, the one a new creation and therefore sinless, and the other sinful and beyond all hope of change for the better, is exceedingly mischievous, palliating and excusing evil propensities. When we speak of the Holy Spirit as the indwelling Sanctifier we will examine the alleged scriptural proofs of this doctrine. We insist that the work of the Spirit in the new creation of the penitent believer in Christ is not the creation of new faculties, but the rectification of those already existing, weakened and marred by sin. He has no need of a new reason, for even after the fall, reason in man grasps the same self-evident truths that exist in God. His sensibilities, both natural and moral, have been damaged by the fall of Adam, and his will has become enslaved to his perverted affections and depraved desires. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to lift this yoke of bondage and to bring the newborn soul into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. He whom Christ Jesus makes free is free indeed. It is the slave that is emancipated and not a new being just created. Such a being would need no act of emancipation. It is the office of the Spirit to give the will the gracious ability to make holy choices, and to clarify the moral sense or conscience so that its decisions will all harmonize with ethical axioms or immutable morality. The "new creature" spoken of by Paul is a figure of speech for the vivid presentation of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of a soul badly shattered by sin. Conscience is restored to full activity both in its power to discern and its power to approve or to condemn. The human spirit may well be compared to a skylight in the dome of his

being through which he was designed to have a vision of spiritual realities. But sin has darkened the windows and intercepted the heavenly vision. The remedy is not in the demolition of the old skylight and the setting of a new one, but in the thorough cleansing of the original window by One who by taking up His abode in that dome can always keep it transparent by His purifying presence. The process seems to be first to cause the law of God to shine into conscience, the light of forgiveness, then the light of purity, "having no more conscience of sin."

Another error obstructive of the spiritual life of all the so-called sacramentarian churches -- more than half of Christendom -- consists in a perversion of the meaning of Christ's words to Nicodemus, "born of water and of the Spirit." Those who magnify the sacraments as saving ordinances, and some who do not teach baptismal regeneration, teach that the words "born of water" refer to water baptism. But others, including the writer, insist that these words have no reference to that ordinance, which was not made obligatory upon believers till after Christ's resurrection, years after his dialogue with Nicodemus. The identification of water baptism with the new birth has wrought untold harm to myriads of souls, deluding them with a shadow of the requisite for salvation instead of the substance, the impartation of spiritual life and initial sanctification symbolized by water. We sympathize with Weisse, though we cannot use his strong language, that to make regeneration depend upon baptism by water "is little better than blasphemy." We believe with Neander, Calvin, Grotius and other scholars, that Christ here intends the symbolic import of water, and not water itself, as an agent of cleansing, according to an ancient figure which expressed one idea by two nouns connected by and instead of a noun and an adjective, as, "we drink from cups and gold" for golden cups. Thus, ye must be "born of water and of the Spirit" for the purifying Spirit. Desiring to give his distinguished hearer a clear idea of the change which the Spirit must work in the natural heart, he adds the idea of initial cleansing by using the word water.

In like manner a more thorough purification is expressed by the words of John the Baptist descriptive of Christ, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire," an agent of cleansing far more effectual than water in the purification of earthen and metallic utensils. We cannot here, as some do, read and as meaning or, "with the Holy Ghost or fire," meaning all who do not receive the Holy Spirit's baptism must be baptized with hell fire. We prefer the exegesis of Bishop Hopkins, "those who are baptized with the Holy Spirit are, as it were, plunged into the heavenly flame, whose searching energy devours all their dross, tin and base alloy." Here is a promise of a richer blessing, more thorough sanctification and a far larger equipment for effective service than that which is enjoyed by the average Christian to-day. "The purification at conversion, comparatively superficial, is only that which may be fitly symbolized by water baptism. But fire searches the inmost springs of life. The baptism of fire must be such a close and intimate contact of the holy God with the inner man, as to light up its dark secrets and burn out its uncleanness."

Christ Our Sanctification: The work of each of the three Persons of the Trinity in the scheme of salvation is quite definitely stated in the Holy Scriptures. The Father originated the plan, the Son by His atoning death provided the means, the blood of sprinkling, and the Holy Spirit conditionally applies it for the soul's purification. But sometimes the work of the Spirit is ascribed to the Son. This seeming confusion perplexes the student of the Bible, till he learns that when the Son is spoken of as sanctifying it is always in a different sense from the Spirit's work of purification. In the interest of clearness of thought and of saving truth set forth as the cloudless noonday sun, let us note in what

sense the sanctification ascribed to Christ in several texts differs from that internal work wrought by the Comforter. When Christ is spoken of as our sanctification, it is meant, not that He enters into the hearts of believers and cleanses them, but that He provides the purifying medium, His own shed blood, and the sanctifying agent, the Holy Spirit. The Son's work is external, the Spirit's is internal; or in philosophic terms, the work of the one is objective, that of the other is subjective; the one sanctifies provisionally and the other effectually. Now let us carry this distinction into Paul's letters to the Corinthians. In I Cor. 1:2 they are addressed as "sanctified in Christ Jesus," and in 3:1, Paul could not speak unto them "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." How are these apparent contradictions harmonized? It will not do to say that Paul, to say nothing of the Spirit who inspired him, flatly contradicts himself. In the light of the distinction between provisional sanctification in Christ and actual sanctification by the Holy Spirit, a very beautiful harmony emerges. Through faith the Corinthians had been born from above, and had become "babes in Christ," and were now entitled to all the privileges which He had purchased for believers, among which was conditional sanctification. But since they had failed to appropriate their heritage by the exercise of faith, they were still strongly carnal in their leanings, as evidenced by their "envying, strife and divisions." They were provisionally sanctified in Christ; they were not actually sanctified by the Holy Spirit. The contradiction disappears. In the same way the contradiction between the statement that "Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all men" and His sentence of a part of them in the last day to eternal punishment disappears in the consideration that Christ is the conditional Saviour of all the human race, but the real Saviour of believers only.

In I Cor. 1:30 Christ "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." This He is to every one who does by faith appropriate Him and become wise by believing divine revelation personified in Christ, the truth, and justified through faith in Him, and sanctified through the reception of the Spirit in His office as Sanctifier, and redeemed, soul and body reunited and glorified, through persevering faith in Him who shall change the body of our "humiliation," that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. This distinction between provisional sanctification in Christ and sanctification inwrought by the Holy Spirit secured by faith utterly excludes the doctrine of holiness imputed to persons whose hearts are still filled with depravity. One may die for another, but one cannot be holy for another. Sin and holiness are personal, and not transferable. Alford calls attention to the double conjunction in I Cor. 1:30, between "righteousness, the source of our justification before God, and sanctification by His Spirit, implying that the Christian life is complete, the negative side and positive side are so joined as to form one whole." The piety of the Corinthians lacked the positive side. They were forgiven, but not cleansed. They had appropriated part of their heritage in Christ, justification, but they had not by an appropriating faith claimed sanctification. The Corinthian type of Christians has not become obsolete. In every age, with here and there an exception, it has been the prevailing type. This accounts for its failure to conquer the world. When the possible in Christian character shall have become the actual in the whole Church the world's evangelization will be speedily accomplished. That generation will see the glorious consummation.

In Heb. 2:11, "he that sanctifieth is Christ, regarded as the author of the provision of salvation and of the agency of the purifying Spirit, who applies to "those who are sanctified" the cleansing efficacy of the atonement on the condition of their faith in Christ.

In Heb. 10:10 is another instance of sanctification by Christ provisionally, "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." That inward holiness which the altar ritual of the Hebrews with their interminable repetitions was unable to produce, has been rendered possible to every believer through the offering of the body of the adorable God-Man once for all. While the atonement sanctified no one, it renders possible the entire sanctification of every offspring of Adam who will trust in Christ for this purchased blessing.

Verse 14 has often been misunderstood as teaching that Christ brought to perfection the work of our inward sanctification eighteen hundred years before we were born: "For by one oblation hath he perfected for ever them that are being sanctified." (Alford.) The sanctification which Christ thus perfected is provisional. As such it is eternally efficacious and incapable of improvement. It stands ready from age to age to be applied by the Holy Spirit to the inward cleansing of every believer. Nothing is lacking but the outstretching of an empty hand to grasp this pearl of great price. Under the atonement "all things are possible to him that believeth."

Verse 15 does not teach the witness of the Holy Spirit to the actual, inward work of entire sanctification, as some erroneously teach, but His testimony in the Old Testament to the coming of the days when the provisions for the inner purification will be complete, when the law will no longer be a galling yoke on the neck, but a joyful song in the heart. It is true that this inner change will be through the agency of the Holy Spirit, who, by shining on His own work, is a witness to its genuineness. But this is not a proof text of such a witness. Well says Delitzsch: "The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of prophecy, and from Him comes the whole God-inspired written Word. He also in that Word is the witness that with Christ's return to the Father all is accomplished, and nothing remains to be done to procure for us inward perfecting and a complete restoration to communion with God." Man's relation to God is no longer merely legal, but inward, evangelical and spiritual. He ceases from outward, compensative works, but concentrates his view upon the sanctifying and endowing grace already procured, and seeks to enter in and lay hold of it. This once-for-all provisional grace for justification and entire sanctification, according to Jeremiah, is the basis of the new covenant.

Many good Christians find it difficult to accept the doctrine of a definite and instantaneous work of the Holy Spirit subsequent to regeneration, because they cannot draw a sharply defined line between the incoming of the Spirit, the Lord of life, to impart life, and His second incoming to impart the more abundant life by the removal of all antagonisms thereto. When told that there is a difference between being free and being "free indeed," between the work of the Spirit in inspiring love, they are still unable to construe to themselves satisfactorily this distinction. Hence they are inclined to reject the doctrine as an untenable theory.

But in the face of so much Scripture exhorting to holiness and commanding perfection and the fullness of the Spirit, and of so many promises and prayers relating to the same blessing as immediately attainable, is it not the wiser course to bind up this difficulty with two others pertaining to the Holy Spirit, which every evangelical mind believes, but none understands? The first mystery is involved in the question how the Holy Spirit was always in the world as the inspirer of all true piety in human hearts, from Abel to John the Baptist, and yet a definite moment, on the day of Pentecost, the same Spirit came down from heaven into the world. Here is an enigma which orthodoxy universally fails to explain, and yet universally believes. For orthodoxy receives the

doctrine of the Trinity, which implies the eternity and the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit, while the Bible asserts His agency in creation and His activity in human hearts in all the pre-Christian ages. Faith accepts this mystery which is too high for the grasp of reason. In a similar manner faith answers another question, how the Holy Spirit was in the heart of the man Jesus Christ, inspiring, illumining and guiding Him all His life up to the hour of His baptism, when the Holy Ghost descended upon Him and abode in Him. How could He be in Him thirty years, and then enter into Him at a definite moment?

Here is a question which reason cannot answer. Yet every believer in the New Testament assents to these unharmonized facts in the relation of the Holy Spirit to the humanity of Jesus Christ. If the Bible teaches that entire sanctification through the Holy Spirit is a crisis in Christian experience, subsequent to the new birth by the same divine agent, and if reason cannot draw an accurate boundary line between these two works of the Spirit, why should we not bind up this mystery in the same bundle with the two which we have just described, and relegate this difficulty to the domain of faith? The first immediate effect would be the cessation of the debate which exists even in Wesleyan circles; there being no more occasion for a theological controversy on this third question than there is in the case of either of the other two. The second effect would be that multitudes of earnest believers, having now emerged from the foggy metaphysics environing the subject of entire sanctification into the clear atmosphere of faith, would aspire with all the energy of their being to enter into the full spiritual heritage of the children of God, now clearly set before the eye of faith. A third effect would be: "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord," in efficiency to resist sin and to sway unbelievers to bow to Christ. There would be a spiritual revolution in the Church, and vigor would supersede supineness, spiritual hunger would take the place of satisfied worldliness, harmony would succeed discord, and unity displace all tendencies to schism.

It is certainly logical to treat all the mysteries involved in the offices of the Paraclete alike; and it certainly is unreasonable to receive two of these mysteries by faith and to reject the third, not because of its lack of scriptural proofs as the ground of faith, but because of its lack of transparency to the eye of reason. Candid persons should be consistent, treating like difficulties in a like manner when they all stand upon the basis of the same supernatural revelation. But truth when it collides with men's pleasures, passions and wills never has a fair chance. President Mark Hopkins suggests that, if the proof that the three angles of a triangle equal two right angles abridged men's sinful indulgence, there would be many who would stoutly insist that they could not see the point of proof. This shows that unbelief originates in a moral rather than an intellectual cause. May it not be that much of the difficulty with the doctrine of entire sanctification arises from the heart and not from the head; not in a lack of evidence, but in a disposition to neglect the proofs of a work of the Holy Ghost which builds a hedge across the path of sinful desire, and kindles an unquenchable fire in the house of the heart's idols? Hence entire self-surrender to one's best light is absolutely necessary to perfect candor in his attitude towards God's truth. The least particle of self-will can obscure a great spiritual truth, as a hair, or platinum wire finer than any hair, stretched across the eye-glass of the telescope, will blot out Sirius, 6,000 times larger than the sun, and 8,400,000,000 times larger than our globe.

It is a great thing to be "of the truth," to be so in love with it as to be willing that our eyes should be purged of every film in order to gaze upon her radiant form, and to have our feet blistered in toiling up the rugged path in which the heavenly maid walks that she may lure us to the skies. St. Paul in Eph. 4:15 has one expression which shows the very quintessence of Christian candor requisite for realizing in experience the highest spiritual verities, "truthing in love," or "pursuing truth in love." Love is the eye which sees God's truth when the eye of mere intellect utterly fails. There is always a certainty that they who are disposed to sacrifice all to the truth as it is in Jesus, and out of love to Him, will speedily scale the loftiest heights of spiritual knowledge, and daily dwell upon these sunlit summits evermore.

Such are not stumbled-at doctrines never revealed to reason but to faith only. Happy are they who early learn to render to reason that which belongs to reason, and to faith that which belongs to faith. Among the latter are all those truths relating to eradication of sin "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

To a person objecting to entire sanctification in the present life because he could not "see into it," excellent advice was recently given in these homely Saxon words, "Get into it and see out." The advice contains a truth that is capable of wide application. Every doctrine which is to be apprehended by faith and not by speculative reason, must be verified by experience before its truth can be realized. Christianity came into the world as an experimental science, saying to every one, "Come and see, test me and prove the truth of my divine origin, taste and see that the Lord Jesus is good." This was the challenge with which the Son of God met all doubters. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself" (John 7:17, A.R.V.). A right attitude of the inquirer's will is the indispensable condition of his success in his study of the Christian evidences. The culpability of unbelief lies in the absence of this obedient attitude of the will, the disposition to follow whithersoever truth may lead. Hence I preach that there is no such thing possible in God's moral universe as permanent, honest doubt. At some point in the doubter's history, truth has pointed to a path which he was not willing to tread. One refusal to follow his best light has spoiled forever afterwards the plea of honest skepticism. The relation of Christian truth to every human soul is that of a key to a lock. The gospel was constructed by omniscient wisdom to unlock every heart. Wherever it fails, when faithfully applied, to turn back the bolt of unbelief, the fault is not in the key, not in the original structure of the lock, but in that tampering with the wards which is in the power of every free agent. God never made such a moral monstrosity as an intelligent soul incapable of believing His truth. The aphorism of John Fletcher, "All salvation is from God, all damnation is from man," is really a moral axiom. Unbelief is damning because it has a moral cause, the perverse will. When the will passes into a state of obedience, the soul emerges into the region of light. This law is as invariable as any in the physical world. Whenever there is a "total, irreversible, affectionate self-surrender to Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord," the Spirit of truth streams through and through the soul like a pencil of sunbeams, vitalizing, illumining, warming and cleansing. This statement is true in respect to all the stages of spiritual progress. Many have verified it in the joyful experience of the new birth, and may with gladness attest its truth in that spiritual uplift which has followed that all-surrendering faith which has laid hold of Christ as our entire sanctification from inbred sin. That uplift awaits all true believers in the Holy Spirit, the outpoured gift of our glorified Saviour.

St. Paul prayed that the Ephesians might "know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe," the very same power which God "wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." God can do what He will with inert matter, because there is inherent in it no power to resist His fiat. But when the Omnipotent would mold the sinful human spirit into more than angelic beauty, into the beauty of His own moral likeness, He may be thwarted by the obstinate resistance of the free agent. He made man without his consent, but He cannot save him without his consent. When that consent is fully given, and the hand of faith is put forth to appropriate Christ to save unto the uttermost, then is experienced what St. Paul, by a strain of language itself, piling up words expressive of unlimited transforming energy, styles "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe," because He is able to do "superabundantly above the greatest abundance." (Adam Clarke.)

One effect of this wonderful inward transfiguration is an astonishing quickening of the spiritual perceptions, so that the distant becomes near, the opaque transparent, and the indefinite and incomprehensible becomes clearly defined and easily discerned by the anointed vision. Many are trying to see before they buy of Christ the divine eye-salve. Multitudes are applying to spiritual things the wrong faculty of knowledge, reason instead of faith, with results as far from the truth as those which follow the attempt to distinguish between pulverized sugar and fine salt, not by the taste but by the touch.

"Get into and see out" is just what the astronomers did in order to get a true view of the solar system. For ages they strove to harmonize the retrograde motions of some of the planets with the geocentric theory, but in vain. At length one of them dared in thought to take his stand in the sun and to look out upon the orbs wheeling through the heavens, when, lo, before his enraptured gaze was a perfectly harmonious system without one backward motion. Get out of the earth into the sun, and the solar system becomes heliocentric. Get out of self into God, and theology becomes Christo-centric and beautifully consistent. One of the old divines had for his motto, "It is the heart that makes the theologian." Rutherford used to say to students for the ministry, "If you would be a deep divine, I recommend to you sanctification," and to all Christians, "sanctification; sanctification will settle you most in the truth."

The faith requisite to entire sanctification is essentially the same as that which is the condition on which forgiveness of sin is received.

It remains for us to discuss entire consecration, its nature and motives, as preliminary to the faith by which we are sanctified wholly. Motive is the word ordinarily used in speaking of the conditions of choice. We call it an inducement when it is adapted to excite the sensibilities, and we call it a reason when it is addressed to the intellect in the form of argument. The motive to entire consecration includes both, because it is an appeal to all of man's nature back of his will. We might bring out an array of various inferior motives to a perfect devotement of self unto God and His service, if we did not see that all motives to this act which are not comprised in one grand motive are too weak to deserve mention. They are such as these: fear of penalty, self-respect, a full and rounded development of our being by the stimulus communicated to the intellect when the love of God is perfected in the heart, greater usefulness, increased happiness, the honor which comes from God and good men and that greater reward which results from greater godliness. Without delaying

to discuss these motives, mostly commendable but all of them combined inadequate, we proceed to present the motive presented by the inspired apostle, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God." The persons addressed are already Christians, for they are tenderly called "brethren." They are not plied with the threatenings of the law, because "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." They are no longer "under the law" as the impulse to service. Hence the lash of penalty cannot be wisely applied. It is not in harmony with the diction of the New Testament to address threatenings to the sons of God. This is a servile motive. Children by adoption who hear within the cry "Abba, Father," are on a higher plane. Yet this does not prove that they have reached spiritual perfection. It is the habit of St. Paul to exhort those who have already become sons and daughters to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in filial reverence, not in guilty terror (II Cor. 7:1).

"The love of Christ constraineth us." Love responsive to the self-sacrificing love of the Son of God is the only genuine motive to our complete self-surrender to Him, soul, body and spirit. The manward aspect of His atonement had this very design, the believer's total consecration under the mighty impulse of gratitude to his great Benefactor. "He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again" (II Cor. 5:15, A.R.V.). Love, especially love to the unworthy and the sinful, awakens gratitude, except where the noble capacity for gratitude has been utterly blasted by the mildew of depravity. Gratitude finds expression not only in word, but service and devotion to the benefactor ever unto death. The dreary annals of human selfishness in the form of wars and oppressions are here and there lighted up by instances of heroic self-sacrifice of souls struggling to express a gratitude too great for tongue or pen to utter. Hence we solemnly aver that the noblest act of which a man is capable is the total and irreversible consecration to Christ of every atom of his being. When he has done this he will long for an enlarged capacity of loving service and sacrifice.

THE GOSPEL OF THE COMFORTER

By Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

An abridgment by Ross L Price, D.D.

Chapter 4 THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT

This is the doctrine of assurance which Wesley did more to elucidate and to relieve of obscuring misapprehensions than any preceding theologian. He thus describes the direct witness of the Spirit as "an inward impression on the souls of believers, whereby the Spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit that they are children of God."

The indirect witness is an inference from the discerned presence of the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, etc., and it follows the direct witness in the order of time, "because," says Wesley, "in the nature of the thing, the testimony must precede the fruit which springs from it." The voice of the Spirit within the believer is to all who know God the most real of all realities. It is sometimes called a seal which secures, authenticates and appropriates.

The Holy Spirit is God's seal. "Ye were sealed with [not by) the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13, A.R.V.). Another metaphorical designation of the witness of the Spirit is "the earnest of the Spirit." The earnest is derived from mercantile usage traceable through the Romans and Greeks to the Phoenicians, the founders of commerce. It assures the fulfillment of a promise as a part of the purchase money paid in advance to bind the bargain, or as an installment of a servant's wages paid at the time of hiring, obliging the servant to render the service and the master to pay the rest of the wages after the work has been done. It places both parties in a position to enforce the contract. The buyer, if he does not take the goods, forfeits the money advanced, and the servant who fails to render the service must refund the earnest which he has taken. The master who repents of his bargain must lose the wage advanced, and the merchant who withholds the goods because the market price has risen, or for any other reason, must repay the money advanced.

The phrase "earnest of the Spirit" occurs only twice in the New Testament. Grammatically "the Spirit" is in apposition with "earnest," meaning that the pledge consists in the Holy Spirit bestowed upon the believer and dwelling in his heart. "And gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:22, A.R.V.). There is no hint here of the time when the full wage will be paid, although in Eph. 1:14 it is "until the redemption of the purchased possession. Those who take a narrow view of present Christian privilege and put the fruition of the promises after death interpret the earnest only of the fullness of joy in heaven. But I believe that it is a pledge and a foretaste not only of heaven hereafter, but of a present heaven attainable by faith -- even the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

"By mistaking the earnest for the fullness we run the risk," says Joseph Parker, "of stating incomplete truths as final revelations." The earnest of the Spirit is the assurance of the fullness of the Spirit in this life, and in the future life it is a right to drink evermore of the "river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 22:1, A.R.V.). The fullness is certainly promised in this life; it is prayed for by Paul for believers, and it was enjoyed

by many in the apostolic church, and there have been some witnesses to this experience in every subsequent generation.

With respect to the obligation which the earnest of the Spirit lays on its recipient, it has been well said that it is a lien upon the future service of the receiver. If the service be unperformed, the earnest will be withdrawn; whereas if the service be lovingly rendered with the whole might of the heart, the measure of the gift will be filled up even to the sanctification of the whole body, soul and spirit. The Church is in its infancy as to the realization of spiritual blessing, as mankind is in babyhood in its application of electricity to human utilities. To what surpassing altitudes will the individual believer and the Church as a whole be lifted when the gift of the Spirit is fully realized and appropriated.

Spirit, who makest all things new,
Thou ledest onward; we pursue
The heavenly march sublime.
'Neath Thy renewing fires we glow,
And still from strength to strength we go,
From height to height we climb.

Another very instructive property of the earnest is to be noted in the fact that beyond the idea of security it implies identity in kind. If the earnest is paid in silver, the whole will be paid in silver. If the earnest is in gold, the wages will be golden. If the earnest in the case of the believer in Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit, then the fullness of the blessed Comforter will be his portion in this life and his eternal reward. This is the Old Testament promise, "I am thy ... exceeding great reward." Hence we need not die to know what are the felicities of saints in heaven. They flow from the same fountain from which we are drinking in this world -- "the joy of the Holy Ghost." The bliss of the Old Testament and of the New, of earth and heaven, is the same. To all Spiritual intelligences God is a satisfying portion.

There is a stream which issues forth
From God's eternal throne,
And from the Lamb's living stream,
Clear as the crystal stone.

The stream doth water Paradise,
It makes the angels sing:
One cordial drop revives my heart;
Hence all my joys do spring.

-- John Mason --

This doctrine of the immediate contact of God's Spirit with my spirit, without the medium of symbol or sacrament or absolving priest, does not rest upon one, two or three cardinal proof texts, but upon a wide variety of scriptural proofs, such as the communion of the Holy Spirit, the revelation of Christ within the soul, the knowledge of God, the strengthened form of the Greek epignosis, clear, certain, thorough and perfect knowledge of Christ, a favorite term with both Paul and Peter, together

with plerophoria, full assurance, excluding all doubt. Count up the many times in John's first Epistle in which he says "we know," and add the stronger words, "ye all know," instead of "ye know all things" (I John 2:20), found in the Revised Version margin and the text of Westcott and Hort, and our reader will see the broad basis on which this doctrine stands.

The direct witness of the Spirit is intermittent in most young Christians. Before the fullness of the Spirit is received there are only occasional gleams of light through the rifted clouds, followed by sunless intervals when doubts distract and harass the soul. The cry of such Christians when seeking the abiding witness, the indwelling Comforter, is voiced by Charles Wesley, who alone among all the versifiers of the eighteenth century gave due prominence to the Holy Spirit; "the author," says James Montgomery, "of a great number of the best hymns in the English or any other language." The superiority of the permanent to the transient witness of the Spirit is thus finely expressed:

O that the Comforter would come!
Nor visit as a transient guest,
But find in me His constant home,
And take possession of my breast,
And make my soul His loved abode,
The temple of indwelling God!

In another hymn he prays to the Spirit in these words:

Spirit of love, return
To every troubled breast,
And comfort us who mourn
For permanence of rest.

Thou often visitest Thine own;
But in an hour or day
Our transitory guest is gone,
Our joy is fled away.

O might we always know
The Father reconciled!
Set up Thy throne below
In each adopted child.

This alternation of experience from sunshine to shadow affords occasion for the temptation to cast away our confidence in Christ and to abandon His service. Many yield to this suggestion of Satan and go back to the world instead of climbing to altitudes above the clouds. Some are told by stationary and retrograde Christians that they will never be so happy as they were when they first entered the kingdom of God. This dismal outlook upon the future intensifies the temptation with which they are wrestling. Hence it is not surprising that not a few young converts turn away from Jesus and walk no more with Him. They should have been told that in the normal Christian

experience "it is better farther on." It is to be regretted that there are so few normal Christians who are at hand to give the discouraged convert this word of good cheer.

Our advice to all who have occasional gleams of sunshine through the rifted clouds, with intervals of doubt and incertitude, is, to ascertain the cause of this intermittency, and to remove it as soon as possible. For the cause is not, as some teach, in the sovereign will, but in ourselves. To this declaration the only exception is some physical condition into which we have been brought by divine Providence, such as a prostrated nervous system, depressing the mind and obstructing conscious access to Christ. The Christian, by thorough self-examination, should assure himself that no sinful act has veiled his inward vision of God. Then he may patiently and believably wait for the veil to be lifted again, and continue to be lifted so long as he has a firm grip on the promises of God. For where sin is absent the Spirit's witness is intermittent, because faith is wavering. Hence the remedy is a greater familiarity with the Word and a constant personal appropriation of the full heritage of the believer, especially the great gift of the Comforter.

When the Third Person of the adorable Trinity is fully received, or, rather, when He fully possesses us, there is no more interruption of His testimony to our sonship to God. For He is now the abiding witness. Ecstatic joy may come and go as the tides ebb and flow, but peace and assurance abide forever. We advise the believer to gather together the promises of Christ respecting the abiding of the Paraclete found in His last address before His death, recorded in the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of St. John, and the numerous references to the same glorious theme in St. Paul's epistles, and especially in the First Epistle of St. John where the mutual abiding is taught, "God in us, and we in God." In such a spiritual life, filled and interpenetrated by God, there can be no hiatus, no vacuum, and no place for doubt.

Where vital interests are at stake it is very comforting to know that we are on the winning side. Calmness and comfort came to the two hundred and seventy-six storm-driven souls on the coast of Melita when Paul stood forth and uttered the cheering message from God, "There shall be no loss of ... life among you." This seemed to be a nonforfeitable life-insurance policy, representing the Calvinistic assurance of faith, unconditional because it is grounded on the decree of election and the assumed perseverance of the saints. But Paul made an important addendum to his prediction. When the tricky sailors were stealing the lifeboat to make good their own escape, the Roman prisoner, who had an angel for a cabin mate the night before, stood up again and said to the military custodian, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." This illustrates the Arminian conception of the assurance of eternal salvation. It rests upon the small word if. If the Christian perseveringly believes, he will be saved.

Our doctrine of assurance is grounded on the direct witness of the Spirit, and not on the Word, as some assert, for it cannot certify the fact of my adoption. It is the office of the Spirit to give assurance of this fact by crying in our hearts, not in the Bible, "Abba, Father." But doubtless the inquirer who requests me to discuss this vital theme desires a more exact definition. It is not easy to explain spiritual realities in human language. It is a transaction wholly in the realm of spirit, invisible to the natural eye and inscrutable to the human mind. It is the "white stone" and the "new name written, which no man knoweth saving him that receiveth it." The direct witness is of the nature of a spiritual intuition, the voice of mercy speaking comfort to the troubled soul.

If you ask for the manner of this divine communication, I must reply, "The wind bloweth where it listeth." The manner of all knowledge is a mystery. In all communications from one mind to another there is the same mystery. The thought in my consciousness is conveyed to yours along a path which the wisest philosophers are unable to map out in their psychologies. Yet the mother looking down with a smile into the eyes of the babe a month old awakens a responsive smile. She has laid a cable to that little island and flashed the message of a mother's love. Cannot God do as much to a lost child seeking His face? Cannot He who made man unmistakably reveal Himself to him? Yes, assuredly. The manner is a speculative question which may be omitted, while we proceed to answer more practical questions.

Do we need any other evidence besides the direct witness of the Spirit to our adoption? Yes, we need the indirect witness, the confirmatory proof of the genuineness of the Spirit's testimony; for a person may imagine some flash of his own fancy to be the voice of the Spirit. This is the way fanatics are made.

What is the safeguard? The fruit of the Spirit perceived as existing in us -- "love, joy, peace," and the whole train as in Gal. 5:22. These are the marks of the regenerate state, and are needful not only for the purpose just mentioned, but also to sustain the believer when the direct testimony is obscured. There are cloudy days in the spiritual realm, when the sun is veiled and there is no ray of direct light. Then it is comfortable to walk in the light reflected from the clouds. In early Christian experience the direct witness is frequently intermittent. Then the indirect witness is of immense value to keep one from casting away his confidence in Christ. If one says that he has the direct witness of the Spirit to his adoption and continues to commit sin, he shows that he has not that saving faith that gives faith victory over the world.

The advantages of the direct witness are: first, salvation from doubt on fundamentals, also certainty with respect to adoption and forgiveness, and the joy of the Lord and the strength which always springs therefrom. It is the secret of an aggressive spirit and power. It gives positiveness and convincing cogency to testimony. Conscious salvation attested by the voice of the Spirit crying "Abba, Father," is a great safeguard against apostasy -- the greatest next to the Spirit's work in entire sanctification. A sudden conversion, bright and joyful, is a towering monument in the memory. A Christian life which has no spiritual birthday anniversary is not to be discounted or rated as spurious, for many are converted, especially children, without such a marked and memorable transition; but the ideal new birth of the New Testament, since the day of Pentecost, has a date to it which only the direct witness of the Spirit can impress on the mind.

But this suggests another question which perplexes many: Is the witness of the Spirit necessary to salvation? We have already hinted that an inference from the marks of the new birth found in us cannot save from doubt. Eternal salvation depends on faith in Christ. "He that believeth ... hath the witness in himself." St. John, whom we quote, does not say whether this is direct or indirect and inferential. Some kind of evidence will follow saving faith. It may not always be joyful, or even satisfactory. It may be weak and only occasional. There are well-authenticated instances where persons have for years doubted their regeneration, and yet have lived on the right side of their doubts by fearing God and working righteousness. They were servants of God, as John Wesley was until he was thirty-five years old, when he emerged into conscious sonship. This he called his conversion.

He ascribes the absence of assurance in exceptional cases "either to bodily disorder, or to ignorance of the gospel promises." These exceptions under Methodist preaching in his day were rare indeed. He says that "ninety-nine out of every hundred could tell the day of their regeneration by the Holy Spirit."

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Chapter 5

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRY TO THE BELIEVER

Christ's Two Receptions and Two Bestowals of the Holy Spirit: Section 1. The Two Receptions of the Spirit: Jesus on the day of His baptism by John received the Holy Spirit in a manner which indicated that it was a permanent and not a transitory gift, for the Spirit descended and abode upon Him. A second reception of the Holy Spirit took place after His ascension (Acts 2:33). The differences of these receptions we may not be able to point out. But since the earthly life of Jesus is an example for His disciples, it is important to know just what the Spirit did for Him and whether we may expect Him to do the same for us.

We now come to the question, What did the first reception or anointing of the Spirit do for Jesus as a man? It certainly was not His entire sanctification, for He was perfectly sinless. It was something more than a visible consecration or setting apart for the work of the world's redemption. God does not do merely spectacular deeds. The form of a dove was designed for human spectators, but the reality, the descent of the personal Holy Spirit and His permanent abiding, was an uplift in the life of the Son of God on the earth and a special endowment for the work of redemption. From that hour He went forth in the power of the Spirit. His perfect manhood needed this endowment for the successful accomplishment of His mission. If this be true, does not every man and every woman need, in addition to perfect purification, the same empowerment for life's mission? For we believe that God has a plan for every person's life, a work for every one to achieve. Moreover, we believe that this plan, if realized, will secure two ends, God's highest glory and our highest happiness. What a prerogative of personality it is that I, a creature, may advance the glory of the infinite Creator by reflecting His moral attributes and by giving a race of sinners a more worthy conception of His character! This can be done only by the fullness of the Holy Spirit exalting, intensifying and guiding our mental and moral faculties. Even entirely sanctified souls cannot depend on their unaided natural energies.

Many a Christian worker has failed to put on power, or has lost both native and divinely imparted power, by erroneously trusting to himself as a reservoir. The truth cannot be too strongly accentuated, that only when the human spirit is indwelt by the divine Spirit does it attain that clear insight, that emotional fervor, that spontaneity and maximum energy of will for which his Maker designed him. It is possible to avail ourselves of a power not of ourselves and to do things impossible to ourselves. We cannot stand in Boston and with the aid of our natural voice converse with a friend in Chicago. But by utilizing a subtle and mysterious power called electricity I can perform that miracle. My speaking into the telephone and placing the receiver to my ear, thus connecting me with that unknown force, is an act of faith. It is impossible for me by my own energy to transport myself from Boston to New York in five hours. But I can by entering an express car subject myself to a power to do this impossible. This is an act of faith.

"All things are possible with God" and to him who is linked to God. Faith is the link. Hence "all things are possible to him that believeth." Hence I am accountable not only for what I can do, but also for what I plus available omnipotence can do. I attain my maximum power and answer the end of my creation only when I am to my utmost capacity filled with God by the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This important truth many fail to realize.

In the reception of the Holy Spirit by Jesus there are three notable stages. The first was the work of the Spirit in the creation of His humanity, in the miraculous conception which obviated the possibility of contracting any transmitted corruption from Adam, for He was the second Adam, the first term in a new series, while He was, by His birth from Mary, within the human family as a kinsman-Redeemer. The fact that "the child grew, and waxed strong ... filled with wisdom: and [that] the grace of God was upon him," is a sufficient proof that He was filled with the Spirit, as Luke 2:40 intimates, which in His early years imparted the consciousness of His divine Sonship and redemptive mission.

The second and enlarged reception of the Spirit was at His baptism or anointing for His public office of Messiah. Here was an external manifestation of the Three Persons of the Trinity: the voice of the anointing Father was heard; the anointed Son and the unction, the anointing oil, the dove symbolizing the Holy Spirit, were seen. The abiding of the dove on the head of Jesus is noted by John the Baptist as the fulfillment of a prophetic sign, "the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him" (Isa. 11:2, A.R.V.). As the Son of God He may not have needed this anointing. But as the Son of man, made like unto His brethren to fit Him for His mediatorial work, which included a perfect example for His disciples, that unction was requisite for His complete qualification to be the Saviour of the world.

It is worthy of remark that this visible display of the Trinity, and especially this descent of the Holy Spirit, took place while Jesus was praying to his Father probably for the greatest gift that He could send or that men could receive, the long-promised prophetic gift of the Spirit (Luke 3:21).

Henceforth His "commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen" were given "through the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:2). His miraculous activity dates from His baptism with the Spirit.

The third reception of the Holy Spirit by Jesus Christ was after His ascension: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost" -- that is, the promised Holy Ghost -- "he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2:33).

The descent of the Paraclete promised by Jesus when He should have gone to the Father is a positive proof that He had reached the throne of the universe and has been glorified. The gift of the Holy Spirit is a certificate of His holiness while on the earth.

It is a credential of His Messiahship and supreme divinity. Previous to His resurrection the Spirit had been bestowed as a personal gift. Now the power to bestow Him upon others, held in abeyance till after His resurrection and ascension, has full exercise.

None but God can fathom God. But the "Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. ... the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:10-11). This omniscience of the Holy Spirit argues His divinity. Hence the power and prerogative of imparting Him demonstrates the Godhead of the Giver. This is the culminating proof of the divinity of our Saviour, even towering above His resurrection from the dead.

"The effusion of the Spirit on the apostles and on the Church terminated the controversy whether He was the Son of God. The communication of the Holy Spirit-a gift competent to no created being-proved Him to be the Messiah and the Son of God, according to His own claim" (John 5:19) . [4] Our position in reference to this text is strongly confirmed by Paul's declaration that a personal Pentecost is an experience necessary to the reception of the doctrine of the Godhead of Christ. "No man can say Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3, A.R.V.).

The reception of the Spirit by Jesus on the banks of the Jordan was for His personal equipment for His earthly mission. His reception of the Paraclete at the right hand of the Father, enthroned as the world's Redeemer, in answer to His prayer (John 14:16), is for the conditional full equipment of His Church as an army commissioned to conquer the whole world. The condition is that faith which bears the fruit of love and obedience (John 14:15-17). Says Dr. C. H. Parkhurst: "There were no completed Christians till Pentecost, and there can be no completed Christians with the cessation of Pentecost. There was no Church till Pentecost, and a Church without a Holy Spirit is as much a delusion as a Church without a Christ."

Section 2. Christ's Two Bestowals of the Spirit: As there were two receivings of the Holy Spirit by Jesus, so there were two impartations to His disciples, one on the evening of the day of His resurrection and the other on the day of Pentecost. The exact import of these two receptions and bestowals has not been revealed. Yet it seems desirable that the two gifts of the Spirit to the disciples should be brought into harmony with each other and with the apostolical doctrine of the offices of the Spirit in the present dispensation. Clearness of doctrine is intimately related to unity of faith and uniformity in practice. We cannot accept the theory that the breath of Christ did not in any sense communicate the Spirit, but rather that it was a symbol and prophecy of the future Pentecostal gift. We prefer to say that something real was imparted, but far less than the fullness of the Spirit. "To understand John 20:22 as the outpouring of the Spirit, the fulfillment of the promise of the Comforter, is against all consistency, and most against John himself; see 8:39 and 16:7." (Alford.) To understand it rightly we have merely to refer to that great key to the meaning of so many dark passages of Scripture, the progress of doctrine in the New Testament. Christ's presence in that hour was a slight fulfillment, an earnest, of His manifest coming and permanent abiding in them by His representative, the Paraclete. This corresponds to the witness of adoption as stated in Paul's epistles, especially Rom. 8:16 and Gal. 4:6. It is quite evident that the apostles were previous to this hour in a state of salvation, but as servants rather than sons crying "Abba, Father." In the high priestly prayer in John 17 they are spoken of as given to Christ, as having kept His word, as having all been kept, except the son of perdition, and as being "not of the world, even as I am not of the world," twice declared. This manifestly demonstrates that they were in a state of acceptance with God, but like all the Old Testament saints, destitute of the gospel blessing of the direct witness of the Spirit to divine adoption, the special prerogative of New Testament believers (John 1:12). That the disciples were already born again and were then in possession of spiritual life, may be inferred from the words of

Paul, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit," and the declaration of Christ Himself respecting the Spirit of truth, "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him."

Bengel well says that this bestowment of the Spirit is "the earnest of Pentecost." "It belongs to the peculiarities of the miraculous intermediate condition in which Jesus was, that He, the bearer of the Spirit (John 3:34), could already impart a special first fruit, while the full outpouring, the baptism of the Spirit, remained attached to His exaltation." (Meyer's Commentary.)

The gift of assurance by the initial gift of the Holy Spirit was very timely. The day of Pentecost was seven weeks distant in the future. Suddenly bereft of the constant companionship of their Teacher and Lord, they needed special strength to keep them from fainting in spirit during this interval. Moreover they needed the capacity to lay aside their worldly conception of the Messiah's kingdom and to begin to take in the new and spiritual view of that kingdom. The witness of the Spirit would enable the disciples to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint, during this period of transition and suspense before the Spirit in His fullness should be poured out.

"He breathed on them [His disciples], and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This they needed to sustain their faith in the interval between His resurrection and the full outpouring of the Spirit at the coming Pentecost.

If even Jesus needed "the power of the Spirit," and did not enter on His work till He received it, surely every Christian needs the same power to do the public or private work to which he is called. But let him follow the divine order for its attainment: life before service, and purity before power.

The Paraclete's "Ecce Homo" in the Believer: The title which we have chosen for this section implies that it is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ to the believer. We are not now purposing to dwell upon His office of inspiration by which He gave to the whole world an accurate history of the life and works of Jesus and a reliable record of His words. This exceedingly important function of the promised Comforter we pass by in order to amplify upon another function of the Spirit which needs special emphasis because it is more apt to be overlooked and forgotten—the inward revelation of Christ in the consciousness of the adult believer, as distinguished from that infantile faith by which a penitent is born into the kingdom of God.

Uncertainty and doubt perplex and weaken immature Christians. Christ is to them an outside and distant person whom they endeavor with painful effort to bring near and to make real. They try to do the orthodox thing, to cherish certain beliefs about Him. But there is no warmth, no inspiration, no enthusiasm, no intense love. Their experience is much of the time dreary, and their Christian service is mechanical and constrained, not free, spontaneous and joyful. What is lacking? Not the new birth, but a definite experience which follows regeneration. The new birth implants love divine. When this love has been tested and strengthened by obedience it is our privilege by faith to have a spiritual manifestation of Christ in our hearts. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

In every generation since the day of Pentecost there have been witnesses to the fulfillment of this promise. They were never more numerous than they are today in all Christian lands and in all evangelical churches. They testify to a wonderful clearness of spiritual vision. Truth takes on reality and solidity. Jesus is no longer a distant abstraction, but a person vividly near and real, the one altogether lovely. Love to Him now becomes intense, passionate and all-consuming. His commands are now delightful, and they are unhesitatingly obeyed. "When it pleased God," says Paul, "who ... called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen [treated as dogs by the Jews]; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." There in Damascus the scales of Jewish prejudice fell off from his eyes, and he could see Jesus, not now in the clouds above, but in his heart an abiding guest. This explains his heroic career of labors, dangers and sufferings cheerfully undergone in attestation of the truth of Christianity.

"We are often where the Ephesians were when they said, 'We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.' What came to them and saved them was the Holy Ghost. What must come to us and save us is the same Holy Spirit. There they were holding certain truths about God and Jesus, holding them drearily and coldly, with no life and no spirit in their faith. God the Holy Spirit came into them, and then their old belief opened into a different belief; then they really believed. Can any day in man's life compare with that day? If it were to break forth into flames of fire and tremble with sudden and mysterious wind, would it seem strange to him -- the day when he first knew how near God was, and how true truth was, and how deep Christ was? Have we known that day?

"The Holy Spirit not only gives clearness to truth, but gives delight and enthusiastic impulse to duty. The work of the Spirit was to make Jesus vividly real to man. What He did for any poor Ephesian man or woman who was toiling away in obedience to the law of Christianity was to make Christ real to the toiling soul behind and in the law. I find a Christian who has really received the Holy Ghost, and what is it that strikes and delights me in him? It is the intense and intimate reality of Christ. Christ is evidently to him the dearest person in the universe. He talks to Christ. He dreads to offend Christ. He delights to please Christ. His whole life is light and elastic with this buoyant desire of doing everything for Jesus, just as Jesus would wish it done. Duty has been transfigured. The weariness, the drudgery, the whole task nature have been taken away. Love has poured like a new lifeblood along the dry veins, and the soul that used to toil and groan and struggle goes now singing along its way. 'The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' " (Phillips Brooks.)

The Holy Spirit and Conscience: In the spiritual sphere into which all true believers have been translated, where there are realities too high for the intellect to reach and questions too subtle for so coarse an instrument as conscience to answer, God has provided another umpire perfectly competent for the guidance of the Christian. "Let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts" (Col. 3:15, A.R.V., margin). "Wherever," says Bishop Lightfoot, England's greatest Pauline expositor, "there is a conflict of motives or impulses or reasons, the peace of Christ must step in and decide which is to prevail." This new arbiter is not peace with Christ, or reconciliation, but a far superior and subsequent experience, "the peace of Christ," the unfathomable ocean of His peace poured by the Holy Spirit into your soul in all the fullness of His incoming and abiding. This peace becomes the paramount consideration where there is an internal conflict. Everything which disturbs this profound rest of soul will be instinctively avoided, and every act that weaves the thinnest veil between you and the face

of the adorable Son of God you will instantly shrink from. Thus believers who claim their entire heritage in Christ have an infallible arbiter in a sphere far above that of conscience. St. Paul intended something peculiar by the use of the Greek word for "arbitrate," found nowhere else in the Holy Scriptures, styled by Bengel "a remarkable word."

Modern science constructs balances so delicately poised as to be turned by the weight of a fraction of a hair. This Christian may so far realize the higher possibilities of grace as to be even better equipped for testing human volitions. Let me illustrate. I am invited to be initiated into a popular secret order. Conscience does not object, but the peace of Christ does. A social club-house is erected in my town, and I am solicited to join. Conscience discerns no evil there, but the peace of Christ declines to enter where Christ Himself cannot be introduced and be assigned the seat of honor. The question of worldly amusements has for centuries been before the court of conscience, and no final decision has been reached. But it is quickly decided by the arbiter which the gospel has called to the judgment seat, "the peace of Christ." All truly spiritual minds all along down the Christian ages present a consensus of opinion on the deadening spiritual effect of the dance, the card-table and the theater. Because this consensus has been formulated into a rule of life for the benefit of inexperience, a great outcry has recently been made by some who seem to have forgotten that Christian character consists in something more than good morals, and that its essential principle is spiritual life imparted by the Holy Ghost and sustained by converse with the skies. What all truly spiritual minds have found detrimental to the life of Christ in the soul should be avoided by all who aspire to dwell on what Joseph Cook has recently called "spiritual uplands."

There are two classes of Christians. One class asks, "Is this amusement or indulgence forbidden? If it is not, I will embrace it." The other asks, "Is it obstructive of cloudless communion with the Father and the Son through the Paraclete? If it is, I will discard it." The one aims at innocence, the other at spirituality. The party of higher aim, even though it should be in the minority in any church, should prevail. Their standard should become universal. Thus will the unity of the body of Christ be promoted, as is implied in the words of St. Paul: "Let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body."

Paul asserts his love for the Hebrew nation, his "kinsmen according to the flesh," declaring that his conscience was "bearing him witness in the Holy Ghost." This strong asseveration implies an intimate relation between the Spirit and conscience. We may not be able to give a full and accurate statement of this relation. Among the self-evident truths with which the human mind is originally furnished is the distinction between right and wrong. The power to discover this distinction inheres in every sane mind. On questions relating to immutable morality all such minds agree in their decisions. Such questions are few, and theoretical rather than practical. They are not modified by circumstances. They are such as these: Is it right to hate a benefactor? Is it right to punish the innocent? Is it right to reward the guilty? Is it right to intend injustice to a fellow man? Is it right to violate my own sense of right? to dishonor a parent? to commit adultery? There can be but one answer to these questions. They are addressed to the intuitive sense of right and not to the understanding or practical judgment which modifies the decision.

But when we ask the question, Is this accused man worthy of punishment? we have now to exercise our judgment and go through a course of reasoning before we can decide, and two perfectly

conscientious persons may disagree in their verdict, because we are now in the region of mutable morality. Most of the moral questions in daily life are of this character. It is not enough to know that one man has killed another. I must take into account the circumstances, whether it was in self-defense when attacked by a robber, or a burglar by night was shot in the act of breaking into the dwelling. This sufficiently illustrates mutable morality.

I can but think that the philosophy of Lotze and others is true, that all the self-evident truths are in the last analysis the activity of the immanent God in the human spirit. Hence the moral intuitions, immutable and invariable, are the voice of the divine Spirit immanent in all men, irrespective of regeneration and the gracious indwelling of the Spirit. There is a sense in which the Spirit of God is upholding nature. Men are not conscious of this immanent substratum of their being. But when the Holy Spirit, as a gracious gift, is bestowed upon the believer, he is conscious of His presence within as was Paul. The effect is manifest not so much in the increase of power of moral discrimination, though it does clarify the moral perceptions, as in the marvelous addition to the power that impels toward righteousness. For the conscience has a threefold power -- discrimination, impulse toward the right, and, after the act, approval or disapproval, according as the act is right or wrong. The gracious work of the Holy Spirit intensifies each of these functions, the second more manifestly than the first, and the third more than the second.

What effect does the fullness of the Spirit have in the decisions of practical questions in the province of mutable morality? We answer, it does not prevent errors in judgment and fallacies in logic. The Holy Spirit renders no one infallible in such matters. Yet He indirectly helps us by delivering us from the dominance of appetites and passions inimical to clearness of intellect and calmness of judgment. By inspiring in our hearts love to our neighbors as to ourselves, He strongly incites us to do perfect justice to him in our decision of questions involving his rights. Still the best of men and women who love God with all their hearts, and their neighbors as themselves, may go astray in judgment without a loss of love. Hence, in applying their intellects to the construction of systems of theology, some have founded Calvinism with its five points, unconditional election, a limited atonement, irresistible grace, bound will, and the final perseverance of the saints; and others equally devout and scholarly have constructed Arminianism with its universal atonement conditionally applied, the free will, entire sanctification possible before death, and the peril of a total apostasy from the highest state of grace. George Whitefield preached the first of these doctrines and John Wesley the last. Both were filled with the Spirit and were burning as bright candles of the Lord. Both were used by the Spirit to preach the saving truths of the gospel in such a way as to save multitudes of souls.

We do not teach that error is as good as truth in the production of holy character. We believe that in both the doctrines named there is saving truth because Christ is at the center of both as the object of faith, and salvation consists in a vital union with Him and not in opinions about Him. The maintenance of a good conscience toward God from day to day is essential to the life of faith. The believer must aim at, must be satisfied with, nothing less than this. It is within his reach. Even the Old Testament saints had the witness that they pleased God. By a good conscience we mean an unaccusing conscience, not the assurance that we are exempt from errors in practice arising from misjudgments, but the consciousness that our intentions and aims are unselfish and holy. True spirituality cannot exist unless accompanied by scrupulous conscientiousness, the purpose to do right

at any cost. If believers live as they should, they will find as the Christian life progresses, the testimony of conscience and the voice of the Holy Spirit becoming identical. As we have before intimated, the conscience is the activity of the Spirit of God, on the plane of nature, as Creator and Preserver. In regeneration and sanctification the Spirit works on the plane of grace, as the Reconstructor aiming to restore what sin had defiled.

This is the place to set up safety guards against the danger of a fanatical conscience, which is sometimes associated with extreme and erroneous views respecting the guidance of the Spirit. We lay down the following principles:

1. The Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart does not supersede the activity of our own reason, judgment and moral sense in the decision of practical questions,

2. While the Holy Spirit's testimony to the fact of adoption, including pardon, is direct and infallible when corroborated by the fruit of the Spirit, His guidance in the conduct of life is not designed to be sole and infallible, but in connection with the inspired Word, our own common sense, divine Providences and the godly judgment of Christian people.

3. No guidance is of the Holy Spirit which collides with the Bible inspired by the Spirit. In such collision the Holy Scriptures must be followed in preference to the supposed leading of the Spirit.

4. The Holy Spirit, so named because it is His office to create and conserve holiness, never leads into sin, nor to doctrines which belittle sin by denying its exceeding sinfulness and its desert of eternal punishment, or by weakening the motives to repentance.

5. It being the office of the Spirit to glorify Christ, no teaching that disparages His divinity as the only Saviour can come from the Spirit.

6. It being the work of the Spirit to regenerate and to sanctify, the declaration of any substitute for the new birth and holiness cannot be approved by the Spirit of truth, much less can it be inspired by Him.

7. In practical matters, the province of mutable morality, where fallible intellectual processes are involved and erroneous conclusions are possible, it is a species of fanaticism to ascribe such conclusion to the Holy Spirit.

8. There are two classes of people with whom pastors of churches have difficulty. The first consists of those who consider conscience as infallible beyond the sphere of motives, dispositions and principles, and insist on infallibility in all practical questions, the realm of mutable ethics. They demand that the decisions of the intellect in respect to all moral subjects should be regarded as always right and clothed with the authority of intuitive judgments. Just here is found a fruitful source of most dangerous self-deception and of fanaticism in its various forms and degrees.

The second class includes those who make an analogous mistake in respect to the Holy Spirit. They insist that His infallibility, evinced in His direct witness to adoption, be carried into all questions of everyday life, questions involving intellectual research and the practical reason.

These erroneous claims respecting conscience and the Holy Spirit put these two classes beyond the reach of argument, persuasion and advice. If members of the church, they inevitably become dictatorial, censorious and schismatic.

The Unity of the Spirit: The apostle Paul beseeches the Ephesian church to be diligent, to be constantly keeping that essential unity which the personal Holy Spirit originates in the true Church of Christ. The element or principle in which this oneness is maintained is peace, "the bond of peace." The exhortation to diligence implies that in keeping this unity human agency must be vigorously applied. Why cannot the Holy Spirit alone continue that unity of which He is the sole author? We answer, that where there is an obedient will He could preserve that concord which He has produced, if it were the province of the divine Spirit to assimilate intellects as well as hearts. Grace does not harmonize divergent reasons and conflicting judgments. We are to think and let think, and accept the honest conclusion within the limits of Christian orthodoxy. We must within this sphere agree to disagree, as did John Wesley and George Whitefield on the five points of Calvinism, while still loving each other. The hearts of Barnabas and Paul were united while a practical question on which they differed made it expedient for them to labor for a season in different fields. The diligent endeavor which Paul urges the Ephesians to make is to be directed against magnifying differences of opinion on minor questions into causes of heart alienation. It requires constant effort to keep this threefold maxim:

"In non-essentials liberty;
In essentials unity;
In all things charity."

The various sects which divide the Christian world can keep the unity of the Spirit and dwell in peace so long as they are filled with true charity. How can this fullness be insured? Can we originate Christian love? Can we love at will? No. But having in the divine promises a sufficient ground for faith in Jesus Christ, we may ask for the presence of the Comforter in our hearts, whose office it is "to shed abroad the love of God," which is always attended by love to all who bear His natural image, and especially to all who bear His moral image restored by the new birth. Here is the real basis of Christian unity. It is spiritual and not ecclesiastical; not theological beyond the basal truths of orthodoxy; not sacramental and ceremonial. The manner and significance of water baptism, the Lord's Supper and the number and gradation of ordinations should be regarded as in the sphere of liberty. Is God revealed in His divine Son, Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, and does He communicate Himself to believers in the personal Holy Spirit, the only Sanctifier? This is a doctrinal basis sufficient for the unity of all Christians. It is not possible to dwell in Christian unity with those who deny these fundamentals. They do not dwell in the same sphere with us, since they disclaim belief in the offices of the personal Holy Spirit and disbelieve in the Godhead of Jesus Christ, through whom we receive the Paraclete, who implants regenerating love and perfects sanctifying love, the element of Christian unity. Yet we should, without regard to religious belief, co-operate with all

good citizens to abate and abolish evils which prey upon society, to enlighten the ignorant, to lift up the fallen and to remove snares from the feet of the tempted.

While we believe that society can be most effectively regenerated by regenerating the individual, we should, while applying the truth to secure this end, cherish and express a lively sympathy with all who, though they "follow not us," are trying to cast out devils in the name of Jesus regarded as a mere religious teacher and reformer. They are, so far as the moral well-being of society is concerned, our allies in the great battle with the hosts of the evil one, though they are fighting with bows and arrows when they might be firing Remington rifles. But it must be borne in mind that Christian unity, as Dean Alford well says, "is conditioned and limited by the truth; and is not to be extended to those who are enemies and impugnors of the truth;" who reject the real Christ and preach a phantom Jesus, and whose morals are as corrupt as their faith is false. To have fellowship with such a man is to be a "partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 11).

It is alleged by some that the fullness of the Holy Spirit received by faith in Christ's Pentecostal promise does not unite, but rather divides local churches. This is not true where the entire membership receive their full heritage. The members of such churches are welded together in the closest possible unity, such as extorted admiration even from persecutors. "Behold how these Christians love one another." Such a church is indeed a spiritual brotherhood.

One with our brethren here in love,
And one with saints that are at rest,
And one with angel hosts above,
And one with God forever blessed.

But where part of a church are only "nominal Christians," "baptized worldlings," who either never knew the Lord Jesus as their Saviour or have fallen from grace, there arises a division, caused not by the Holy Ghost, but by those professors who resist Him in His work of purification. This is what Christ Himself predicted. The founder of Christianity, in putting down the kingdom of Satan whose works He came to destroy, brought disturbance and division to every family, every synagogue, every city and every social organization, a part of whose members rejected Him while a part received Him as both Saviour and Lord. Real living Christianity is always a disturber of worldliness and sin, bringing a sword on the earth.

It is the mission of the Paraclete to reprove the world of sin, and if the world has been received into the Church it must be convicted of sin wherever it is found. Otherwise the Spirit would be unfaithful to His mission. He did not come down from heaven to promote discord, but peace on the basis of truth and purity. The resisting party desires peace by being let alone in sin. On whom should the blame rest? Who is responsible for the division and contention? Certainly not those who receive the message which is promotive of the object for which the Church was founded. This is to help its members to become Christlike. Those who reject this office of the Spirit to conform believers to the image of the Son of God are the disturbers of the unity and peace of the Church, and not those who live in harmony with the purpose of its founder.

It often is true that a part of a church, frequently a small minority, have the scriptural ideal of what constitutes true prosperity and real strength, namely, a firm grip upon God's promises and the presence in the church of the converting and sanctifying power from week to week; a zeal for the salvation of souls however poor and submerged in vice; a willingness to give for the support of the gospel from love to its author; and an abhorrence of worldly devices for raising money by appealing to selfishness, to appetite, to frivolity and doubtful amusements. Christ is dishonored when His gospel is treated as not worthy of support for its own sake. The Holy Spirit is grieved when various sensual lures and baits, often in their character repugnant to the spirit and purpose of Christianity, are employed to support the gospel of Christ. When the spiritual few lift up their voice, protesting against yoking the world and the Church to draw the car of the gospel, instead of cheerful though self-denying gifts, the majority often are disposed to unfavorable criticism of their conscientious and spiritual brethren, creating a chasm between the members. In such a case, which is not imaginary, the Holy Spirit is not the cause of the division, but rather the absence of the Holy Spirit from the hearts of a part of the church creates the schism in the body of Christ, the visible Church. The cure is a universal baptism of the Spirit.

There are other occasions for dissensions threatening the unity of the Church. One of these is partialities and preferences for preachers, one running to hear logical Paul and another desiring to listen to rhetorical Apollos, and still another admiring the earnest and impulsive Cephas. The remedy is to turn the thoughts away from the heralds of salvation to the divine personage who is dwelling in the temple of each believing heart. This was Paul's remedy for the strifes and divisions in Corinth. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16) When the Church knows experimentally the indwelling Paraclete, dissensions cease and unity is insured.

Above the mists there are altitudes of Christian experience where believers see eye to eye. Intellectual differences which once stood between them like impassable mountains now seem to their downward gaze like molehills. It is possible to dwell amid the Alpine sublimities of truth so long as to drop our small measuring rods and to acquire larger ones commensurate with the grandeurs about us. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to lift aspiring believers to such Pisgah heights as Paul was familiar with when he prayed that the Ephesians "may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:18, A.R.V.). Wherever this prayer is answered there will be Christian unity.

Plunged in the Godhead's deepest sea,
And lost in its immensity.

Trifles will not unhinge and divide a company of such believers.

In His high-priestly prayer (John 17) Jesus prays for His disciples, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." There are two kinds of church unity-mechanical like the staves of a barrel held together by external pressure of hoops; and vital, like the roots, trunk and branches of a tree unified by the mysterious inward force which we call life. For which of these did Jesus

pray? We find our answer in these words which He had just uttered, "I am the true vine" (John 15:1). He prayed for vital unity, the only oneness worth praying for. This is infinitely superior to that illusory thing after which many are striving, a church unity through an exterior governmental uniformity. Partisan unity is a good machine for developing political power, but it cannot be used by the great unifier, the Giver and Lord of life, the Holy Spirit. It is He who unites all regenerate souls to Christ, and hence to one another, by His creative and vitalizing touch, drawing all into a marvelous oneness, "a oneness spiritually organic, in which each personality, while quite exempt from invasion, falls under the power of a divine cohesion whose results in spiritual harmony of life and action will develop forever." (Moule.) The invisible church is always one body, of which the risen Christ is the Head. It would be a pleasant thing to have the invisible exactly commensurate with the visible containing all the members of the invisible church and no others. But under the present dispensation this can never be, because the doorkeeper of the invisible is the heart-knowing Spirit, and the doorkeepers of the visible Church are fallible men.

"We profess to desire earnestly the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but we shall do well to note that one of the first things which the Holy Spirit will aim to produce in us will be this Christlike love to the brethren. How many brethren in Christ are now effectually separated from you by a high wall of social position, a wall of conventionality that has been reared by Christian pride? Were Christ's mysterious and unfathomable love to them to find its way, perchance, into your heart, how would it laugh at the huge hindrance of this wall, and by a breath cause it to dissolve into the ambient air! This is no hypothesis. In lands where the Spirit of God is poured out we are told of the sudden and beautiful flowing together of social streams that have flowed separately on for generations. Love like that which Jesus manifested to the Samaritan woman and to the woman who was a sinner, has now found new exhibitions of itself." (G. Bowen.)

Enlargement of Heart by the Holy Spirit: It was the Psalmist who, according to the Septuagint version, testifies: "I ran in the way of Thy commandments, when Thou didst enlarge my heart." In his early spiritual life there was in this Old Testament saint the same straitness, slowness and lack of momentum which characterize young Christians in modern times. His service had been enforced by the law and its penalties. Duty was a word which had not been written over and almost concealed by the superimposed capitals which spell LOVE. But it seems there was a crisis in his religious life where constraint ends and joyous liberty begins; where irksomeness disappears and spontaneity in service is a permanent characteristic. The crisis which separates these two experiences is the enlargement of the heart. This is a figure for what St. John calls "perfect love," and which St. Paul elsewhere describes as "the love of God ... shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," though he once, at least, employs the Old Testament phrase: "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged." Reverse the order of these clauses, and we have the cause and the effect. A full heart makes an unloosed tongue. The inquiry is all-important, When is this crisis reached? Some say: "Never this side the dying bed." But no Scripture proof of this dismal doctrine is ever given. It is not true that the believing soul must be a partly filled goblet till it is overflowed by the waters of the river of death. Others say: All souls at the new birth are deluged with love to the brim, a love that drives their chariot wheels as swiftly as the mysterious electric current drives our streetcars up and down our tri-mountain city. Such a steady motive power is not the experience of multitudes, yea, the vast majorities who are truly regenerate. Their inertia is great and the impelling power is feeble. Indeed, something worse than inertia is to be overcome; a strong opposition often arises within,

which it takes all their strength to overcome. They have not a heart at leisure from itself to concentrate upon the work of God. True it is that a few Christians, like John Fletcher, very soon after their birth into the kingdom, because of a correct apprehension of their privilege in the dispensation of the Spirit, are deluged with divine love and become giants in faith. The mass of believers are mere babes in spiritual development. They see days of great weakness and are often on the verge of surrender to the foe. Some, alas, throw away their arms and run away from the fight and never renew the battle. Others fight all their lives with foes in their own hearts and never overcome and cast them out. They have been told by their preachers that this war in the members is the normal Christian life. Hence, believing their preachers instead of the Word of God, they limit His power by their unbelief, and never gladly run, but always sadly drag themselves along the heavenly way.

This large class of Christians need enlightenment and encouragement, and not denunciation. They need to dwell in thought upon "the exceeding great and precious promises," that they may have an experience of the "exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe." They need to lock arms with St. Paul and walk through his glorious epistles, and get his large view of the extent of Christ's saving power, since He has sent down the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. They should study the new Greek words which Paul coined to express the fullness of divine grace and the wealth of privilege which are the heritage of those who fully believe; such as that translated by "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37); "much more abound" (Rom. 5:20, II Cor. 7:4); "and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love" (I Tim. 1:14, A.R.V.). Especially should they ponder that declaration of God's ability to save, found in II Cor. 9:8, in which are two "abounds" and five "alls" -- "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

They should daily repeat St. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, emphasizing each petition, especially the ascription at the close, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly [superabundantly above the greatest abundance, A. Clarke] above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20). There is not sufficient familiarity with the promises on the part of professed Christians. while unbelievers neglect the threatenings, believers are prone to neglect the promises of the Holy Scriptures. Again, the growing failure to magnify the Holy Spirit results in constraint and the legal spirit, instead of the freedom of the evangelical spirit, inspiring courage to run through troops of foes.

How many so-called evangelical Christians there are whose creed is practically as defective as was that of the first believers in Ephesus: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" as receivable into the heart. This important item dropped out of a Christian's faith palsies his tongue, paralyzes his hands and enfeebles his feet. If he is a preacher, his message will be delivered in the weakness of uncertainty and doubt. Splendid rhetoric and oratorical tones and attitudes are beggarly substitutes for the unction of the Holy Ghost. The anointed pulpit will always be mighty. The Spirit inspires fearlessness, imparts freedom of utterance, enkindles zeal and unconquerable love of souls. All of these are elements of genuine eloquence. They furnish the man, the subject and the occasion.

The formal prayer meeting would be transformed by the enlargement of the heart. Dumbness, the penalty of unbelief (Luke 1:20), will find a ready and glad utterance, and the dry harangue will be replaced by the hallelujah.

Let the heart of Protestantism be enlarged by the fullness of the Comforter, and rivers of salvation would flow out unto the ends of the earth, vitalizing those organizations which He can use, and sweeping away those which have been devised as substitutes for His regenerating and sanctifying power.

How intimate is the connection between efficiency and success in saving souls and the fullness of the Spirit, may be seen in the study of the lives of those among the laity and the ministry who have instrumentally turned many to righteousness. It is an open secret that their suasive power dated from the hour when their hearts were enlarged by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

From this experience in the city of New York in answer to the prayers of a few consecrated women, Dwight L. Moody dates the beginning of his highest efficiency as an evangelist. This made Mrs. Catherine Booth's preaching so pungent in convicting of sin among the middle and upper classes in the West End of London; while by the same mighty power as a conscious experience, her husband, Gen. Booth, was conquering the slums in the East End of that city of nearly five millions of souls. Dr. Finney, after the Spirit anointed him, was like an electric dynamo from which streams of power went forth whenever he stood up to preach, and sometimes from his speechless presence. Benjamin Abbott, converted late in life, so extremely illiterate that he preached on the "oyster man," misreading "austere man," preached in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland under the anointing of the Spirit with so great success that thousands were added to the Lord. A layman by the name of Carpenter was comparatively a cipher in the Presbyterian church until he was filled with the Holy Ghost, when he became, through personal effort, the most successful winner of souls in his generation. He drew men to Christ to the number of several thousands as estimated at his funeral. These are a few instances out of myriads in which the baptism of the Spirit has given all the qualities requisite for moving souls from sin unto Christ, love, self-sacrifice, persistence, faith, fearlessness, tenderness and sympathy. We should have mentioned joyfulness as an element of great power in drawing sinners to salvation. Joy always attends the fullness of the Holy Spirit. It differs from all other kinds of happiness which arise from a pleasant environment and depend on things external and hence changeable and transient. The joy of the Holy Ghost is internal, abiding and eternal. The joy of men and women pelted with brickbats and rotten eggs, taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, has a strange power to convince the persecutors of the truth of the gospel, on the principle that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

THE GOSPEL OF THE COMFORTER

By Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

An abridgment by Ross L Price, D.D.

Chapter 6

THE BELIEVER AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Knowing the Holy Spirit: In what sense may believers know the Comforter? Jesus, who sends Him, assured His disciples that they should know Him because of His intimate relation to them, dwelling with them and ultimately being in them. The indwelling would be true after His future coming. If we fulfill the condition, which is love to Christ certified by obedience, we shall receive the Comforter and shall know Him. Of course we shall know when we receive so important a person. It will be a crisis marking a new era in our lives. It is evident that this is not inferential knowledge, though this is important as a confirmation. It comes from noting the fruits of the Spirit described in the Bible and comparing them with the Christian graces observed in ourselves, love, joy, peace, etc. Knowledge of God in the scriptural sense is assimilative. No man can truthfully say that he knows the Comforter when these fruits of the Spirit are absent. But knowledge of a person includes more than an acquaintance with his works. I had known the military career of Gen. Grant, and had read his brief dispatches after his battles, but I had no personal acquaintance with that great soldier till one day in June, 1865, he permitted me to be presented to him and to shake hands with him on the verandah of a Saratoga hotel. I then for the first time knew Ulysses S. Grant.

In like manner we may have such a secondhand knowledge of the Paraclete as we find in the Holy Scriptures and in the testimony of persons filled with the Spirit, while strangers to the personal Holy Spirit. It is one thing to know much about Him; it is quite a different thing to have an intuitive perception of Him, and to feel the thrilling and transforming touch of His hand, and to commune with Him by day and by night more intimately than with any earthly friend. This is the kind of knowledge invoked in the so-called apostolic benediction. We do not understand that in our knowledge of the Holy Spirit we differentiate Him from the Father and the Son. In our present state it is enough for us to receive the love of God and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, commingled in one blissful stream descending through the channel of the Holy Ghost.

In the scheme of revelation the Father revealed Himself in His incarnate Son. After His visible form was received by the cloud which hid Him from the eyes of His gazing disciples on the day of His ascension, the Paraclete was sent down to testify of the absent God-Man, to keep Him in the world's thought and to glorify Him who came to glorify the Father. Hence the Paraclete glorifies both the Father and the Son when He glorifies the Son. Hence Paul's prayer for the Ephesian church, "That ... the Father ... may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him" (Eph. 1:17). This and other texts show that it is not the mission of the Comforter to give prominence to Himself, but to Christ, to whom He bears witness. Thus "when a messenger comes to tell a king, when a witness gives a testimony for his friend, neither speaks of himself. And yet, without doing so, both the messenger and the witness, in the very fact of giving their evidence, draw our attention to themselves and claim our recognition of their presence and trustworthiness. And just so the Holy Spirit, when He testifies of Christ and glorifies Him, must be known and acknowledged in His divine

commission and presence." (Andrew Murray.) It is in this sense that we are to have a knowledge of the Paraclete while He holds up the light for us to see the Father in His adorable Son.

The apostles knew nothing of an unconscious incoming and indwelling of the personal Paraclete. Unconscious regeneration in water-baptism and unconscious reception of the Holy Spirit through a bishop's hands in confirmation are doctrines lacking Biblical proof, the only proof possible after the exclusion of consciousness. The philosophy of the mind seems to require that the introduction of another personality to me, a person, must be with my assured knowledge. If a human enters my library and addresses me while writing these words, I know it. Shall I not know it if a divine person knocks at the door of my heart and, at my invitation, enters? Will not His personal presence be self-evidencing? Will not His testimony to my adoption prove that He is a Person because He has faculties responsive to my own? If He takes up His abode in me, and converses with me and inspires love in me to Him and the other Persons whom He represents, shall I not be conscious of His personal presence?

Love is a spiritual energy which goes forth only toward persons, never toward things. We admire pictures and statuary, but we love persons only. "It is because the presence of the Spirit as the indwelling teacher in every believer is so little known and recognized in the Church, and because, as the result of this, the workings of the Spirit are greatly limited, that there is so much difficulty and doubt, so much fear and hesitation about the recognition of the virtues of the Spirit." (Andrew Murray.) This spiritual incertitude, these hazy Christian experiences and weakening and distressing doubts in respect to fundamentals-the truth of Christ and personal salvation through Him-are the natural product of nebulous preaching on the subject of the offices of the Holy Spirit. This defective preaching comes from a negative experience of the fullness of the Spirit. Conversions take the type of doctrines. The Wesleys, after a long and painful search, received the direct witness of the Spirit to the forgiveness of sins. They immediately began to preach this doctrine, strange to that era of spiritual death, though shining in the New Testament as clearly as the midday sun. People were converted by thousands, of whom John Wesley testified that ninety-nine out of every hundred could tell the exact time of their saving acceptance of Christ.

The offices of the Holy Spirit are not now so prominently and constantly held up before the people in the ministrations of the pulpit. What is the remedy? Let the pulpit be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Let preacher and layman who desire to know the promised Paraclete and to realize His indwelling, study the teaching of the Bible on this theme, especially the promises in the fourth Gospel. Gather these promises together and study them earnestly, and then turn to the Pentecostal fulfillment in the Acts, and to the full development and application of this doctrine by the apostolic writers, especially John and Paul. Approach these epistles athirst to find the artesian well of "water springing up into everlasting life," and to drink evermore therefrom. Study prayerfully and with faith all that the Spirit of inspiration has put on record respecting Himself and His indwelling and blessed work in your heart. Study in dependence on the Spirit, who alone can unlock the Word that He has inspired. Study with a will ready to follow whither the Spirit may lead, and with a complete self-surrender to God and that perfect self-effacement which Paul describes as a double crucifixion, "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

Consecration is indispensable to the successful study of this high theme. It clarifies the intellect, dispels prejudices and misconceptions, and unifies and strengthens all the faculties. In this attitude of hearty consent to the leading of the Spirit, obedience to Christ and crucifixion of the flesh, the persevering believer will soon find the Spirit working in him, first as a searchlight revealing impurities and mixed motives never discovered before. Then, if the will consents to their removal, the Spirit will entirely cleanse the temple of the heart and permanently fill it with His glorious presence. He will beautify His sanctuary with the entire galaxy of Christian virtues. He will strengthen its walls and make them impregnable to all assaults from without, and He will insure loyalty within by His constant indwelling who "yearneth for us even unto jealous envy" (James 4:5, A.R.V., margin).

We must remember that in both the natural and the spiritual world knowledge is preceded by faith. We must believe the Holy Ghost before we can know Him. Every altitude of higher knowledge must be the result of a stronger trust. Faith must be the habit of the soul that aspires after constant growth. Faith ever has to do the invisible and the seemingly unreal. The Paraclete is unseen to the natural eye, and the inner eye of reason does not recognize His existence. Hence faith is the only door for the Spirit to enter and the only atmosphere in which He can dwell. There is no way of knowing the Holy Spirit but by possessing Him and being possessed by Him, just as there is no way of knowing life but by living. In fact the Holy Spirit is the life of the believing human spirit. The spiritual life is as real to consciousness as the natural life.

The declaration of Christ is, "Ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." We see no form. We hear no sound. We feel the touch of no hand. The Spirit does not address any one of the five senses when He creates the soul anew. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned by minds quickened into spiritual life by the omnipotent Spirit, the giver of life. In regeneration the Spirit is inscrutable, His act of new creation is to the subject a fact, a something done in an unfathomable depth below his consciousness. This fact is recognized only by its effects. He knows that he is a new man, that he is fundamentally changed in all his tendencies, that he is released from his accusing conscience, that his past sins are forgiven and that he is no longer cowering beneath the wrath of God, but basking in the sunshine of His love. He no longer thinks of God as a police judge sentencing him to a deserved punishment, but as a loving Father. The filial feeling has been suddenly and mysteriously inspired in his bosom, and he hears with his spiritual ear new words sounding in his heart, "Abba, Father." Almost involuntarily he utters them with his lips. He is conscious of a spiritual transformation.

The personal agent he does not perceive. In fact the personality of your most intimate friend you have never directly seen. Personality is spiritual and is recognized only by its effects-words, smiles and other actions. You may therefore know the Holy Spirit's personality by His works in your own consciousness, as certainly as a son may know his father with whom he has daily intercourse. We say this to show that spiritual knowledge has the same certitude as our knowledge of men and things around us.

Some may be inclined to ask another question, How do we recognize the Holy Spirit? How do we know that it is He and not some lying spirit who is speaking to us? The how of all knowledge is mysterious. The philosophers are not agreed in the method of our knowledge of the external world.

Some assert that we know only our own sensations and ideas, and therefore we are not sure that there is a material world external to our minds. These idealists are inclined to apply the same reasoning to Christian experience and to insist that it is all subjective in its origin, that there is no God in it, that all the changes supposed to be wrought by a divine person outside of us, regenerating, forgiving, witnessing, sanctifying and indwelling, are from hidden causes in our own minds. This kind of reasoning would deny the existence of any human personality outside of ourselves, as well as any material existence. It would reduce all phenomena to our own consciousness and ourselves to a string of sensations. All these absurdities must follow the admission that all our religious experiences are only varying states of our own thoughts and feelings with no external cause. Such a conclusion we are not prepared to accept. When the morning light dispels the darkness, I know that the sun has arisen, and I do not need a candle to see him rise. So when amid the gloom of condemnation for my sins, while trusting in Jesus Christ, a light suddenly shoots into my mind and a voice within cries, "Abba, Father," and the feeling of dread is suddenly changed to filial love toward God, I know that a divine messenger is announcing forgiveness of my sins. This divine sunrise is self-evidencing. I need no rush-light of human philosophy or testimony to certify it. What has taken place is that my dead soul has been made alive. This life has quickened my dormant power of spiritual perception, so that I know by unerring intuition the presence of God the Holy Spirit. "To know the Spirit," says Murray, is the divine foundation of certainty." Christian experience rests upon the same basis with mathematics and all philosophy -- "self-evident truth, the activity of the immanent God in the human soul." (Joseph Cook.)

Testings of the Holy Spirit: The great condition on which the Paraclete is given to any believer is love to Christ evinced by obedience. He may think that he loves Christ and be sadly mistaken. His Christ may be a false Christ, a figment of his own imagination, a liberalistic Christ who will save all men on their own terms, or a fragmentary Christ with justice and all the sterner qualities omitted. There is many a nominal, but only one real and saving Christ. Hence tests are required to prove whether we are really obedient to the true Christ, whether, in the words of John Wesley, "naked we are willing to follow a naked Saviour." This means whether at the loss of all things-property, friends and reputation -- we will follow a pauper Christ with no hope of any reward this side of the resurrection of the just, and possibly a chance for martyrdom. Will we sell all to buy the pearl of great price? Essentially this test is required of all: "Will you hold all else as cheap, yea, worthless, in comparison with Christ?" The literal divesting ourselves of all our possessions which are necessary to give us a foothold of vantage and usefulness may never be required by the Spirit. Christ required it of but one person. If he had obeyed promptly, I doubt not that Christ would have taken the will for the deed and would have made him His steward to hold and administer the estate in the interest of his Master, honoring every draft He should make.

In the nature of the case there are definite limits within which the Spirit applies His tests. He never requires us to do wrong, to violate our own sense of right. To deny this is to open the door for the worst forms of fanaticism and to justify the most flagrant iniquity. It will not do to cite the command to Abraham to sacrifice his son. He may have deemed it his parental right to take the life he had imparted. This instance affords no argument against our position, for the whole transaction, the command and the interposition, are on the plane of the supernatural. Nor does the Spirit require any one to disobey the code of minor morals, good manners.

It should be noted that tests may be presented by Satan when a believing soul is aspiring to receive the fullness of the Spirit -- tests repulsive and offensive, in order to discourage a perfect self-surrender to God. At such times a cultivated Christian woman says that she is always confronted with the question whether she will, uninvited and unauthorized, make public addresses for Christ in the waiting-rooms of railroad stations, hotel parlors and steamboat saloons. Her sense of propriety prompts her to say "No." Another well-balanced woman is asked, when in the act of consecrating all to God, whether she is willing to be like some slattern who professes to be wholly the Lord's, and deems it a sin to make her toilet before a mirror. Her good taste says "No." A man of a bilious temperament, subject to wasting fevers, is asked, while in the act of supreme surrender to Christ, whether he is willing to go to the Congo Mission. Knowing his disability and the adverse opinion of medical experts, and not being eager for a martyr's crown in six months, he says "No." In all these cases this negative answer is used by the tempter to shake the believer's trust in Christ and cheat him of his full heritage. What he should do is to put all these questions aside and to promise that after receiving the desired blessing he will follow his best light derived from the indwelling Spirit, the Holy Scriptures, his own God-given common sense, his own abilities, his circumstances, providential openings and shuttings, and the godly judgment of the church to which he belongs. By thus doing he will thwart the adversary and receive the Sanctifier.

Says F. B. Meyer: "Expect the Holy Ghost to work in, with and for you. When a man is right with God, God will freely use him. There will rise up within him impulses and inspirations, strong strivings, strange resolves. These must be tested by Scripture and prayer, and if evidently of God they must be obeyed. But there is this perennial source of comfort: God's commands are enablings. He will never give us a work to do without showing exactly how and when to do it, and He will give the precise strength and wisdom we need. Do not dread to enter this life because you fear that God will ask you to do something you cannot do. He will never do that. If He lays aught on your heart, He will do so uninvited; as you pray about it, the impression will continue to grow, so that presently, as you look up to know what He wills you to say or do, the way will suddenly open, and you will probably have said the word or done the deed almost unconsciously. Rely on the Holy Ghost to go before you to make the crooked places straight and the rough places smooth. Do not bring the legal spirit of 'must' into God's free service. 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.' Let your life be as effortless as theirs, because your faith shall constantly hand over all difficulties and responsibilities to your ever-present Lord. There is no effort to the branch in putting forth the swelling clusters of grapes -- the effort would be to keep them back."

But we must be discriminating in this matter, and not ascribe to the evil spirit tests which are for our benefit presented by the good Spirit. Says George Bowen: "The Spirit of God sometimes tests the peace of Christians in this way: A man has been for years enjoying a good measure of what he regards as Christian peace. Suddenly he is made to see himself by the light of a most intense holiness, and his former conceptions of his sinfulness and of the evil of all sin are augmented a thousandfold. Straightway his peace is gone. His faith utterly fails. He finds himself sinking in deep waters. The mention of the righteousness of Christ fails to satisfy him. The Christ that he has been looking at all along was one that would save from a moderate amount of sin, such as he then knew of in himself; he has yet to become acquainted with a Christ able and willing to save from such a dire ruin as he is now conscious of. His past peace, his past faith, are now ascertained to have partaken very largely of the nature of delusion. Happy for him that he has discovered the inadequacy of his

faith while it is yet the day of grace! Sad, unspeakably sad, is the fate of many whose faith is not thus tested in their lifetime."

The great danger is that Christians will test themselves, not by the Holy Scriptures illumined and applied by the Holy Spirit, but by the average type of Christian character and attainment. This average is usually low, and this kind of testing, "measuring themselves by themselves," tends to a still lower standard quite near to that vague and indistinct line of demarcation which shades off into the world. We cannot believe that God is pleased with an average piety. Stalker says that the Hebrew prophets addressed nations and were satisfied with national obedience, but "Jesus Christ discovered the individual." Hence He can be satisfied only with marked individuality in the development of all the graces of the Spirit.

Let no man deem it profitable to hide from himself the evil lurking in his own heart. The peace thus secured will not long endure. It is an illusion. No one can afford to rest in a treacherous peace. Absolute safety lies in receiving from the Spirit of truth the intense light that He sheds upon sin, the disease, and upon Christ, the unfailing Physician if called in season.

Walking in the Comfort of the Holy Ghost: This is designed to be the normal life of the believer. The Holy Spirit has two distinct kinds of activity in His earthly mission. His delightful work is to comfort, strengthen and cheer Christians. His strange work is to convict sinners-I call it strange because it is strongly allied to the wrath of God. It has been well said that judgment is His strange work, in which a God of love finds no pleasure. I cannot think that the Holy Spirit finds gratification in administering rebuke to those who sin against a holy God. It is sad to think that even in the case of many who have been born of the Spirit, He exercises toward them more frequently the unpleasant office of conviction than the pleasant office of approval and comfort. How few disciples there are who know the Holy Ghost in the latter office. What is His comfort? He brings into our hearts, if we fully believe in Jesus, the glorified Giver, above all, the consciousness that we are pleasing the Father by the power of the Son; that we are reconciled children making glad our Father. "How long," asks one, "will Christians introvert the offices of the Holy Spirit, and oblige Him to be in their daily walk more convincing than comforting?" Of what sin does the Spirit convict? Unbelief. It is only because of unbelief that so many Christians, looking back a day, a week or a year, have not the testimony in their souls that their life has pleased God; and so the Spirit is obliged again and again, in fulfilling the law of love by which He acts, to take up His office of convicting of sin. At last many children of God lose all faith in the possibility that they may for any length of time live a life pleasing to their heavenly Father. Then they begin to look in the Bible for a justification of this wretched lowering of the standard of holy living and diminishing of the glorious privilege of living in cloudless communion with the Father and the Son while walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. This they find in misinterpreting the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans and a few other perverted texts in Paul's Epistles, and one in I John, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Having dragged the standard down to the low level of "necessary" daily sinning, they have exchanged the comfort of the Spirit for conviction-a worse bargain than Homer speaks of when a certain man exchanged his gold for brass, or "brassed his gold." Where the members of any church that have thus exchanged their gold have become a majority and their influence is preponderating, it is natural for them to delight to see their degraded standard set up in their pulpit. The old standard is now considered as obsolete. It is an uncomfortable rebuke.

Thus, in many instances, the standard is changed. The wishes of the church mold the preacher. Demosthenes tells the Athenians that they make their orators. They speak what the churches wish to hear. In this way a generation of Christians is born into the church who have never heard of the strange doctrine of walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost under cloudless skies, victorious over every willful sin, and delivered from the former intestine war-the flesh striving against the Spirit. This answers our question why so few, relatively, in modern times testify to a continuous walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

But this is a blessing that is not dependent on the majorities. The condition of its existence is not "a count of heads and a clack of tongues." It rests on faith in the promise of our ascended and glorified Christ, appearing in heaven for me today and sending down the greatest gift that men can receive or heaven can send.

It may be said that "this style of life is practicable for only a very few, such as ministers whose minds are always filled with gospel truth and who are not jostled about in contact with rough men, and for retired old men and women living on the interest of safely invested funds; these, having few perplexities and vexations, may be able to live in serene and uninterrupted communion with God through the conscious abiding of the Comforter. But this is impossible with merchants making hundreds of bargains every day; with operatives in mills, in close contact with many who believe not in Jesus Christ and obey not the moral principles of His gospel; with mothers shut up with a troop of quarrelsome children, and with many other classes of people who have a hard lot in life." Can we quote any instances of walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost amid such perplexities? We find many such in church history, but we will cite only two, one a clergyman and the other a layman. The record of the first is this: "In stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one [a hundred and ninety-five]. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, . . in cold and nakedness," "by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report," What is his testimony to his own interior life while running the gauntlet through these perils and sufferings? "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content; in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want." From whom did he learn this wonderful secret? Not from the stoics, but from the indwelling Spirit of Christ. For he says, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:11-13, A.R.V.).

The business of our illustrious layman, that of a premier managing the vast, varied and conflicting interests of an empire of a hundred and twenty provinces, would naturally be regarded as incompatible with a high degree of spirituality. But Daniel, though living in the pre-Pentecostal era and watched by eagle-eyed jealousy, "three times a day went into his chamber, and opened his windows toward heaven, to breathe the heavenly air." As Dr. Bushnell believes that Socrates and Plato were regenerated "by a special mission of the Holy Ghost," so we believe that Daniel was sustained in his unconquerable fidelity to the God of Abraham by the special indwelling of the Third Person of the Trinity.

We live in an age when liberalists and agnostics covertly undermine Christianity by the insinuation that its principles are ideal and altogether too lofty to be perfectly obeyed by men and women who have been crippled and diminished in their moral capacity by sin. This is the view from the plane of naturalism. The supernaturalism of the indwelling Spirit declares that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Glory to God!

The doctrine of Jesus Christ respecting human responsibility is that it is measured by our original talents and favorable or unfavorable environment. Where much is given, much will be required.

The patriarchal dispensation afforded little religious knowledge. Contrasted with our privileges it was as the light of the moon to the sun. We may discover our responsibility in the study of a patriarchal character which adorned the earth more than three thousand years before the day of Pentecost.

The phrase, "walked with God," is in the Bible applied to only two individuals of the human race whose names are known, Enoch and Noah (Gen. 5:22; 6:9). "It must be distinguished," says the celebrated commentator, Delitzsch, "from walking before God and walking after God," since both the latter phrases smack somewhat of the constraint of a legal service. Yet they are used to indicate genuine righteousness and blamelessness of life "under the law" -- to use a Pauline expression for the obedience prompted by fear rather than love. Servility seems to be implied in walking after any one as the servant follows his master. The same feeling is implied in walking before a superior under whose eye we act impelled by a sense of awe and of espionage instead of the gladness and freedom of filial affection walking hand in hand with a loving Father. Walking with a person implies not only a kind of social equality, but the most confidential intercourse, each unbosoming himself to the other in the closest communion. Enoch's walk with God is recorded twice, as something indeed extraordinary, but not impossible to every man in every age. It is put on record for universal imitation, not as a prodigy preternatural and abnormal. It was designed to be the norm or model of every human character. Let us now consider how much walking with God implies.

1. It certainly evinces perfect harmony. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" There was a complete concurrence of the human will with the divine will. Enoch could have used the words of Faber:

I worship thee, sweet will of God!
And all thy ways adore,
And every day I live I seem
To love thee more and more.

There are some who insist that this delightful accord of the believer's will with God's will in all the allotments of life, both painful and delightful, is only a beautiful ideal which can never be realized on the earth. It certainly never can be realized on the plane of nature, nor can it be fully experienced on the plane of that initial grace into which we are brought by the new birth. It is possible only to that fullness of the Spirit which sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, filling it to the brim. It is easy for the child who perfectly love his parents cheerfully to surrender to their commands.

2. Enoch must also have had perfect trust in God. If he who comes to God must have faith, much more must he who locks arms and keeps step with Him have the utmost confidence in his divine companion. Mutual confidence is the root of friendship and the indispensable requisite to the true wedlock of two souls. This unquestioning faith settles the question of divine guidance. In Enoch's walk he left to God the choice of the way. Thus he was relieved of a source of much of the perplexity of life -- painful solicitude respecting the way he should take at every crossroad in the journey of life, and often distressing regret for making a wrong choice. Like Enoch we are all strangers on the earth, walking in a path new to us and having many pleasant but fatal bypaths. To those who wish for unerring guidance there is an infallible Guide whose services are gratuitously rendered to complete trust. As perfect love casts out all tormenting fear, so perfect confidence casts out distressing doubt.

3. Enoch must have had a very joyful sense of security in his walk with God, being freed from all uncertainties respecting the direction of his journey and all fear of foes in ambush. By day and by night he could say to his omniscient and omnipotent conductor, "Where Thou art guide, no ill can come." Complete confidence in Him can walk straight forward regardless of the roar of the lion, the paw of the bear, the tooth of the tiger and the fang of the serpent. Here we have uncovered the secret of the fearlessness of Paul, the courage of Luther, the calmness of Wesley facing furious mobs from one end of England to the other, and the heroism of "the noble army of martyrs" in all the Christian ages.

4. Enoch was characterized by a holiness so perfect as to need no finishing touch in death and no quarantine in purgatory preparatory to his introduction into a holy heaven. Perhaps God translated Enoch and Elijah to rebuke the Gnostic error that men cannot be perfectly holy in the body, and that death by separating the spirit from "the vile body" falsely so called (see Phil. 3:21, Revised Version) perfectly prepares the believer for the inheritance of the saints in light. We have searched in vain for any scriptural foundation of this doctrine, which discredits the blood of Jesus Christ as the means of cleansing from all sin, and discounts the Holy Spirit as the agent of entire sanctification in the present life.

5. He who is on so intimate terms with our ever-blessed God will enjoy the highest possible degree of happiness. The fact that this great world is too small to satisfy the human soul demonstrates its likeness to God, inasmuch as it has an infinite capacity which only the Infinite One can fill. Fill this infinite capacity with the illimitable and fathomless ocean, the pleroma, "the fulness of him who filleth all in all," and bliss will be supreme and eternal. The vicissitudes of life, from health to sickness, from riches to poverty, from applause to abuse, may ripple the surface of this profound happiness, but they cannot disturb its immeasurable depths. The soul thus drinking from the fountain of felicity is at home everywhere, and sings with Madam Guyon in prison:

"My Lord, how full of sweet content
I pass my years of banishment!
Where'er I dwell, I dwell with Thee,
In heaven, in earth, or on the sea."

What valid excuse have we for not walking with God as closely and as persistently as Enoch walked? Our circumstances are not less favorable. He lived in a pessimistic world rapidly

degenerating and soon to be overwhelmed in the deluge. We live in an optimistic world that is on the up grade, steadily rising in moral tone. He lived before the God-Man appeared on the earth and left for our feet a shining path to an open heaven. He lived before the dispensation of the Comforter, who comes to abide in the believer in Jesus Christ. His dispensation compared with ours is as the light of the stars to the cloudless noonday sun.

He was not exempt from toil and care. While walking with God, he did not dwell apart from society, a celibate in monastic seclusion, but begat sons and daughters, bore the burdens of a father in providing for his family and in disciplining his children and commanding them to obey his precepts. It is quite probable that sometimes he had to secure obedience and respect for his authority by the use of the birch.

In no respect was Enoch's environment equal to ours in promoting communion with God. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews enrolls Enoch among the heroes of faith. There are on the earth today many Enochs with whom God is walking and talking. The purpose of this chapter is to encourage many others to spend their lives in this glorious companionship in heavenward travel, "walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."

Praying to the Holy Spirit: The fact that there are only a few instances of prayer to the Holy Spirit, and these are only when He is named with the other Persons of the Trinity, has led some persons to refrain from praying to the Paraclete. But there are good reasons for the infrequency of prayer to the Third Person of the adorable Trinity.

When we take into consideration the disposition of the Spirit to conceal Himself in magnifying the Son and the Father revealed in the Son, and when we note the fact that the Holy Spirit is the inspirer of the Bible, it is natural that there should be a comparative silence respecting honors ascribed to Himself.

Again to give prominence to His claim to be worshipped might interfere with our dependence on Him to suggest what we should pray for and to make intercession within us. "If it is His special function not only to speak to and deal with, but also to speak and work through, the man whom He renews and sanctifies, we can just so far understand that He the less frequently presents Himself for our articulate adoration." Yet there can be no question of its rightfulness and propriety, inasmuch as His equality with the Father and the Son is assumed in the prescribed formula of baptism: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The form of benediction also implies prayer to the Third Person of the Trinity. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion [communication] of the Holy Ghost, be with you all" (II Cor. 13:14), is an act of adoration to the three alike. The same may be said of the blessing pronounced upon the seven churches in Rev. 1:4, where the perfection of the offices of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in the Hebrew idiom of seven-foldness. It is to be noted also that in this text the Spirit is not mentioned after the Son, but after Him whose name signifies him "which is, and which was, and which is to come," i. e., Jehovah. Says Prof. Moule, "The believer's relation to the Spirit is not so much that of direct adoration as of a reliance which wholly implies it."

The Scriptures ascribe divine titles and attributes to the Holy Spirit equally with the Father and the Son (Acts 5:3-4; Acts 28:25 with Isa. 6:9; Heb. 3:7-9 with Ex. 17:7).

The equality of the three divine Persons in unity is formulated in the Christian covenant and commission: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18-19, A.R.V.).

It should be borne in mind that all orthodox believers must pray to the Holy Spirit when they pray to God. For the Christian concept of God is that in the one divine substance there are three subsistences, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, or three Persons in the one divine nature. This may not be distinctly before the minds of some Christians when they pray. Nevertheless, prayer reaches its full evangelical development and efficiency in the consciousness that through the divine Son we have access by the "one [divine] Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2:18).

Since the Spirit, equal in power and majesty to the Father and the Son, is the agent by whom both touch believing souls and impart the wealth of their love, it is natural that He should also be the object of devotion and that His ministration of grace should be invoked, at least in impassioned ejaculatory prayer.

The law of spiritual growth is by successive uplifts or baptisms of the Spirit. By a study of the Acts of the Apostles we find that the same persons who "were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4) were a few days or weeks afterwards, again in answer to prayer, "all filled with the Holy Ghost" (4:31).

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath;
We enter heaven by prayer.

What is the object for which the believer prays except it be for an ever-increasing fullness of the Spirit?

But did not Christ refer to the Holy Spirit when He said to the woman at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst"? Yes, but the tense of the verb "drinketh" denotes continued appropriation. If the Christian thirsts for any other water, it is because he has ceased to drink of Christ's "living water." Says Bengel, "Truly that water, as far as it depends on itself, has in it an everlasting virtue, and when thirst returns, the defect is on the part of the man, not of the water." The life emanating from Christ must be constantly made our own anew. "He that cometh [continually] to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth [uninterruptedly] on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). Says Tholuck: "The figure means, this water will once for all be received into the inner nature, will be immanent in man, and will attend him through every state of his being, even to eternity. The need of an increase of this water is not thereby excluded."

The Holy Spirit, of which water is a symbol (John 7:39), is a river of life flowing from the Father and the Son (Rev. 22:1) into all hearts open skyward, and incessant prayer for the Spirit keeps our

hearts thus open. "How much more shall your heavenly Father give [be continually giving) the Holy Spirit to them that [constantly] ask him?"

The Freedom of the Spirit: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Cor. 3:17). The words "freedom" and "liberty" are found in the New Testament, but they do not have the meaning which is attached to them in treatises on the Will. It is a remarkable fact that there is no attempt in the Bible to prove human free agency, as there is no demonstration of the existence of God. Both of these fundamental truths are assumed without proof. Moral obligation implies freedom, and consciousness asserts it. This kind of freedom has been called formal freedom, to distinguish it from that real freedom which Christ promises: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Since this freedom is the gift of Christ, it is evident that it is not an attribute of man in his fallen estate. It belongs only to the true believers in the Son of God. It is not a deliverance from any bolts or bars or yoke of necessity outside of us, but from "the law in our members," in the will itself, a uniform tendency to yield to the sway of the depraved sensibilities which give birth to sin. When conscience forbids what inclination strongly desires and evil habit draws us to, there is a collision of forces which, without the intervention of Christ, the great Liberator, invariably ends in bondage. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" This is the universal cry with all thoughtful souls recognizing obligation to the moral law but without help from above to keep it.

They see the right, and they approve it too;
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue.

This produces a degrading sense of servility. One bright moral ideal after another fades away. After each moral defeat the aspirant after true excellence lets down his standard with a self-loathing and wretchedness befitting one who has voluntarily sold himself into slavery. Thus thousands of noble souls who began to climb the mountain with the motto "Excelsior," have begun to descend, having insensibly changed their motto to "Inferior."

There is only one remedy. Some power must enter into them which can harmonize inclination and conscience in such a manner as to enable the man to do just what he delights to do and at the same time to do exactly right. When desire and duty become one, the soul is truly free and truly happy. How is this identity of duty and desire accomplished? The Stoics endeavored to reach the same end by extinguishing the latter, but they failed. God does not lead men up to perfect freedom by mutilation, but by purification. When we desire only God's will, we will delight in His law. There are minds which cannot be subject to God's law. Still they are accountable. They can consent to the reconstruction of their natures by the extinction of carnality and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. They are, through Jesus Christ, endowed with the gracious ability to repent and to receive Him as their Saviour and Lord. This is initial salvation, or prevenient grace. It is for the will to determine whether this shall become real and complete deliverance from the enslavement of depravity. One would suppose that this is the only choice morally possible to a rational being, since all men abhor personal slavery and political bondage. But we need not go far to find abundant proofs that the so-called "natural man" prefers the despotism of sin to the freedom of righteousness. There is no more hopeless condition than delight in spiritual bondage. In a former generation the saddest parents in America were those who, after converting all their possessions into gold to ransom their sailor boy from captivity in Algeria, received back their money from the consul with a message that their son

refused to be redeemed because he preferred the society of his barbarian captors to that of his Christian kindred. He had married a Bedouin wife, contracted nomadic habits, and become fascinated with the pleasures of the lawless Arabs. This is a mirror in which every impenitent sinner may see himself. He is redeemed by One who has paid an infinite ransom; yet for the evanescent and degrading pleasures of an hour he scorns freedom and hugs his chains. He persists in this through all his earthly probation. What would the liberalist do with such a being if he were in supreme authority over him? The question is a fair one. Let there be a candid answer. We have hinted at the way of obtaining spiritual freedom. It is only through the power of Christ, the great Emancipator. Our part is an all-surrendering trust in Him. Says Thomas a Kempis: "My son, thou canst not have perfect liberty unless thou wholly renounce thyself. They are but in fetters, all who merely seek their own interest and are lovers of themselves. Keep this short and complete saying: 'Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave concupiscence, and thou shalt find rest.'" This gives God a chance to do some very needful work inside, even to put His law in the heart. When this is done, the law, instead of a yoke galling the neck, becomes a well-spring of joy. "Thy statutes," says the Psalmist, "have been my songs" -- the Ten Commandments set to music! Only those whose hearts are perfected in love shed abroad by the Holy Spirit can ever learn that tune. It is the first rehearsal on the earth of the new song they are singing in heaven, the song of Moses and the Lamb, the law and the gospel harmonized.

Hitherto we have spoken of the negative side of spiritual freedom. There is a positive side. The love of God filling the soul, and excluding all antagonisms, guarantees the unfettered action of the higher nature, restores the man to himself, and makes him his own master, because God has now perfect sway over his will. This is the gospel paradox--rest under a yoke; Christ's *doulos* (slave) and the Lord's freeman. The free are exhorted to use their liberty as the bondservant of God. This is because the highest freedom is realized when the heart is perfectly captivated by the divine love and the will is completely enthralled by the divine will. Faber seems to have experienced this paradox which prompted his hymn to the divine will:

And He hath breathed into my heart
A special love for thee:
A love to lose my will in His,
And by that loss be free.

But what are we to understand by being free from the law? In answering this question some have fallen into the error of antinomianism, the denial of obligation on the part of the believer to keep the moral law.

1. He is not under the law as the ground of justification, the blood of Christ being his new plea; nor as the motive to service, love to the Lawgiver having taken its place; but he is under the law as the rule of life, although Christianity puts man's spontaneous obedience in the place of the act legally enforced, his independent decision in lieu of legal necessity. Thus love unconsciously fulfills the law. It implants the principle of obedience in the heart so that it is free, unconstrained and natural. This is "the law of liberty" of which St. James speaks. I do not wonder that he calls it the "royal law," i. e., the king of all laws. For he whom the love of Christ constrains in all his acts obeys the highest law in the universe. This is Christian perfection. This is being free indeed. This is the heritage of all

believers. Reader, if you have not received this heritage, the reason is not found in the unwillingness of the executor of Christ's last will and testament, the Holy Spirit, to hand over your portion. You have not fulfilled the conditions of its reception.

We come now to consider spiritual freedom as related to the moral law, and to anchor a buoy over the hidden rock of antinomianism.

The Jews did not make a distinction, as we do, between the ceremonial, the civil, and the moral precepts of the law, but thought that all should be honored by obedience with the same pious regard. As with devout Romanists in our times, the neglect of a mere ceremonial requirement was in heinousness equal to the infraction of a command of the decalogue. It is the use of a term embracing such diverse meanings that makes the intelligent reading of the New Testament difficult. It is the purpose of this section to relieve this difficulty as far as possible. It may not be known to many students of this volume that twelve of its books -- nearly one half -- do not contain the ambiguous word law. These are II Corinthians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, II Timothy, I and II Peter, Jude, 1,11 and III John and Revelation. This is encouraging to those who have sweat in their endeavor to understand St. Paul and harmonize him with James. It may help the reader of the Greek Testament to know that when James uses the word law without the article he designates only the ethical portions of the Mosaic law. It will be of advantage to all Bible students to bear in mind the fact that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the ceremonial part of the law is the prominent idea. It should also be noted that in the other books this term is so often referred to as to show that the writer or speaker has his eye on the ethical part alone as of perpetual obligation, the ceremonial and civil precepts being no longer binding on Christians. It is ethical where it is spoken of as fulfilled by love, as in Rom. 13:8, 10; Gal. 5:14; also where its perpetual validity is declared, as in Matt. 5:18; and also in cases where it is equivalent to the principles of right imbedded in the human conscience, as in Rom. 2:14-15. St. Paul uses "law" in a peculiar sense as a uniform tendency or dominant impulse. The moral law when used as a sword piercing the conscience is the occasion of an opposition so strong that the apostle calls it "another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind" (Rom. 7:23). Here we have the bent to sin inherent in human nature in conflict with the rule of action prescribed by reason, Rom. 8:23. On the battlefield of this chapter grace does not appear, nor is the Holy Spirit one of the combatants. In chapter 8:2 He does appear as a conqueror, under the Pauline phrase, "the law of the Spirit of life," the impulse to right action imparted by the Spirit when He breathed life into the dead soul.

But we apprehend that most Bible readers are in perplexity respecting the declaration that believers are "not under the law" and are "free from the law." Is St. Paul referring to the moral law? Yes, to the whole law. Then how can a man be righteous irrespective of law? Does not righteousness imply a standard of right to which the individual conforms? Yes, every true believer enthrones the law of God in his heart and swears eternal allegiance thereto. When St. Paul says that I am "not under the law," I am "free from the law," he does not mean that I am removed from the realm of moral law, for it is so imbedded in my mind that its removal would destroy me by blasting the image of God in me. Hence God's law cannot be abrogated in the sense that I need not obey it, but it is abrogated in the sense that it is, through faith in Christ, no longer the ground of justification. Were I shut up to justification only through the plea that I have never transgressed the law of God, I should be in utter despair, for I have violated my own sense of right and can never be justified by the works of the law.

Against this plea "every mouth is stopped, and all the world is become guilty before God." But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, a new ground of justification is presented. If by faith I plant my feet on this ground, and instead of insisting that I have never sinned, I say, I have sinned, but Thou, O Son of God, hast died for me, I will find no legal acquittal but gracious pardon. In this sense I am free from the law. But it is still my rule of life. Grace enables me to obey it in the future so that I may be free from condemnation.

2. There is another sense in which the believer is free from the law. He is delivered from the fear of the penalty of the law as a motive to service. Love to the Lawgiver has taken the place of tormenting dread, so that the believer is no longer servile in his obedience, but free and joyful. Duty, that unscriptural word, is concealed by the word love written over it in large letters. If disquieting fear of the law still vexes the soul in any degree, however slight, it is because love has not yet been made perfect in kind by the exclusion of every antagonist. This is St. John's explanation.

3. This brings us to a third sense in which we are free from the law-as the instrument of entire sanctification. The law has no power to slay our inward foes, to cleanse from depraved tendency. We cannot sanctify ourselves by the most vigorous application of the law. It is not the province of the law to cure the depravity which it reveals. This is the office of the Holy Spirit, so called because it is His prerogative conditionally to create and to conserve holiness. It is my opinion that no mistake is more common among Christians than the idea of sanctification by the works of the law. For men may be as legal in seeking freedom from depravity as they are in seeking deliverance from guilt. This idea lies at the root of gradualism, or the denial of the extinction of the propensity to sin by the Spirit's finishing stroke. Only those believe in the instantaneous extinction of inbred sin who magnify the office of the personal Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you" (Ezek. 36:25-26). "This promise," says Henry, the incisive commentator, "signifies both the blood of Christ sprinkled upon the conscience to purify that and to take away the sense of guilt, and the grace of the Spirit sprinkled on the whole soul to purify it from all corrupt inclinations and disposition, as Naaman was cleansed from his leprosy by dipping in Jordan." Henry interprets this promise as inclusive of both justification and entire sanctification, or the extinction of sin considered as a principle infecting our nature. Thus impersonal law is not abolished, but is transcended, in both justification and sanctification by the personal Holy Spirit, the Lord of life and author of purity.

THE GOSPEL OF THE COMFORTER

By Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

An abridgment by Ross L Price, D.D.

Chapter 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN MATURITY

Spiritual Babes and Spiritual Men: These classes are contrasted in the Epistle to the Hebrews in a manner not complimentary to the babes (5:12-14).

Men become believers, in the New Testament sense, when through penitent faith they submit to God and receive Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord, and realize forgiveness of sins and the filial feeling which cries, "Abba, Father." To be a believer is to have conscious regeneration and the witness of the Spirit. Many are enrolled on earthly records as believers who have no such inward consciousness and witness. These need help which differs from that needed by true believers. Our present discussion is directed to those who are sure that they have been delivered from the power of darkness and have been translated into the kingdom of the Son of God. There are many of these who rest in the fact of the new birth and regard it as the sum total of Christian experience and character. They are spiritual babes, contented with their cradles.

It is a great mistake to regard as a finality the faith which delivers from guilt, and not as a preliminary to the glorious waiting attainments of perfected Christian manhood. To avoid this mistake which dwarfs so many believers we advise an earnest study of the progress of doctrine in the New Testament from the elementary utterances of Jesus Christ about repentance and seeking the kingdom of God up to His last address in which He announces the incompleteness of the gospel and bids His disciples look for another and final stage of instruction under another Teacher whom He would soon send. Pentecost was the fulfillment of this promise and the completion of that visibly progressive course of doctrine which Christ began to unfold. Now, doctrine is not an end but a means to an end, and that is transfigured character. This progress of doctrine under two teachers signifies that completed Christianhood lies in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. Christian infancy is prophetic of Christian manhood. The movements of still lingering carnality with which the Spirit strives intimate a still remaining work when the flesh shall be crucified and the Spirit shall be the sole tenant of the purified heart. Hence every believer, while highly prizing the attained experience preached by Jesus to Nicodemus, should move onward beyond the four Gospels into the Acts of the Apostles and the glorious Epistles, if he wishes to appropriate his full heritage in Christ. He who lingers in his primer year after year, and never enters that rich treasury of literature to which it is the key, is no more foolish than the believer who never "ceases to speak of the first principles of Christ," and ever fails to press on unto perfection.

We are aware of the mysteries involved in this subject which we cannot explain. We are glad we cannot; for what man can fully comprehend man may have invented. There is mystery pertaining to the theology of the Holy Spirit and His relation to the Father and the Son. But a faithful study of the Gospels and of the Acts clearly demonstrates that the Son relegated to the Paraclete that completion of Christian character which it was not His mission to accomplish before His ascension. After His resurrection He gave a foretaste of this completion when He breathed on His disciples and said,

"Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Nevertheless they were commanded to wait for the full measure of the Spirit perfecting their character and equipment: "Tarry ye in the city ... until ye be endued with power from on high." Thus in the new birth there is a capacity for the fullness of the Spirit, and, in all properly instructed believers, a presentiment and a prayer for its glorious realization. To this prayer there should be added an intelligent, persevering and all-surrendering trust in the glorified Redeemer.

We recently heard a preacher declare that the great purpose of the incarnation of the Son of God was to perfect believers by the plenitude of the Spirit. This novel statement does not contradict the Scripture which says that He came "to give his life a ransom for many," for the atonement is only a means to an end, to link unhinged humanity with God. The only link long enough to reach both and strong enough to hold them in blissful and eternal union is the personal Holy Spirit, the original bond between God and men before the rupture wrought by sin. The bridge swept away by that deluge is conditionally restored by the mediatorial work by the Son of God. The condition is unwavering faith put forth by a wholly consecrated soul.

It has been said that doctrine is the skeleton of religion. If this be true, the backbone of that skeleton is the scriptural doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Let every believer, by prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, secure for his faith this spinal column. The faith of many is weak and flabby because it is invertebrate. In nature only the vertebrates have strength and speed and dominion in their sphere, as the lion and the whale. It is so in the spiritual realm. The lions are few, while the jellyfishes and sponges are many. Here our parallel must end. Things natural have no freedom. A backbone may be acquired in the spiritual realm, but not in the natural. Hence the immense responsibility of every free agent, and his obligation to be conformed to the image of the Son by accepting the offer of the transforming and conforming Spirit.

The Fullness of the Spirit: It is sometimes said that Christ's new commandment, "Love one another," is the eleventh commandment. In the same way we have the twelfth in Paul's mandatory precept, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). There is an error quite widely spread in the Church, that the baptism or fullness of the Spirit is not universally obligatory, but rather that it is an elective experience, a privilege and not an imperative duty. We note that the passive voice, "be filled," implies that we cannot actively fill ourselves, but that the Spirit is present like the atmosphere and ready instantly to fill every vacuum. It is ours to create a vacuum by an unreserved self-surrender to Christ as both Saviour and Lord. This implies strong faith. In truth, faith is man's only capacity to receive God. He cannot enter us through the senses, for they report only material things; nor can the Spirit enter the soul through the reason, which apprehends only relations, not realities. Therefore faith is the only door by which the Spirit comes into the human spirit. Man, a spirit, is an image of God the Spirit. The creature is made for the occupancy of the Creator, and he finds his highest joy only when as a temple he is "the habitation of God through the Spirit."

It is quite evident that purity is a prerequisite to this indwelling fullness of the Spirit. This is the divine order; first cleansed, then filled. All filling presupposes emptying. It is true that the baptism of the Spirit has been sought and received as a full endowment for service. But a careful examination of such experiences reveals the fact of the Spirit's revelation of an inward bias to moral evil, and also of the seeker's full consent to its extermination by the purifying fire of the Spirit before He takes up

His abode within. This consent is a part of his irreversible and all-embracing self-surrender to Christ, the great Physician, whose healing power is preparatory to the full endowment with the Holy Spirit.

Turning to our Greek Testament we note that the command "Be filled with the Spirit" is in the present tense, denoting not a mechanical fullness once for all, but a vital fullness, a constant appropriation and a perpetual reception, a ceaseless drinking and a ceaseless thirst. Hence the paradox of Charles Wesley:

Insatiate to this spring I fly;
I drink, and yet am ever dry.

The thirst is for more of the same kind, not for anything different, like the thirst of a perfectly healthy babe. "But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well [artesian] of water springing up into everlasting life." The need of an increase of this water is not excluded. Says Calvin: "The Holy Spirit is a gushing fountain ever flowing, so that they who have been renewed by spiritual grace are in no danger of becoming completely dry," so far as the supply is concerned. There is danger of a diminishing appropriation till the soul has ceased to drink. Says Bengel, "Truly that water, as far as it depends on itself, has in it an everlasting virtue; and when thirst returns the defect is on the part of man, not of the water."

"We may insensibly and without raising the suspicion of our Christian friends lose the life of the Spirit, and preserve at the same time deceitful appearances. For when the Holy Spirit withdraws from the soul He sometimes allows the forms which He has created to remain. The oil is exhausted, but the lamp is there; prayer is offered and the Bible read; the going to church is not given up, and, to a certain degree, the service is enjoyed; in a word, religious habits are preserved." (Tophel.)

There is a fullness of the Spirit of the emotional kind which is liable to great fluctuations. It is genuine but not deep. It does not have permanent and staying qualities. It is often received amid the tidal wave of the faith and sympathy of a multitude, and begins to decline when the social magnetism is dispelled by separation from the jubilant throng in the temple or camp. The Spirit seems to pervade only the upper and more easily reached currents of the soul; the depths of the being, the inner life where the will dwells and character has its roots, have not been reached. Their experience is like what Fletcher calls "a land flood," a spring freshet, and not a river steadily flowing from springs so deep as not to be affected by summer's drought and winter's cold. Corresponding to the stony ground converts to Christ, who receive with joy the word into the shallow soil and immediately send up a flush of green which as quickly withers away, is a class of Pentecostal professors whose uneven ecstatic experiences are a stumblingblock to many Christians and a great hindrance to the experimental reception by the mass of believers of the most precious truths of the gospel, especially the promise of the Father and of the Son, the gift of the Comforter. Whenever He is deliberately received in the fullness of His offices and the permanence of His indwelling, men of power are raised up, and anointed women go forth to successful labor in the harvest fields of the world.

Many a professed Christian now a cipher in influence would become mighty in advancing the kingdom of Christ if he were filled with the Pentecostal gift. "The apostles were good men before the baptism of the Pentecost. But how dull of apprehension were they though they listened to the

instructions, not of a prophet who was of the earth, therefore earthly and speaking from the earth, but of Him who was from heaven and above all, and who spake the very words of God. How little they saw the glory or felt the power of the truth they heard! Yet they knew more, believed more, loved more than all the rest of mankind. They possessed truths which flesh and blood had not revealed unto them, but the Father in heaven. 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' But when the Holy Ghost fell on them what a glorious transformation! It was as if meridian day had burst upon them from the obscurity of an eclipse. As with tongues of fire they spoke forth the wonders which, though they knew them before, they till now had not known. God had passed before them and proclaimed His name, shown them His glory. The Spirit had taken the all-glorious beams that blaze from the face of Christ and had carried them deep into their hearts. The chambers of their inner being had become all luminous, and every ray of light there glowed with a dissolving, melting warmth. The fountains of the great deep of their sensibilities were broken up, and floods of happy tears were shed over a thousand remembrances of their beloved Lord. His instructions, His miracles, His holiness, His love, His majesty, His sufferings, His resurrection, His seat of His Father's right hand, His whole manifestation and work stood before them in a new and resplendent light and bathed in glory." (John Morgan, D.D.)

Rivers of Living Water: It is very rarely that we find a saying of Jesus Christ, the great teacher, with an apostolic note subjoined. This unique combination is one of the priceless jewels in John's Gospel (7:37-39). Christ was at the feast of tabernacles. "At every day of the feast at the time of the morning sacrifice, a priest brought into the forecourt, in a golden vessel, water from the spring of Siloah, which rises within the mount on which the temple stood, and poured it, mingled with sacrificial wine, into two bowls which stood upon the altar and in which there was an opening by which it made its escape." Meanwhile the priests sounded trumpets and clashed cymbals, and the words of Isaiah 12:3 were chanted, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Just when the people were exhibiting great joy at the sight of this symbol Jesus stood forth and with a loud voice cried out to the vast multitude: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Upon this John thus comments: "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." This explains why Jesus used the future tense, "rivers of living waters shall flow." The ceaseless Pentecostal fountain was yet to be opened for earth's thirsty millions.

It is commonly thought that when Jesus uttered the words, "Come unto me, and drink," He meant but one act -- believe on me; that is, to come is to believe, and to drink is to believe. But there is a beautiful shade of difference. Christ used no tautology. To come to a fountain does not quench thirst. This represents the direct act of saving faith, not satisfying, but painful from the strenuous effort. But drinking is a fit emblem of the reflex spontaneity of assuring faith grounded in the Spirit's inward cry, "Abba, Father." This is not a single effort, as saving faith is, but a continuous and joyful appropriation. We come to the fountain once; we drink always and without conscious volition. The first act is saving faith, the second act, or series of acts, is the faith of assurance. In fact, the water will once for all be received into the inner nature, will be immanent in the believer, and will attend him in every stage of his being, even to eternity -- "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Says Tholuck, "This eternally upspringing water expresses that death not only does not interrupt this life, this communion with God, but that it rather brings it to perfection."

In John 4:14, Jesus declared His gift of water would be a self-dependent spring within the heart; but at the feast of tabernacles He went far beyond that in saying that the inner fountain should pour forth, not brooks, but rivers, Amazons, abundantly quenching our thirst and refreshing others. This interpretation avoids the error that one Christian can impart the Holy Spirit to another. He may by his testimony and conduct awaken thirst in his neighbor and lead him to the spring where he may himself drink. One may be a channel for the water of life to flow to another.

The conditions on which the living water, the Holy Comforter, is given are clearly set forth in John 14:14-16, the last address of Christ before His crucifixion. It has been very appropriately called "the heart of Jesus." The conditions are love to Christ evinced by obedience to His commandments and asking in His name. The Paraclete is the greatest mediatorial gift. The words "in my name," as the condition of prevailing prayer, distinctly reveal the mediatorial office of the Son of God in the establishment of His Father's kingdom. No man can willfully ignore the Mediator and then prevail in his prayer to God for the gift of the Comforter. Hence many fail to receive the well of water, the Pentecostal gift; some because their theology is so meager that it affords in the unity of the divine nature no place for the Mediator, and others because He is rather a name, an orthodox formula, than a living person in whom they trust with a faith equal to that exercised toward the heavenly Father. Such equal reliance the Son claims when He says, "Believe in God, and believe in me." Before He finished the discourse which opens with these words He completed the prayer taught to His disciples at the beginning of His ministry by adding "in my name." It is this completed prayer, offered in faith by a soul filled with ardent desire, which opens wide the portals for the incoming of the Comforter, and unseals the fountain henceforth eternally springing up in the hidden depths of the believing soul.

Many excellent Christians fail to receive the fullness of the Spirit because, like the woman at Jacob's well, they do not know the gift, or rather, as Campbell translates it, "the bounty, the liberality of God," that disposition of mind from which the best gifts flow. "If thou knewest ... thou wouldest have asked." Our asking is limited by our knowledge. Ignorance of God's large-heartedness asks only small favors. Hence a better knowledge of God is requisite for spiritual enlargement. There must be a more thorough acquaintance with His character as revealed in His word and in the testimony of those who are dwelling in the higher altitudes of grace. Knowledge excites desire. The merchant who artistically arranges his goods in his windows acts upon this principle. To awaken a spiritual appetite God sets forth in revelation His showcase of exceedingly great and precious promises. In this display of priceless jewels is the Kohinoor diamond of the Holy Scriptures "the promise of the Father," towering above all the other promises as indeed "a mountain of light," an ornament for the crown of every "king and priest unto God," who claims his full heritage in Christ.

Jesus said to the woman, "If thou hadst asked, I would have given," showing as invariable an order of sequences in the spiritual realm as in the material world. He answers all true prayer that reaches His ear, and is waiting for more. To bestow the Comforter is His highest delight. He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit "to them that ask him" than earthly parents are to give good gifts unto their children.

The Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit: In the Old Testament we read of extraordinary gifts of the Spirit entirely different from the graces of the Spirit. Bezaleel was endowed by the Spirit of God "to devise cunning works ... in gold, and in silver, and in brass" for beautifying the tabernacle. Samson

when the Spirit came upon him became preternaturally strong, and both Balaam and King Saul were seized by the Spirit, who constrained them to prophesy, although they were utterly destitute of grace. From his birth John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost rather as an outward gift than as an inward Pentecostal grace. This Old Testament endowment of the Spirit did not render him sinless from his birth, but it inspired in him a vivid sense of Israel's apostasy and of his own vocation to preach repentance of sin as a preparation for the coming of the Messiah King. He was endowed with a dauntless courage to rebuke sins, even in the court of the king, and an irresistible eloquence, not of the polished Grecian, but of the rugged Hebrew type, to sway the multitudes toward righteousness. He was greater than Abraham, the founder, than Moses, the lawgiver, than David, the warrior king, of the Hebrew nation, and yet less than the least in the kingdom of Christ. Although these least had not the showy gifts of the Spirit, they had what is far better, the Comforter in their hearts crying, "Abba, Father." The filial feeling, with the assurance of forgiveness, is the distinguishing New Testament grace, together with the Pentecostal fullness of the Spirit as the Comforter and Sanctifier.

It is natural that extraordinary gifts should flow forth from the Holy Spirit in New Testament times, to signalize the beginning of His distinctive work as the Paraclete. When the Son of God by the incarnation came into the sphere of matter, it was to be expected that His miracles would be in the realm of things sensible. But the Comforter marked His entrance into the human spirit by miracles in the sphere of mind, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, as a charism, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues and interpretations. The only exception is healing, which Bengel suggests has continued to the present time as a specimen of the other gifts, just as the portion of manna laid up in the ark was a proof of the ancient miracle. In order to the intelligent discussion of this charism it will be necessary to describe another with which it stands in immediate connection, the gift of faith. This differs from common or saving faith, called the grace of faith, in the following particulars:

1. The grace of faith is grounded in the general promises of the Bible, while the gift of faith rests not on the written Word, but on the assurance inwrought by the Holy Spirit "that the prayer will be answered and the work accomplished." (Whedon.)

2. Hence the grace of faith, when exercised in prayer for temporal blessings, is always accompanied by the condition "If it be Thy will." The gift of faith is the assurance beforehand that it is God's will to bestow the thing desired.

3. Saving faith is morally obligatory upon every soul having a knowledge of its object, Christ, and the absence of such faith is the ground condemnation (John 3:18). Miracle-working faith, a special gift, is required of no one, but is bestowed sovereignly by the Holy Spirit, "severally as he will." Hence there is no more culpability for the absence of this faith than there is for a lack of the gift of tongues.

4. The grace of faith is designed to be permanent, and is as indispensable to spiritual, as breathing is to natural, life. Faith as a charism is not permanent but occasional. St. Paul sometimes had it and could heal (Acts 28:8), and sometimes he had it not and could not heal, as we infer from II Timothy 4:20.

5. The grace of faith transforms the moral character. The charism of faith has no such effect any more than any other extraordinary gift of the Spirit. Balaam and King Saul prophesied under the power of the Spirit, and both died accursed of God. There is at least one man in the flames of hell to-day who was once commissioned to work miracles. Compare Matthew 10:1-4 and 26:24, John 17:12. Jesus Christ intimates that Judas will have plenty of company from the ranks of Christian ministers who in theory acknowledged the Lordship of Christ, after the strictest orthodoxy, and in the exercise of their profession cast out devils and did many mighty works (Greek, miracles), but had not that grace of faith which works by love, purifies the heart and brings its possessor into vital union with Christ. "The distinguishing feature in those men is an impure, often fanatical boldness in the faith, which, though enabling them to perform outward acts of a marvelous nature, yet fails to exercise any influence upon their own moral life --just the sort of thing described by Paul in I Corinthians 13:2, and the manifestations of which are to be met in every age, especially in times of great religious excitement." (Meyer.)

The eager desire of some Christians to secure the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit is not an evidence of spiritual progress, but rather of spiritual retrogression. A large number of Christians of various churches are diligently inculcating the doctrine that every kind of sickness will invariably be cured by the grace of faith possible to all Christians, and that the absence of such faith is a species of unbelief, constituting a grave defect of the spiritual life. We believe, that this hankering after these gifts is undermining the spirituality of those who indulge in it, and we commend to them the grand aim set before us by St. Paul, "I show unto you a more excellent way," LOVE. The church in which the gifts were specially manifest is the most undesirable of the New Testament churches. I would not swap off for it the poorest one of the fifteen churches of my pastoral life. "Indeed, I should loathe to minister to such a sorry set of Christians as were the Corinthians with all their miracles and tongues. Wrangling about Paul, Apollos and Cephas, running after false teachers, full of envying, strife and division, harboring an incestuous person without discipline, degrading the Lord's supper into a feast of appetite, giving to Paul constant sorrow and anxiety, the Corinthians needed miracles to give them a respectable title to a Christian name; and they so abused miraculous gifts by jealousy and contention that they turned their Sabbath assemblies into cabals of men and women shouting, singing, praying, prophesying, pell-mell, without decency or order." From such a style of Christianity "Good Lord, deliver us," and lead us into the heritage of I Corinthians 13 by "the more excellent way."

The relation of this subject to the work of the Holy Spirit is very intimate. "In like manner, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity [singular number, A.R.V.]: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26). Here the infirmity is ignorance of what lies in the divine will. Is it pardon, the new birth, entire sanctification, the fullness of the Spirit or grace to help in time of need? No Bible reader need be in perplexity respecting all these spiritual blessings. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" This text (Rom. 8:32) following so soon after that which emphasizes our ignorance of what is best for us and our need of a divine teacher (verse 26), is in seeming contradiction to it, and it can be harmonized in no other way than by understanding that the "all things" which are promised "with him" are spiritual blessings, while the things in respect to which we are ignorant whether we should pray for them or

not, are temporal blessings, relief in want, deliverance out of peril, ease when in pain, and restoration from sickness.

THE GOSPEL OF THE COMFORTER

By Daniel Steele, S.T.D.

An abridgment by Ross L Price, D.D.

Chapter 8

SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

Dishonoring the Holy Spirit: These words of the saintly Fletcher in his portrait of St. Paul have clung to my memory more than a score of years: "To reject the Son of God manifested in the Spirit, as worldly Christians are universally observed to do, is a crime of equal magnitude with that of the Jews, who rejected Him when manifested in the flesh."

1. The Holy Ghost is dishonored when spoken of as a thing or an influence, and not as a person. This is often done by referring to Him by the use of "it" instead of "he." Our authorized version of Romans 8:16, "The Spirit itself," has greatly promoted this error. The Revision is correct, "The Spirit himself." Not only does it degrade the Spirit to strip Him of His personality, but it cuts away the ground for that strong faith in Him which is requisite to secure His abiding presence in us and the complete work of His offices. We cannot trust a thing as we trust a person. Indistinct and hazy conceptions weaken faith. When thought of as a power, a principle, an effluence however bright, the Holy Spirit is degraded infinitely below a personality implying intelligence, feeling, will, freedom and a moral sense. Many true believers in Jesus Christ fail to realize the indwelling Spirit because their faith in Him is far less definite than their faith in Christ. This weak faith is because of nebulous conceptions of the Spirit.

2. He is dishonored when regarded as a created person. Some admit His personality, but deny His divinity equal to the Father and the Son in power and glory. In so doing they divest themselves of the ground of the strongest possible faith in the Spirit. The proofs of His divinity are found in texts which ascribe to Him divine attributes, divine acts, divine titles, and associate Him on implied terms of equality with the Father and the Son, as in the formula for Christian baptism, Matthew 28:19, and the apostolic benediction, II Corinthians 13:14.

3. The Spirit is dishonored when anything is substituted for His offices in the inspiration of Christian character, such as a germ of natural goodness instead of the new birth, education instead of sanctification, culture of the aesthetic tastes instead of the fruit of the Spirit, roundabout inferences that we are saved, neglecting and undervaluing the direct witness of the Spirit "in your hearts, crying Abba, Father," the pleasures of sense instead of the joy of the Holy Ghost, the honor of men rather than the approval of God. We have already alluded to the disrespect of the Spirit when His witness to adoption is slighted. This is so important that it needs further emphasis. The Spirit is really, though it may be unintentionally, dishonored when His office of witness to the adoption of the penitent believer is dropped out of the sermon and out of the instruction of seekers at the altar. When the office is slighted the officer is disparaged. When the sinner becomes a new creature it is not by a natural process of evolution, or of development from a germ of goodness, but by the will and work of the new-Creator. When it is said that a man may regenerate himself by assuming an obedient attitude of his will toward Christ as both Saviour and Lord, disrespect is shown to the sole author of the new birth. It is true that men have the gracious ability to convert themselves in the literal

meaning of that verb, that is, to turn about, to forsake sin, and in penitent faith to look unto God. This is conversion, a graciously assisted human act. But regeneration is the sole work of the Spirit when the term is used in its theological sense. In the same way the Spirit is slighted when His office as God's messenger to announce the soul's adoption is ignored and something else is put in His place. The modern substitute is the Word, the Holy Scriptures. Written many centuries ago, they cannot certify my sonship to God by adoption. The Bible nowhere teaches that itself is the ground of personal assurance. It distinctly reveals the fact that the Holy Spirit is the direct witness to this all-important event on which eternal destiny hangs. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The phrase "into your hearts," instead of "into the Bible," denotes a direct, personal certification of adoption. In addition to this, there are found in the Bible, inspired by the Spirit, the marks of the new birth, the fruit of the Spirit. When these are discovered, they constitute an inferential testimony confirming the direct witness of the Spirit. But when the Word is put in the first place, as the ground of assurance, and the Spirit is omitted, or put in the second place, He is dishonored. There is a numerous school of evangelists who are thus constantly ignoring the Holy Ghost in all their teaching of assurance. It is a great error. It leaves the seeker without the satisfactory certification of sonship to God which He in His goodness has provided. "The Spirit himself beareth witness [direct testimony] with our spirit [inferential testimony], that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16, A.R.V).

This direct contact of the Spirit is elsewhere taught under the imagery of "the earnest," or money paid to bind the bargain, and "sealing," since the seal authenticates, assures and appropriates. The Holy Spirit in the believer's heart is the Father's seal. Let all religious teachers honor this seal. To dishonor it is to encourage a multitude of professed disciples of Christ to go into eternity with invalid title-deeds to eternal life, with no possibility of rectifying the fatal mistake.

4. Ministers of the gospel and other Christian workers dishonor the Spirit when they more earnestly desire His gifts than Himself; when they are more eager to be clothed with His power than to be filled with His presence; when they prefer popularity to purity; when they rely more on polished rhetoric than on the power of the Holy Ghost; when they are more concerned about preparing the sermon than themselves; when they are more ambitious to please the Church than the Head of the Church; when they subordinate the ministry of the Lord Jesus to themselves and not to the Lord Jesus; when they use the sacred office as a ladder to personal fame or gain, instead of a stairway up which they may lead repenting sinners to the bosom of God. The Holy Ghost scrutinizes motives. He searches not only the deep things of God, but also the depths of man's heart, and He feels aggrieved when He is outranked in man's esteem by anything beneath the sun, yea, beneath the throne of the ascended Son of God and Redeemer of men whom it is His mission to glorify on earth. Hence the Holy Spirit is dishonored whenever Christ is not exalted as the only Saviour of lost men; when He is displaced in the pulpit by some fad or fancy of momentary interest.

5. Disrespect is shown to the Holy Spirit when the Bible He has inspired is neglected, and religious books and periodicals illustrating, explaining and defending the Book of books find little sale and less attention, while secular and fictitious literature is read with great avidity. It grieves the Spirit to see myriads of people bearing the name of Christ feeding on the chaff of irreligious reading and crying, "Oh! my leanness!" or devouring the poison of the satanic press and going down to a speedy spiritual death as moral suicides, because of the virus of a baneful literature voluntarily

poured into their arteries, "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." But since a man thinks as he largely supplies materials for thought by reading, it is true that as he readeth good or bad books, so is he.

6. When the Holy Spirit moves holy men to write saving truth for the spiritual healing of the nations throughout all generations, and bad men develop a satanic ingenuity in assailing this precious record and in destroying the faith of men in that religion which transforms sinners to saints here and reveals life eternal hereafter, the Spirit of inspiration is not only grieved but is deeply disgraced. It is like some baneful genius destroying in some dark and stormy night all faith in the mariner's compass and causing all the ships, with all their crews and passengers, in all the oceans of the world, henceforth to sail in painful uncertainty, and many of them to drift into ruin. It is one thing to dig down to the foundation of a citadel in order to show their strength, but it is quite another thing to explode a hundred pounds of dynamite beneath them. There is in our times a class of higher critics who are studious to conserve all the truth that the Holy Spirit has inspired. With such He is well pleased. His honor is safe in their keeping. There is a class of destructives who are madly attempting to sweep out of the universe every vestige of a supernatural revelation, and to beat down to the dead level of naturalism every religious truth that stands a foot above that level. The personal Holy Spirit, whose mission it is to conserve and apply saving truth, cannot look upon this attempt with indifference. It dishonors Him to assault His work. In our day this assault is quite indirectly made by some. They are attempting to bring Christianity to this level, not by beating it down, but by lifting all pagan religions up. They admit the inspiration of Isaiah and Paul, but they assert that Plato and Shakespeare are just as much divinely inspired. We have heard one of the champions of "liberal Christianity" read in his Boston pulpit from Job, Plato, Seneca, Cato, and T. Starr King, and then say, "Thus endeth the reading of the Scriptures."

The robber in the Arabian Nights put a chalk mark on a house which contained treasure, intending to rob it in the night. Morgiana chalked all the other houses in the same way, and thus defeated the robber's purpose. One book contains the treasure of heavenly truth for the enrichment of mankind. That they may easily find it, God has put the mark of inspiration upon it. Liberalism is trying to defeat His benevolent purpose by putting a similar mark on all the religious books of the heathen and all the works of genius. The scheme may so far succeed as to mislead and bewilder thousands of souls and turn their feet away from the path to eternal life. Such an act is doing despite to the Spirit of grace.

7. The divine Spirit is dishonored by the unholy lives of those who profess to be regenerated by Him. The Christian professes to be a sample of the new creation. A defective sample discredits its maker. Thus the unworthy life of a man who by profession writes the name of the holy Christ across his forehead for all the world to read brings reproach not only on those who labored and prayed for his salvation, and on the church with which he is united, but also on the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life and the new-Creator of souls. Still greater is the dishonor to the Spirit where one professing to be filled with the Spirit, and to be entirely sanctified by His indwelling, is living an unworthy life. The more valuable the coin the baser is the counterfeit. A Christian may become a false professor in two ways -- by an untruthful original profession, and by retrogression from a true profession. In either case the Spirit is dishonored. But I speak more especially of the latter. "How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed!"

Our words may not only dishonor, but distress the Holy Spirit. From Eph. 4:29-30 (A.R.V.), "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying ... And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," we learn that "worthless" (Meyer), "profitless and unedifying, not necessarily filthy" (Ellicott and Alford) talk is here indicated as painful to the divine Spirit, vile talk being prohibited in v.4. Empty and trifling discourses, low wit and nonsense, are so opposed to the holy nature and work of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in Christians, that He cannot fail to be grieved thereat. "The chosen expression 'Holy Spirit of God,' renders the enormity of such action most palpable." (Meyer.) "The Christian walking in sincerity utters not only no wicked, but even no useless words." (Olshausen.) This does not exclude animated, instructive and cheerful discourse, enlivened by flashes of delicate and dignified wit, but it does mark with the disapprobation of the Holy Spirit the jester, the punster and studied humorist whose chief end and aim in human society is smartness, facetiousness and drollery.

The universe is rational, and its Creator is rational, and the Holy Spirit, the divine Person through whom He acts on man as a reprover, and in the believer as the sanctifier, is also rational. He can never be pleased with anything irrational, unreal and farcical. Jesus Christ, whom the Spirit represents, took a view of human life and destiny too realistic to admit of those distortions of the truth which are implied in jokes and witticisms. If it is the office of the Spirit to bring us into conformity with the image of the Son of God in moral character, shall we not be assimilated to His sobriety and gravity also? Will not the Spirit chasten and elevate the imagination and make it the vehicle of truth and the instrument of instruction? Will He not in this way sanctify the fine arts and make painting and sculpture, poetry and music, rhetoric and oratory channels of grace to the believing heart? Is it not the mission of the Spirit to harmonize and unify all our faculties so that the aesthetical and the ethical shall both minister to our complete spiritual development? If an affirmative answer is correct, it follows that so much of pleasantry and wit as is needful for human society at its climax the Holy Spirit will sanctify, and all that tends to degrade He will eliminate. Humor without the savor of godliness always tends downward, changing the sublime into the ridiculous, and turning the sacred into the profane. It may be thought that in the form of ridicule it is necessary to castigate folly and refute error. But Jesus Christ, the model religious teacher, did not use it in denouncing the hypocrisies of the Pharisees and in establishing His gospel. Elijah made use of the ridicule against the priests of Baal, as did Paul against Christian teachers insisting on circumcision, "I would they would even mutilate themselves" (Galatians 5:12, A.R.V., margin). But it is a dangerous weapon of the nature of a boomerang.

8. Next to disrespect shown to the Holy Spirit is disparagement of His work. Almost identical are an author and his book, a mechanic and the product of his skill. Ridicule of the work is derision of the workman. This truth underlies that weighty and alarming utterance of Jesus Christ, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." The lifeblood of Jesus pulsates in His words, for He says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." It was the work of the Son to take His Father's words on one side of the veil, and reveal them unto men on the other side. Hence contempt for the revelation is mockery of the Revealer.

Moreover, it is true that the more excellent the work in the estimation of the worker, the more keenly does he feel dishonored when it is disparaged. A condemned masterpiece is the climax of mortification.

What work on the earth is the masterpiece of the Holy Spirit? Is it not the completed holiness of a soul born with a propensity to sin? We infer this from the adjective "holy," which is a part of the name Holy Ghost. He is thus called, not because this adjective distinguishes His nature from that of the Father and the Son, but because it designates His office to impart and to create holiness. It is true that believers are provisionally "sanctified in Christ Jesus," just as all men are provisionally saved in His atonement. But men are really saved only when through their faith in Christ they are born of the Spirit, and believers are wholly sanctified only when they appropriate this work of the Holy Spirit as the completion of the new-creation of the soul. This is the climax of His activity on the earth. He is the finger of God when He causes us "to know the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe."

Therefore it follows that the sin that borders upon the irremissible sin, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, is the irreverent and contemptuous criticism of His work in the entire sanctification of an immortal soul. This is a sin to which every generation of Christians is exposed, but more especially that body of believers which is beginning to lean upon the world and to let down its standard of truth in order to court its favor. Then he who would magnify the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, by attesting His power to perfect holiness in the believer, may expect to endure disparaging and captious criticisms which really reflect on the divine author. This is a serious matter. Of the three Persons in the one divine nature, the Holy Spirit is the most sensitive to slights and insults.

Should it be said that the holiest person you have ever met had faults, and was therefore a just object of criticism, we reply that many imperfections in taste, judgment and outward appearance may be consistent with perfect purity of heart.

The only perfect man since Adam was created did not escape the contempt of men.

In the classroom of President Wayland, many years ago, a student arose and put the following question: "Dr. Wayland, don't you think, if Christian people were more amiable, kind, lovely in their dispositions and in their intercourse with the world, if they presented Christianity in its true aspects, don't you think everybody would be so attracted and charmed as to embrace Christianity at once?" Dr. Wayland, assuming an air more deliberate and earnest than usual, replied in substance: "There was once on earth one who combined in perfect symmetry all the graces of Christian character; one who was wise, kind, unselfish, lovely, without fault, absolutely perfect; and what was the result of this exhibition of character in the world? They cried, Crucify him! crucify him!"

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit: This is a doctrine which rests on the following undisputed proof texts: Matt. 12:31-32; Mark 3:28-30 (in which the Revised Version has "eternal sin"); and Luke 12:10. Orthodox theologians disagree about the meaning of John 15:22-24; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:29; II Pet. 2:14; and I John 5:16.

Respecting the nature of this awful sin there are two opinions which divide the Christian world. One was maintained by Chrysostom, that this sin is the assertion that the miracles wrought by Christ through the aid of the Holy Spirit were done through the agency of the devil. Universalists and all who teach the doctrine of eternal hope advocate this view because it seems to limit this sin to the contemporaries of Jesus Christ.

The other theory, championed by Augustine, defines this sin as the obstinate impenitence of the sinner till the end of life while inwardly approving Christian doctrine as divine, yet, against his own convictions, opposing and blaspheming or slandering Christ and persevering in this deliberate contempt till the close of life. Hence this sin is possible in the present time. This is a subject on which we are not disposed to dogmatize. Yet it is a part and an important part of Christ's teaching and should not be withheld from the hearers of the gospel.

The most solemn and awful demonstration of the personality of the Holy Spirit is inferred from the fact that the only irremissible sin is found in some offense against Him. There could be no such pre-eminent offense against an impersonality, an influence, effluence or attribute. That such an offense is possible is implied in the warning given by the tender and merciful Son of God. Our subject does not require us to answer the question, "What constitutes this sin?" Yet since there is much inquiry we will modestly express our opinion. We agree with Julius Muller that the unpardonable sin is not an isolated sin, but sin in its full development ("Christian Doctrine of Sin," ii, pages 418, etc.). This is nearly the same as Joseph Cook's definition, "Any sin that involves final impenitence." It is a result of a series of acts of known sin, the outcome of a course of deliberate rejection of light and defiant repulse of the Holy Spirit's warnings in that great debate upon the subject of duty and destiny, a question which every soul in probation must answer for itself alone. He who persistently gives the wrong answer will come into a state of matured enmity to God and a "hatred of recognized eternal holiness." His irreversible choice is, "Evil, be thou my good." It, not God, closes the door of repentance. For such are the laws of man's moral nature that he can finally and eternally shut up his personality against grace and irreversibly expel the Holy Spirit whom he once received.

We must bear in mind that the dispensation of the Holy Spirit is the highest possible expression of divine mercy. God's mercy endureth forever, but man's ability to appropriate that mercy is for a short time. A man who by abuse of his body has entirely wasted its power of nutrition by assimilating food may starve in a house full of bread. There will be bread and to spare after the last returnless prodigal has refused his Father's tenderest and most persuasive invitation. At the funeral of every lost soul the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit will head the procession as the chief mourners, preceding the earthly kindred. There is nothing capricious or arbitrary on the part of the Holy Spirit in leaving a human soul to its deliberate self-determined destiny. He is not a judge, but a helper, and He ceases to help when character has become fixed in sin. All sin tends towards final permanence in sin. Can a man once truly regenerated fall into sin and take on this final permanence? Find your answer in I John 5:16, which plainly implies that "a brother" may "sin unto death" and put himself beyond the reach of prayer. Study Hebrews 6:4-8 and Julius Muller's weighty remarks thereon. The convert from Judaism who after Christian enlightenment and partaking of the Holy Ghost returned to Judaism must pronounce Jesus a false Messiah and the Holy Spirit an illusion in order to be received into the synagogue.

The fact that the Holy Spirit is the last test of orthodoxy throws much light on the subject of the irremissible sin. Human history has had three dispensations—that of the Father, the test of which is the worship of one God; that of the Son, the test of which is faith in Him as an infallible teacher, imitation of His perfect example, reception of Him as atoning Saviour, and obedience to Him as an invisible king, the God-Man. The last and highest test of loyalty in those who have stood the two former tests is the Holy Spirit, the substitute for the personal presence of our risen Lord Jesus. To receive Him is a more difficult test, for the following reasons: 1. The Spirit is perfectly abstract and colorless, beyond the reach of the senses. 2. He is destitute of the interest which attaches to the incidents of a bodily history. 3. His presence addresses no natural faculty of mental perception, and His work in the application of redemption is internal and mysterious. 4. He cannot be discovered by any process of reasoning. 5. Faith in Jesus Christ, resulting in newness of life and imparting the power of spiritual intuition, is the only avenue through which He can be known and received. Receptivity must first be unfolded from a capacity existing unused in the natural man, before the Holy Spirit can be apprehended as a glorious and blessed reality. For the reception of the fullness of the Spirit there must be a large capacity produced by a strong and mature faith. 6. Such a faith is possible to those only who make "a total, affectionate and irreversible self-surrender" to Christ, consecrating to Him our good things, our possessions, our social standing and influence and all our powers of body and mind. When we received Christ we abandoned our evil things. This is an act less difficult than laying all our good things on the altar of Christ. Hence the greater severity of this last test. For this reason many fail to enter consciously into the dispensation of the Holy Ghost. They receive Christ, but remain spiritual babes, many of them so weak and prone to sin that Paul cannot call them wholly spiritual, but rather carnal (I Cor. 3:1). In view of this fact, John Owen in his "Pneumatology" utters words of deep solemnity: "Wherefore the duty of the Church now immediately respects the Spirit of God, who acts toward it in the name of the Father and of the Son, and with respect unto Him it is that the Church in its present state is capable of an apostasy from God.... The sin of despising His person and rejecting His work now is of the same nature with idolatry of old, and with the Jews' rejection of the person of the Son." Hence the Paraclete as a speciality claiming the new prominence of the day of Pentecost has become the touchstone of true piety and the article of a standing or falling Church. The words of Fletcher are very similar to those of Owen: "To reject the Son of God manifested in the Spirit, as worldly Christians are universally observed to do, is a crime of equal magnitude with that of the Jews who rejected Christ manifested in the flesh."

"A parable may help to show the relation of the three Persons of the Trinity to man's salvation. A father wishes his younger son to be educated for a certain profession. The elder brother of that son, who has learned it himself, gives all the books and apparatus necessary for acquiring a knowledge of it. And they together engage a teacher to teach the younger son the knowledge required. And it is evident—and this is the point of the illustration -- that the final success of the plan of the father and elder brother depends on the success of the teacher whom they appoint. It is manifest, too, that it is only at this point that the younger son can yield to or resist the efforts of his father and brother. He may speak with the greatest respect and affection of both, but if he refuses to be taught by the teacher he will remain ignorant of the science which they wish him to learn. On the other hand, he may speak most rebelliously of both, but if he submits to the teaching of the teacher they have appointed, he will end by learning the profession they wish. Thus resistance to the father and the elder brother may be atoned for by submission to the teacher they have sent, but resistance to the teacher cannot be atoned

for by any nominal submission to the father. By its very nature it will prevent his son learning the science."

It is evident in the last supposition that the obedience will be only "nominal," not real, while the younger son is defeating the cherished purpose of those to whom he presents a professed submission. Men cannot resist and grieve the third Person of the Trinity and at the same time be acceptably serving the other two Persons.

Another comparison has been used to illustrate the same truth. The Father is like a physician who by his wisdom has discovered a cure for a deadly disease. The Son is like another physician who by his skill prepares the medicine discovered. The Holy Spirit is like a third physician who goes about administering this medicine to the dying. Here again it is manifest that it is only by the work of the third physician that the work of the other two can be made effectual. They may have finished their work and done it perfectly, but if the sick refuse to take the only remedy from the hands of the third, their resistance cannot but be fatal to them. They may profess to admire the wisdom of the discoverer of this infallible specific for their disease and the skill of the compounder, but this will not heal them. They must render equal honor to the practitioner who applies the medicine, by submitting to all his directions.

Among those who refuse to obey the Holy Spirit there may be great moral diversities, a pure outward life or gross immoralities, but they are all alike in their destiny, after a persistent rejection of the agent appointed to heal them through regeneration and entire sanctification by the Holy Spirit. They must all bide under the wrath of God evermore.

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It is my earnest prayer that, having read afresh this abridged edition of The Gospel of the Comforter, you will have a renewed appreciation for the Holy Spirit, the blessed Third Person of the Trinity. With a deeper appreciation for Him as a person, may you ever increasingly discover the riches of the Spirit-filled life and the Spirit-led life. -- R. E. Price

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ENDNOTES

1 Dr. John Owen, On the Spirit, Chapter III.

2 Merrick Lectures on "The Philosophy of Christian Experience."

3 Dean Alford's version of Phil. 2:12-13.

4 Professor Smeaton Cunningham, Lectures, 1882, page 72.