THE HOLY SPIRIT

G. Michael Cocoris

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

As a result of mentioning the Holy Spirit in a sermon, I got into a conversation about the Holy Spirit. One thing led to another and I decided to do a short series on the Holy Spirit. To cover everything the Bible says about the Holy Spirit would require a long, very long series of sermons. One of the books I have on the Holy Spirit has 288 pages. To cover all of those pages would probably take 25 or more sermons. This series is not going to be that exhaustive. Rather than focusing on the work of the Holy Spirit in relationship to believers, I'm going to begin by answering some of the fundamental questions about the Holy Spirit. Who is He? What does He do?

A friend tells of a conversation he had with a fellow while flying on a plane. They were discussing "things religious" when the traveler told my friend, "You know, if I could understand the Trinity, I think I could understand Christianity." My friend said he was thinking about the traditional questions and the biblical answers when the fellow surprised him by saying, "I didn't have much problem thinking about God as Father, or even about Jesus Christ as His Son, but what bothers me is the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, I think if I understood the Holy Spirit, I'd understand what the Christian life is all about."

I don't think my friend, or anyone else, could explain to that fellow all about the Trinity or the Christian life, but I do think that fellow was correct. If we understood more about the Holy Spirit, we would at least understand more about the spiritual life.

You see, God gave us the Holy Spirit, among other things, to assist us in our Christian life. The Christian life is a life with a power assist! Yet today, the biblical teaching concerning the Holy Spirit is ignored on the one hand and abused on the other. What does the Bible teach about the Holy Spirit, and how does He assist believers?

The Person of the Holy Spirit

A Person The first question concerning the Holy Spirit is, "Who is He?" The Holy Spirit is often thought of as a power or influence, a misty cloud, or something nebulous. Maybe that is because when contrasted with the other members of the Trinity, He seems impersonal. God the Father is the Creator. The visible creation and the acts of creating make the personality of the Father easy to conceive. God the Son became a Man. The incarnation made His personality easy to believe, but God, the Holy Spirit, is somehow secret and mystical. Perhaps it is because of the symbols we use of Him, like wind and water, breath, and a bird (a dove), even oil and fire. Then again, maybe it is because of His name—Spirit. Somehow, people don't think of spirits as persons.

Be all that as it may, the Holy Spirit is a person. The personal pronoun "he" is used of Him (Jn. 16:7, 8, 13-15). Twelve times in John 16:7-15, the Greek masculine pronoun he is used for the Holy Spirit. That is particularly remarkable since the Greek word for spirit is neuter, which would normally call for a neuter pronoun. Yet, contrary to normal grammatical usage, a masculine pronoun is used. This is not a pictorial personification but a plain, pointed statement asserting the personality of the Holy Spirit.

On top of that, the attributes of personality are ascribed to Him. He has intelligence (1 Cor. 2:10-11), emotion (Eph. 4:30), and will (1 Cor. 12:11). Furthermore, the actions of a person are attributed to Him. In Acts 13, He communicates (Acts 13:2), He calls (Acts 13:2), and He commissions (Acts 13:3). More could be added, such as the names and titles used of Him imply personality, but suffice it to say, the Holy Spirit is a person.

The Bible does not make sense if the Holy Spirit is not a person. In Matthew 28:19, the disciples were told to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The first two names indicate persons. If the third is not a person, the statement ceases to make sense. Imagine, "Baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and of an impersonal power." If the Holy Spirit is simply a force like the wind, Acts 15:28 would have to be rendered, "It seemed good to the wind and to us." If the Holy Spirit is just a power, Acts 10:38 would have to be translated "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with power and with power."

R. A. Torrey said, "It is of the highest importance from the standpoint of worship that we decide whether the Holy Spirit is a divine person worthy to receive our adoration, our faith, our love or simply an influence emanating from God or a power that God imparts to us. If the Holy Spirit is a divine person and we know it not, we are robbing a divine being of the love and adoration that are His due. It is of the highest importance that we decide whether the Holy Spirit is a power that we in our weakness and ignorance, are somehow to get hold of and use, or whether the Holy Spirit is a personal being, infinitely wise, infinitely holy, infinitely tender, who is to get a hold of and use us. The one concept is heathenish, the other Christian. This one concept leads to self-humiliation, self-emptying, and self-renunciation. The other concept leads to self-exaltation. It is of the highest experimental importance that we know the Holy Spirit as a person. Many can testify to the blessedness that comes into their lives when they come to know the Holy Spirit, not merely as a gracious influence (emanating, it is true, from God), but as an ever-present loving friend and helper" (Torrey, *What the Bible Teaches*, p. 225).

A Divine Person The Holy Spirit is not only a person; He is God, which is indicated by His very title. He is called the *Holy* Spirit (Acts 5:3), the Spirit of the Lord (Acts 5:9), as well as being plainly acknowledged as deity (Acts 5:3-4).

His associations also prove his deity. He is associated with the other members of the Trinity (Mt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 12:4-6). Furthermore, He has the attributes and the actions of deity. He is said to be omniscient (1 Cor. 2:10-11), omnipotent (Gen. 1:2) and omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-10), as well as holy (Acts 5:3). He was involved in the creation of the world (Gen. 1:2), in begetting Jesus (Lk. 1:35), in the acts of regeneration (Jn. 3:5-6), and in the sanctifying of believers (2 Thess. 2:13).

Therefore, the Holy Spirit is God. He is co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father and the Son. The deity of the Holy Spirit is not a significant issue today. If people accept the doctrine of the Trinity, they automatically assume the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, but that has been an issue in the past.

About AD 318 in Alexandria, a man named Arius taught that the Father alone was God. Christ, in his view, was a created being and so was the Holy Spirit. This resulted in one of the greatest controversies in church history. Councils were called; debates raged. Arianism, as it was called, was branded as a heresy. From that day to this, orthodox Christianity has affirmed the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit. As Charles Hodge says, "Since the

fourth century, His true divinity has never been denied by those who admit His personality" (Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, p. 527).

The Work of the Holy Spirit in General

The second question concerning the Holy Spirit is, "What does He do? The answer to that question fills books on the Holy Spirit. The Bible reveals that the Holy Spirit has done and is doing many things in relationship to the universe, to humanity in general, and to Christ in particular, not to mention His work in the lives of believers.

Creation God created the universe. Most references to God as Creator do not refer to any particular member of the Trinity. For example, Genesis 1:1 says, "God created the heavens and the earth." Nevertheless, some passages indicate all three members of the Trinity were involved in the creation, including God the Father ("By the word of the LORD the heavens were made," Ps. 33:6), God the Son ("All things were made through Him, and without Him, nothing was made that was made," Jn. 1:3), and God the Holy Spirit ("The earth was without form and void, and darkness *was* on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters," Gen. 1:2). The Holy Spirit was also involved in the creation of human beings (in the book of Job, Elihu said, "The Spirit of God has made me," Job 33:4).

Christ The Holy Spirit was involved in the earthly ministry of Christ. He was involved in the conception of Jesus. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins" (Mt. 1:18-21).

The Holy Spirit was present at the baptism of Christ. "When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'" (Mt. 3:16-17).

The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus to preach. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read Isaiah and applied it to Himself. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Lk. 4:14-15).

The Holy Spirit was involved in the temptation of Christ. "Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil" (Mt. 4:1).

Jesus worked miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit. He said He cast out demons by the Spirit of God (Mt. 12:28).

Inspiration The Holy Spirit inspired the Word of God. He worked through the men who wrote the Old Testament. For example, Paul said, "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers" (Acts 28:25). Peter says, "Prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet.

1:21). The men were not inspired; they were moved. The words were inspired. "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Unbelievers

The third question is, "What does the Holy Spirit do now, especially in unbelievers?"

Convince the World Jesus says, "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn. 16:8). The idea of conviction is complex (Westcott). The Greek word translated "convict" means "to expose, convict, convince, reprove." It involves the concepts of authoritative examination, unquestionable proof, decisive judgment, and punitive power. He who convicts places the truth of the case in such a clear light that it must be seen and acknowledged as truth. He who rejects the conclusion rejects it with open eyes and at his peril (Westcott). Morris says it denotes prosecutor (*cf.* also Derickson and Radmacher). "Convince" is a good translation (Plummer; Ryrie). Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, people do not really know the truth about sin, righteousness, or judgment.

The next three verses give three areas of conviction (sin, righteousness, and judgment). Each is followed by a clause that begins with "because." The Greek word translated "because" can be translated "because," indicating the cause or reason, or "that," indicating the content of the conviction. Derickson and Radmacher say it is "because" principally because verse 10 can only make good sense if understood causally.

Of Sin The Holy Spirit will convict the world "of sin, because they do not believe in Me" (16:9). The Holy Spirit does not convict the world *of* the sin of unbelief, but *because* of their unbelief (Plummer; Morris). The world does not believe; they are in sin. So the Holy Spirit convinces them they are sinners. Even though Derickson and Radmacher say the "because" clauses are causal and not explanatory, they say that sin here is the sin of unbelief. They cite such passages as John 3:18, 8:24, 9:40-41.

Of Righteousness The Holy Spirit will convict the world "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more" (16:10). After His departure, Jesus will no longer be here to be the standard for righteousness. So, the Holy Spirit will convict the world of their need of righteousness and of the nature of righteousness. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus place righteousness in a new light (Westcott). "His return to the Father (resurrection and ascension) is evidence used by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate Jesus' righteousness and the world's evil" (Derickson and Radmacher). "The Spirit shows man (and no one else can do this) that their righteousness before God depends not on their own efforts but on Christ's atoning work for them" (Morris).

Of Judgment The Holy Spirit will convict the world "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged" (16:11). Satan, the ruler of this world, rules in the hearts of men and blinds their minds, but he was judged at the cross, so now the Holy Spirit will convince men of judgment to come. Satan's judgment indicates there is a final judgment.

To sum up the situation, people do not believe that they are sinners, that they need righteousness, or that they will be judged. Satan has blinded their eyes and Jesus is not here to open them. So He will send the Holy Lawyer and convince and persuade the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Westcott makes several interesting observations, including that these three items deal with the past, the present, and the future and that sin has to do with people, righteousness with Christ, and judgment with Satan. He also points out that when the convicting work of the Holy Spirit is complete, people have to choose between two alternatives. On the one hand, that righteousness is to be obtained from outside of them and, on the other hand, of a judgment to be faced.

It has been said, "Conscience and the Holy Spirit are the two great prosecutors of the soul! Because so many confuse the role of each, it might be well to define their respective spheres of operation. The conscience convicts the unbeliever of sins committed, of righteousness forfeited, and of judgment to come. The work of the Holy Spirit is much more gracious, for He convicts of sins remitted, of righteousness provided, and of a past judgment! Conscience primarily focuses its attention upon our failures and warns of coming judgment, while the Holy Spirit primarily focuses our eyes upon Christ by whom sins are remitted, a perfect righteousness is provided, and upon whom the judgment for our guilty souls has already fallen at Calvary. Conscience can only convict a man, but the Holy Spirit can also incline him to receive the pardon for his crimes and enter a new life of victory. Has the Holy Spirit done His indispensable work in your heart?" (*Our Daily Bread*, 8/26/1959). There is some truth here, but it may be more accurate to say that the conscience convicts based on what has been programmed into it, which may be God's truth and which may not be God's truth, whereas the Holy Spirit convinces people of the truthfulness of God's Word.

Summary: The Holy Spirit is a divine person who created the world, worked in the life and ministry of Christ, inspired Scripture, and convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

It would not be too much to say that without the Holy Spirit's work, we would not have the universe, the life and ministry of Christ, and the Word of God in our hands.

This is a great encouragement to evangelism. The believer speaks and the Holy Spirit does the work. The Holy Spirit will testify of Jesus: "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning" (Jn. 15:26-27). The Holy Spirit is coming to testify of Christ, yet the disciples are to bear witness to Him for, as Jesus says, the disciples have been with Jesus from the beginning of His ministry (Westcott). Therefore, they could bear witness to what they had seen and heard. As they speak, the Holy Spirit would do His work of testifying concerning Jesus.

1. Ask for an opportunity. "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward those *who are* outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always *be* with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one" (Col. 4:2-6).
2. To get started, ask a question.
3. Trust the Lord for the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord meets you at the point of obedience.

THE INITIAL WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the first message in the series on the Holy Spirit, I introduced Him by mentioning who He is and what He does. I talked about the fact that He is a divine person who was involved in the creation, the life and ministry of Christ, the inspiration of the Scripture, and He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. I also said the subject was so vast that I would restrict it to the work of the Holy Spirit in relationship to believers. Actually, the work of the Holy Spirit in relationship to believers is so large, it will take me half a dozen messages to cover it. He is involved in every aspect of the spiritual life of believers. Let's start with what he does at conversion.

Regenerates

The Passage "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (Titus 3:4-6).

God saves through the washing of regeneration. This phrase has been extensively debated. The word "washing" has been rendered "laver" and understood as a baptismal pool (Fairbairn; Alford). In this view, washing (that is, laver) is not the act of washing but the place of washing, and thus, this verse is said to support baptismal regeneration. In the first place, the word "washing," in classical Greek (Hiebert) and in the singular in the New Testament (Humphreys), as here, means "washing." Moreover, if Paul had intended to say "laver," another Greek word would have been expected (Kent).

"Regeneration" is a compound Greek word made up of "new" and "birth." Thus, the "washing of regeneration" is cleansing sin at the new birth. In other words, God saves by the Holy Spirit cleansing at regeneration. This is done through the Word (Hiebert), not through water (Eph. 5:26; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23). As people hear the word of truth, the gospel, and believe, the Holy Spirit cleanses them from sin and imparts new life.

God also saves by the renewing of the Holy Spirit. Paul speaks of "the washing of regeneration *and* renewing of the Holy Spirit." The nature of the Greek construction makes two different renderings possible. Either regeneration is further defined as renewing the Holy Spirit (Hendriksen; Kent), or two operations are described: regeneration and renewal (Trench; Alford; Fairbairn; Hiebert; Guthrie). In support of the second alternative is the fact that the word "renew" only occurs twice in the New Testament, here and in Romans 12:2, where it clearly refers to what takes place after regeneration and not at regeneration.

Paul adds, "whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior" (3:6). In other words, God has made abundant provision for the Holy Spirit to renew us (Hiebert). An inadequate experience of the renewal is not because believers do not have an adequate supply of the Holy Spirit. It is because believers do not walk in the Spirit.

Thus, in this passage, when Paul says God "saves us" (3:5), he is not just referring to our initial salvation (regeneration) but also to our progressive salvation (renewal). Believers today think that being saved refers to what happens when people first trust Christ, but the New Testament uses the terms "saved" and "salvation" for several different

experiences of the Christian life. The biblical concept of spiritual salvation can be divided into three parts. For believers, salvation is past, present, and future. They have been saved (Titus 3:5), they are being saved (1 Cor. 1:18; 1 Tim. 4:16; Jas. 1:21), and they will be saved (Rom. 13:11; 1 Pet. 1:5; Heb. 9:27-28).

The Explanation The theological definition of regeneration is "to impart new life." The popular expression is "born again." All humans were born dead (Eph. 2:1). Upon hearing that Jesus Christ died for sin and rose from the dead, being convicted, enlightened, and drawn by the Holy Spirit, and putting their faith in Jesus Christ, people are born again. At that point, the Holy Spirit imparts new life to them (2 Pet. 1:23-25). The life He imparts is God's life (2 Pet. 1:4), an eternal kind of life (Jn. 1:13; 3:15). Therefore, the definition of the doctrine of regeneration is: At the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit imparts new life to the believer (Titus 3:5).

Regeneration is not reformation; it is transformation. Once upon a time, a man had a pet pig who ate slop and wallowed in the mud. The problem was that the pig wanted to live in the house with his master. So, occasionally, after wallowing in the mud, he would go through the back door and make himself at home on the living room sofa. The master wanted to teach him not to sit in the mud and then sit on his sofa. He tried everything, including lectures, lashes, and a leash. Nothing worked. It's tough to reform a pig.

The Illustration Suppose that by some supernatural power, the master could put the nature of a sheep inside his pet pig. The pig would be transformed. He would have a new kind of life, bringing new types of desires. Then, he would have to be taught how to follow the inclinations of his new life instead of his old one.

A Marxist, speaking in Hyde Park, pointed to a man in rags and exclaimed, "Communism can put a new suit of clothes on that man!" A nearby Christian responded, "Christ can put a new man in that suit!"

Indwells

John 14 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray for the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (Jn. 14:15-17).

In the upper room discourse, there are five discussions of the ministry of the Holy Spirit (14:16-17, 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:7, 16:13-14). In this passage, the prayer of Jesus is for *another* Helper. There are two different Greek words translated "another." One means "another of a different kind." The second means "another of the same kind." For example, someone could say, "I have another suit," meaning another of a different kind: "This one is wool and the other is a blend." Or, the same sentence could mean, "I have another of the same kind. This one is wool and so is the other." In this verse, the Lord is saying that He will pray that the Father will send another Helper, and He uses the Greek word, which means another of the same kind. Therefore, the Trinity is in this verse.

The point is that another Helper is coming. The Greek word translated "helper" is *paraclete*, a Greek word that means "to call to one's aid; hence, an advocate, a pleader, an intercessor." It was used of a friend of the accused person called to speak to his character or otherwise enlist sympathy in his favor (A-S). The word has the secondary notion of counseling, supporting, or aiding that individual. The sense is advocate, counselor, one

who pleads, convinces, convicts, one who strengthens on the one hand and defends on the other (Westcott; Plummer). Christ is our advocate (1 Jn. 2:1). He also gives believers another advocate. Christ pleads our case before the Father. The Holy Spirit pleads our case before the world (cf. 16:8).

Jesus is our advocate, but He is leaving. Will the new advocate leave too? The answer is, "No." The assuring words of Jesus are that this advocate will abide forever. The permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit implies eternal security (Derickson and Radmacher).

The Lord identifies the advocate as the Spirit of truth. This, of course, is the Holy Spirit, who is referred to as the Spirit of truth (cf. 15:26, 16:13; 1 Jn. 4:6) because He guides into all truth (16:13). In the Greek text, the expression "Spirit of truth" can either mean the Holy Spirit is characterized by truth, or He communicates truth. Subsequent references to the Holy Spirit in the upper room discourse indicate the Holy Spirit is the one who communicates truth. He teaches (14:26), testifies (15:26-27), and guides into all truth (16:13).

The Lord adds that the world cannot receive or know Him. The reason they do not receive Him or know Him is that they do not see Him, meaning they do not perceive or discern Him (cf. Jn. 3:3; 1 Cor. 2:14). The Greek text here, as well as in 1 Corinthians 2:14, indicates that they are not able to see Him. On the other hand, the Lord tells them, "You will know Him for He dwells with you and shall be in you." In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit temporarily indwelt believers; He permanently indwells them in the New Testament. Some suggest that Jesus is referring to a corporate indwelling. "The Holy Spirit's ministry is more corporate than private (Derickson and Radmacher, who cite the plural "you" and 1 Cor. 3:16).

In the Greek text of John 14:16-17, three different prepositions describe the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the believer. He is said to be *with* them for fellowship, to abide *by* them, to defend them, and *in* them as a source of power (Plummer).

1 Corinthian "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 19-20).

Paul asks, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" (6:19). Even if you do not see that immorality is a sin against your body, are you ignorant of the fact that your body houses the Holy Spirit? The Spirit who dwells in each believer is "from God," denoting His origin and essence. That insertion also indicates that the Spirit is a gift given by God. His presence signals that the believer is not his own. God has moved in; the body—His house—now belongs to Him.

Paul explains (cf. "for"), "For you were bought at a price" (6:20). The price was high—it cost Jesus Christ His life in that He died for our sins so that we might be His possession and dwelling place. So, taking possession is legitimate because of the purchase price payment.

The conclusion is, "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (6:20). Actually, the Greek word translated "therefore" is not the usual Greek word translated "therefore." This Greek word means something like "now, surely, certainly." In

light of your body being the temple of the Holy Spirit, surely you should glorify God in your body.

There are two commands in this paragraph, one negative and one positive. In 1 Corinthians 6:18, Paul said, "Flee fornication." Now, he urges the believer to glorify God in his body. This admonition goes beyond the previous one. To glorify is to magnify, to manifest (Jn. 16:14). Believers are not only to abstain from impurity but positively use their body as an instrument for righteousness, displaying God's love to others. After all, the body is God's temple. It should show forth His glory.

"Be careful how you handle that wrapped box," someone explains, "because of what is inside." In a similar fashion, believers should be careful about how they handle their bodies because of what is inside.

The Holy Spirit moves in and takes up residence in the life of the believer.

When people move into a new house, usually one of the first things they do is clean it. In a similar fashion, the Bible speaks of the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5). With the new life, there is a bath, and then the Holy Spirit moves in His new dwelling. The body of the believer is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Seals

Paul explains, "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13). These *Gentiles* first heard the word of truth, further defined here as the gospel of salvation. The gospel is the good news that Christ died for our sins and rose from the dead (1 Cor. 15:1-8). When they believed, they were sealed. The sealing did not occur *after* faith, but *at the moment* of faith (Toussaint). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of promise; Christ promised to send Him (Lk. 24:29; Jn. 14:6; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5).

The sealing work of the Holy Spirit indicates and illustrates several things: 1) ownership. A cattle brand on a Texas longhorn is a sign of identification showing which ranch it belongs to. 2) promise, like the seal of an engagement ring. When a fellow gives a girl that sparkling diamond ring, there is a great sense of promise about it. That's one of the reasons she is so excited about it. There are good things ahead. 3) security. When a letter is sealed, it is secured, especially if it is an important letter like a registered letter. Human seals can be broken. A dishonest person can break the seal of a letter; a thief can steal a Texas longhorn and a fickle fiancé can break an engagement. True, but the seal of the Holy Spirit is God's seal. Ephesians 4:30 indicates that the Holy Spirit remains until the day of redemption when Christ returns to redeem our bodies. He does not renege on His promises (Heb. 13:5).

Earnest Concerning the Holy Spirit, Paul adds, "Who is "the guarantee of our inheritance" (1:14a). The Greek word translated "guarantee" means "earnest," a first installment, a partial payment that guarantees full payment in the future. When purchasing a house, the buyer puts down earnest money, a down payment with a promise of more to come. What is given is related to what is to come—as part of the whole (Lightfoot). The Holy Spirit is the first installment. More is coming, more of the same. The present gift is only a fraction of that which is to come. The deposit of the Holy Spirit is a little bit of heaven now. There is much more to come later.

The word "our" is a return to the first person and brings together the Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians mentioned above. By the presence of the Holy Spirit, both groups are guaranteed an inheritance.

This sealing and earnest are "until the redemption of the purchased possession" (1:14b). This refers to the redemption of the body at the return of Christ (4:30). Believers have been sealed and have received the Holy Spirit as an earnest until Christ returns "to the praise of His glory" (1:14c), that is, that God's glory should be praised (Hodge).

The point of these verses is to praise God for His grace, whereby He sealed us and gave us the earnest of the Holy Spirit. As thy hymn writer has said,

Now I belong to Jesus; Jesus belongs to me,
Not for the years of time alone but for eternity.
(Norman J. Clayton)

Summary: At our conversion, the initial work of the Holy Spirit is to give us new life, indwell us, and seal us until the Lord returns.

Sin can destroy the fellowship with the Lord, but it cannot destroy the relationship with the Lord. Two brothers can lose the relationship, but they cannot destroy the fact that they are brothers.

Let not your heart be troubled. "Peter said to Him, 'Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.' Jesus answered him, 'Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times. Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, also believe in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also'" (Jn. 13:37-14:3).

Nothing we do can change the fact that we are children of God, but we need to be aware that the Lord himself, in the person of the Holy Spirit, dwells within us.

"In my first year of marriage, my wife and I got into a disagreement while visiting a family member's home. We went to the guestroom to hash it out privately, but we had no idea how badly we were about to embarrass ourselves. While in the guestroom, our tempers flared. Unfortunately, I became particularly disrespectful until suddenly, my wife's face dropped and she said, 'Oh my gosh- the baby monitor is right next to you.'

"This was significant because the baby monitor speaker was sitting in the living room and our hosts were home. I was unfazed. 'Don't worry,' I said, 'I turned it off right before we came in here.'

" Without missing a beat, I continued rehashing my grievance until we got tired of arguing and my wife left the room. Then she immediately returned and said, with icy composure, 'I just went into the living room. You didn't turn the baby monitor to the 'off' position. You turned it to voice activation.'

"We both felt like we were going to die, hoping that, by some chance, nobody had heard our nasty argument. Back then, we learned they had. We were humiliated. Even when there hasn't been a baby monitor broadcasting our tension, marriage has humbled my wife and me. It is often made us face our ugly side and it still does sometimes. Perhaps you can relate.

"On the outside, you're the decent person who's easy to get along with. You never tell off a coworker or post an insult on someone's Facebook page. You are likable, respectful and kind. You're even admirable. But when the doors close at home, someone else emerges: the real you. Surely, you're a good spouse overall, but then there's that other side. Maybe you're constantly critical of your spouse, but you're hypersensitive to any negative comments. Maybe you slammed doors when you were angry or raised the volume of your voice to shut the other person up. Or perhaps you're the icy cold type who body slams your spouse with the silent treatment.

"What if people got to listen to that other person on the other end of the baby monitor? You probably offer the same excuse you tell yourself: 'I'm not really like that- I'm just reacting to the other person.' Whatever. That's just another way of admitting that your spouse brings out who you really are.

"If the real you, the best you, is going to emerge in your marriage, it will require dealing with yourself first- that doesn't come naturally to any of us and sure doesn't for me. But when I'm at my best, there are some things I'm willing to do to move in the right direction: 1. Apologize: own my part- even- if it's just a small part. 2. Forgive: follow the example of Jesus, who forgave when nobody had apologized yet (Romans 5:8). 3) Pray: internally confess to God that I don't know what to do, and I need His help. 4. Listen: focus on understanding my wife's position instead of shooting it down as fast as possible. 5. Touch: eliminate the physical distance by touching MY wife's hand; it makes it harder for me to be emotionally distant.

"This isn't a magical formula for conflict resolution- I haven't found that formula yet. These are just small but monumental steps and take as we seek to resolve our differences in marriage. They are steps to becoming the kind of spouse we would like to be if other people were listening to the other end of the baby monitor" (Joshua Rogers).

In our case, the baby monitor is not on. The relatives are not listening in the other room. Our situation is that the Holy Spirit lives inside of us!

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The most controversial issue in the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostalism teaches that after salvation, believers need a second experience called the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the evidence that you have is that you will speak in tongues. Not all Christians agree with that. Hence, the controversy. The first, and perhaps the foremost, issue is, "When does the baptism of the Holy Spirit take place in the life of the believer?" Beyond that, the issue is the significance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues.

When Do Believers Receive the Baptism?

The Promise John the Baptist predicted that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33). After the resurrection, Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). At this point, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was still in the future.

The Fulfillment The baptism of the Holy Spirit began in Acts 2. The expression "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" does not appear in Acts 2. Acts 2 says they were "all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4), but what is said later in the book of Acts indicates this was the beginning of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

While Peter was preaching to the people in Cornelius' house, "the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word" (Acts 10:44). Again, the expression "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" does not appear in Acts 10, but what is said later indicates that this is what happened.

When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he explained what happened in Cornelius' house by saying, "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. Then I remember the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you should be baptized with the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 11:15-16). The expression "as upon us at the beginning" can only refer to Acts 2 because in Acts 1 the baptism of the Holy Spirit was still future (Acts 1:5). So these verses in Acts 11 explain that what happened in Acts 2 and Acts 10 was the baptism of the Holy Spirit and that the baptism of the Holy Spirit began on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

The Problem The confusion and conflict over when the baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place today. In Acts 2, people receive baptism *after* their conversion. In Acts 10, it happened *at* conversion. What is the norm?

In Acts, receiving the Holy Spirit *after* conversion was extremely rare. It was not the norm. In the approximate 30 years covered in the book of Acts, people received the Holy Spirit after conversion only three times (Acts 2, 8, 19). Moreover, the New Testament does not recognize the possibility of being a Christian apart from the possession of the Spirit (Jn. 3:5; Acts 11:17; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Gal. 3:2; 1 Thess. 1:5ff.; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 6:4; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Jn. 3:24; 4:13).

If it was not the norm, why did the baptism of the Holy Spirit happen *after* conversion on three occasions in Acts? The first baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred was in Acts 2. Since the baptism of the Holy Spirit first happened to people who were already believers, obviously, it had to happen *after* their conversion. In Acts 8, if the Holy Spirit had come

on the Samaritans apart from the laying on of hands of Peter and John, there would have forever been two churches because the Jewish Christians and the Samaritan Christians would have had nothing to do with each other. So, the baptism of the Holy Spirit came on the Samaritans after their conversion by the laying on of hands to establish unity between the Jewish church in Jerusalem and the Samaritan church in Samaria. In Acts 19, disciples of John the Baptist said they had not heard of the coming of the Holy Spirit. In other words, they missed out on what happened on the day of Pentecost. Before the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, believers were not baptized with the Holy Spirit (Jn. 16:13; Acts 1:5; 2:4; 11:15-16; 1 Cor. 12:13). So in that case, they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit after their conversion.

In the case of Acts 19, there was another factor. Part of the purpose of the latter part of the book of Acts is to demonstrate the authority of the apostle Paul. Paul was able to do all that Peter did. Hence, in Acts 19, Paul was able to lay hands on the believers who were converted in the ministry of John the Baptist before Pentecost so that he could do what Peter did in Acts 8.

Therefore, except for a few special occasions, which occurred for special reasons, after Pentecost, every believer receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit at conversion (1 Cor. 12:13). Contrary to the Pentecostal movement, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a work of the Holy Spirit subsequent to salvation. All believers are baptized into the body of Christ at conversion (Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10). There are no commands or conditions for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the one person in the New Testament who wanted to seek something connected with the Holy Spirit was rebuked sharply (Acts 8:18-24).

By the way, that means that since the baptism of the Holy Spirit began on the day of Pentecost and it places believers in the body of Christ, which is the church (Eph. 1:22-23), the church began on the day of Pentecost.

What is the Significance?

Six verses in the epistles refer to the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21). The only passage that gives a detailed explanation is Romans 6. In the most detailed discussion of the spiritual life in the New Testament (Rom. 6-8), Paul begins with the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:1-14). It is the foundation of the spiritual life. There are three imperatives in Romans 6:1-14.

Know The first command in Romans 6:1-14 is "know" (Rom. 6:3, 6). Believers need to know several things.

1. Believers need to know that they were baptized into Christ. Paul says, "Or did you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Rom. 6:3). Simply put, believers were united to Christ (Rom. 6:5). When I got married, I was united to Patricia. We became one.

2. Believers need to know that they were baptized into Christ's death. Paul says, "We were buried with Him through baptism into death" (Rom. 6:4; see also 6:3, 5-6). What does that mean? Something died. What died? Paul says the old man died (Rom. 6:6). The expression "old man" has been interpreted to mean the believer's sinful nature as if it were some part inside the believer that died.

An old deacon who frequently led the prayer meetings would often conclude his petitions with the words, "O Lord, clean all the cobwebs out of my life!' Finally, a man who lived next door to him could stand it no longer, for he knew that he was a self-seeking, carnal Christian. So one Wednesday night, when the old fellow ended in his usual manner, his neighbor jumped to his feet and shouted, "Don't do it, Lord! Don't do it! Make him kill the spider!" Some think of the old man as a spider that can be killed. I wish it were that easy.

The word "man" does not refer to just *part* of a person. The "old man" is the *whole man* who lived before conversion. The old man is the man of old who existed before the believer came to Christ. This person was crucified with Christ. He no longer exists. Simply put, believers in Jesus Christ are not the same people they were before conversion. When I got married, I was united to Patricia. The old Mike, *the single Mike*, died. He no longer exists. He is dead to blondes, brunettes, and redheads.

God had two purposes in mind in crucifying the old man (see the two clauses that begin with "that" in Rom. 6:6). First, the old man was crucified "that the body of sin might be done away with" (Rom. 6:6). Colossians 2:11, a parallel passage to this one, indicates that the body of sin is used figuratively of the mass of sin. This mass of sin was abolished when the old man was crucified with Christ.

The second purpose was "that we should no longer be slaves to sin" (Rom. 6:6). The old man, who was a slave to sin, was crucified. The believer is now a new person who does not have to be a slave to sin. Believers *should* no longer be slaves, but they could be if they do not follow Paul's instructions in this passage (Rom. 7:23).

Paul explains ("for"): "For he who has died has been freed from sin" (Rom. 6:7). The word translated "freed" is the Greek word "justification," which is a forensic term. In a figurative sense, the word means "freed." The idea is that the believer no longer has any legal obligation to sin. Sin lost its case in court. The illustration comes from slavery. A slave owner has legal claims over a slave. The slave is legally obligated to obey, but if the slave is dead, he is freed from that obligation. If the slave owner were to order the slave to lie or kill, the slave would have to say, "My tongue and my hands no longer obey me *as a slave*."

3. Believers need to know that they were baptized into Christ's resurrection (Rom. 6:4-5). Spiritually, believers are raised to walk a new kind of life (Rom. 6:4). They are alive to God (Rom. 6:11). When I got married, I began a new kind of life, married life.

4. Believers need to know that they were baptized into Christ's body (1 Cor. 12:13). When I got married, I was united to Patricia's family. You don't marry a person; you marry a family.

The point of Romans 6 is that believers do not have to sin (Rom. 6:2, 6, 7). Believers can live a new kind of life with Christ (Rom. 6:4, 8). Believers may sin, but they do not have to; they can choose not to sin. A prisoner has to obey the warden, but when he is pardoned and set free, he is no longer obligated to obey what the warden commands prisoners to do. Believers in Jesus Christ have been freed from sin. They are no longer obligated to obey the impulses of the flesh.

Believe The second command in Romans 6:1-4 is believe. "Now if we died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him" (Rom. 6:8-9). Paul's explanation (see "for" in 6:10) is that Christ died *once* and He now lives unto God (Rom.

6:10). He says, “Likewise you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:11). “Reckon” is an accounting term that means “to take into account, calculate.” This passage is virtually equivalent to “believe.” It is one thing to know that you are dead to sin; it is another to believe it. It is one thing to know the governor has pardoned you and you are no longer a prisoner; it is another to accept that as true.

If you reckon wrong, you will make a mistake. I reckoned I had $159 in my checking account when I only had $59. Thankfully, my overdraft protection prevented a bounced check when I paid a $61 parking ticket.

The concept of Romans 6:8-11 is similar to, if not the same as, the modern concept of “self-image.” If we believe that we are dead, we will act accordingly. At conversion, God makes us new. We must reckon by faith that we are indeed new creatures in Christ. Sin is no longer to be the center of our lives. Christ is to be the focus.

A number of women who had facial defects of one kind or another went to a plastic surgeon requesting that the defect be corrected so that they could be beautiful. He performed plastic surgery on all of them. To his surprise, some of them concluded that the defect was corrected and, therefore, they were beautiful. Others, however, responded to the surgery by saying they were still ugly. The plastic surgeon said that the difference was not the fact of their facial features but of their self-image. Those who believed that they were beautiful concluded they were beautiful. Those who believed they were ugly concluded they were ugly. The surgeon ultimately wrote a book entitled *Psycho-cybernetics*. His name was Maxwell Maltz.

In a similar fashion, believers need to reckon on the fact that radical surgery has been done. They are now new creatures in Christ and are capable of righteous living. This is not to say that they are no longer capable of sin. As Paul will explain later, they still have the flesh and are very much capable of sin. However, their basic nature is that they are now new creatures in Christ. Some teach that Christians are saved sinners, that is, their basic nature is that they are sinners and they happen to be saved. The New Testament teaches that we are saints who happen to still have the flesh.

The Puritan theologian John Owen once wrote that his biggest challenge as a pastor was persuading non-Christians that they were slaves to sin and Christians that they were dead to sin. We need to undergo a paradigm shift in our thinking to see ourselves differently as those introduced to a new way of living.

Obey The third command in Romans 6:1-14 is obedience. Paul writes, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts, and do not present your members to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Rom. 6:12-13).

The believer, being in Christ, is dead to sin. As every believer knows, sin is still a problem. The sin principle is still present and can express itself through “the mortal body,” that is, the body destined to death, but sin has no right to reign; therefore, Paul says, do not obey sin, but God. Don’t use any member of your body to sin; use the members of your body, like your legs, arms, and mouth, as instruments of righteousness unto God. Don’t use your hands to steal or your mouth to lie. Use your hands to help others and your mouth to praise God. In short, obey the Lord. You have a choice.

Summary: At the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit place the believer into Christ and His body, uniting them to Him and all other believers.

Perception of self determines personal behavior. The critical issue is that we understand that, as believers in Christ, we are new creatures. We must reckon on that new position and act accordingly. A friend of mine told me about stopping at a stop sign and being hit by the car behind him, which did not stop. There was no great damage done to life or limb or either car, but my friend's first response was anger because this accident was going to make him late for an appointment. Before he got out of the car, he said to himself, "I do not have to be angry. I am a believer in Christ, who can be kind. I believe that, and I choose to, on this occasion, do that." He then got out of the car and was kind to an embarrassed motorist.

Paul indicates that all believers receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit *at* conversion. Remember, this is said to a group guilty of gross sins, factions, and defections from the faith, namely, the believers at Corinth. Besides, Ephesians 1:3 says that we are blessed with *all* spiritual blessings.

The result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that the individual is placed into the body of Christ (see "one body" in 1 Cor. 12:13). Thus, they are permanently united to Christ and to each other. It is this point that Paul picks up on and develops in 1 Corinthians 12. Believers are one body; they are united, which means they need each other, help each other, and all hurt when one hurts.

When people have a toothache, other body members feel the pain. They may even decide to have nothing to do with the tooth. Their hands, their feet, their arms and their legs could get together for a conference and decide, "This is not *my* problem. We will have nothing to do with that painful tooth," but the fact is, when one member of the body is kept awake all night, all members stay awake. Likewise, when one Christian hurts, all Christians hurt because they're all members of the same body.

When other members of a person's body realize that the aching tooth will affect them, they will all take part in helping. The feet and the legs carry the individual to the medicine cabinet. The arms and the hands see to it that the medicine gets to the tooth. Even the fingers get in on the act.

The Holy Spirit has put believers into the body of Christ. They are part of Him and part of each other. For one part of the body to be in pain and the other parts not to be sensitive to it, is to have a sick or even deformed function of the body.

Enables Having given believers new lives and taken up residence in them, as well as sealing them and placing them into the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit is now in a position to enable them to live Christian lives. Galatians 5:16 says, "This I say, then, walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." How is that done?

First, if people are to walk in the Spirit, they must know where to walk, at least in what direction. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth that guides into all truth (Jn. 16:13). The truth is a reference to the Word of God (Jn. 17:17). Thus, the Holy Spirit communicates to us through the written Word.

The Holy Spirit not only supplies instruction, but He also enables believers. Ephesians 3:16 says, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man." As believers depend upon Him to do what the Word says, He enables them to accomplish the task.

Notice carefully, however, that Galatians 5:16 says, "*Walk* in the Spirit." Walking takes effort. Paul did not say, "Sit" in the Spirit. Believers have to do something. They have to

put forth effort to walk. Adults take walking for granted, but learning to walk takes great effort and discipline. Walking in the Spirit requires the same.

To be specific and demonstrate exactly how this works, imagine a fellow having a problem with being patient with people. The Spirit of God working in his life will direct his attention to the Word of God to show him that God wants him to be patient, especially with people. Then, as he puts forth effort to be patient with others and, at the same time, depending on the Lord for grace, he will discover that God will give him the ability to exercise patience.

Summary: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the triune God (Acts 5:3, 4) who regenerates (Titus 3:5), indwells (1 Cor. 6:19), seals (Eph. 1:13), baptizes (1 Cor. 12:13), and enables the believer to obey the Word of God (Eph. 3:16).

God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, lives inside of believers and is willing to enable them to obey the Scriptures. It is life (remember regeneration) with a power assist. Simply put, believers have God's presence and God's power to implement God's precepts in their lives.

Some do not have God's presence. They are like a car without a motor. As cars were made to have motors placed inside, humans were created for God to dwell inside them. When an individual trusts Christ, God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, takes up residence within that person.

Others have God's presence, but they do not utilize God's power. They sometimes erroneously conclude that they need more of the Holy Spirit. Impossible! He is a person. How does one get one-half or one-tenth of a person? The individual who has trusted Christ has received all of the Holy Spirit he will ever get. The issue is not, "Do you have more of the Spirit?" but "Does the Holy Spirit have more of you?"

At a meeting in Philadelphia called to discuss the possibilities of inviting D. L. Moody to conduct an evangelistic campaign there, an objector said, "Do you think that Mr. Moody has a monopoly on the Holy Spirit?" The chairman answered, "No, but the Holy Spirit seems to have a monopoly on Mr. Moody." If you are a Christian, you have all of the Holy Spirit. Does He have all of you?

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Paul says believers have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph. 1:3). Those blessings include being given a new life, being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, being sealed by the Holy Spirit, and being baptized with the Holy Spirit. That is only the beginning. There are many, many more spiritual blessings. One theologian calculates that 33 things happen to believers when they trust Jesus Christ. Among the many is the fact that God gives every believer a spiritual gift.

Paul writes, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all" (1 Cor. 12:7). The Holy Spirit gives a gift to each believer. Gifts are not reserved for a few outstanding believers. The purpose of the gifts is to profit all, not for selfish satisfaction. As Hodge points out, "The power of vision is not for the benefit of the eye, but for the man."

The Designation of Spiritual Gifts

Three chapters list spiritual gifts: Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 12:28-30, and Ephesians 4:11.

Romans 12:6-8	1 Corinthians 12:8-10	Ephesians 4:11
Prophecy	Word of Wisdom	Apostle
Ministry	Word of Knowledge	Prophet
Teaching	Faith	Evangelist
Exhorting	Healing	Pastor/teacher
Giving	Working of miracles	
Leading (administration)	Prophecy	
Showing mercy	Discerning of spirits	
	Tongues	
	Interpretation of tongues	
	1 Corinthians 12:28-30	
	Apostle	
	Prophet	
	Teacher	
	Miracles	
	Healings	
	Helps	
	Administrations (leading)	
	Tongues	
	Interpretation of tongues	

These passages list 29 spiritual gifts, but there is duplication. There are only 18 different gifts. Prophecy and teaching are the only gifts to appear in all three chapters. Apostleship, administration, and helps are mentioned in two of the three.

The Division of Gifts

Speaking Gifts Peter says, "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever, Amen" (1 Pet. 4:10-11). Peter says there are *speaking* gifts and *ministering* (serving) gifts. **Speaking gifts** include **apostle, prophet, pastor/teacher, teacher, a word of wisdom, word of knowledge, exhortation, evangelism.**

Serving Gifts **Serving gifts** include **administration, giving, mercy, serving, helps, and perhaps faith and discernment.**

Sign Gifts Mark 16 mentions a third category, sign gifts. After Jesus commands the *Apostles* to preach the gospel (Mk. 16:15-16), He says, "And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name, they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues, they will take up serpents and if they drink anything deadly it will be no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover" (Mk. 16:17-18). Jesus speaks of "signs," including miracles such as casting out demons, speaking in tongues, and healing. Paul calls miracles, tongues, and healing spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:28-30). Thus, the **sign gifts** are **miracles, tongues, and healing.**

The Definition of Gifts

Sign Gifts The spiritual gift of **miracles** is the Spirit-given ability to perform miracles, such as taking up a serpent, drinking a deadly poison, and raising the dead (Mk. 16:17ff). Healing may be included in this gift. If so, this gift is the ability to do more than heal and is thus a larger gift than healing. Perhaps casting out demons is part of the gift of miracles (Robertson and Plummer), although that might involve the gift of healing. Calvin suggested that the smiting of Elymas with blindness (Acts 13:11) was an example of this gift.

The spiritual gift of **healing** is the special supernatural ability to perform miraculous healings of disease.

The spiritual gift of **tongues** is the special, supernatural ability to speak a known human language unknown to the speaker. The Greek word translated "tongues" means "languages." The only passage in the New Testament that describes tongues supports that conclusion (Acts 2:6-11).

The spiritual gift of the **interpretation of tongues** is the special ability to understand and explain what was said in the gift of tongues, that is, interpret a foreign language.

Hebrews 2 indicates that all the sign gifts have ceased. The writer to the Hebrews says, "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (Heb. 2:1-4).

It is important to note what this passage says happened and the order in which they happened.

1. The Lord spoke the message.
2. Some heard the message from the Lord (the Apostles).
3. Some ("us") heard the message from those who heard the Lord.
4. God bore witness with signs.

The question is, "Who performed the signs, those who heard the message from the Lord (the Apostles) or us?" The answer is those who heard the Lord. The word "confirmed" is in the past tense (in Greek, the aorist tense). In the Greek text, "bearing witness" is a present tense participle, which describes action contemporaneous with the main verb "was confirmed." In other words, "both the eyewitness testimony and the miraculous corroboration were past events. The verb tenses do not indicate that these things were still in the process of occurring" (Burdick, p. 38). The King James Version translates Hebrews 2:4, "God also bearing *them* witness." The word "them" is not in the Greek text, so the King James translators put it in italics, but the Greek construction indicates that they were correct in doing so.

The point of the passage is that God confirmed the messages to us by them—not to us by miraculous signs, but to us *by them who did supernatural things*. Why did those called "us" not perform the miracles? The sign gifts had ceased with those who heard the Lord (the apostles).

Several passages in the New Testament indicate that the gift of healing ceased before the New Testament canon was closed.

In AD 60, Paul healed people on the island of Malta (Ac 28:7-10), but a few years later (AD 62), he wrote that Epaphroditus "was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him and not only on him but also on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow" (Phil. 2:27). Apparently, Paul was not able to heal Epaphroditus when he first got sick. A year later (AD 63), Paul told Timothy, "No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities" (1 Tim. 5:23). If Paul still had the power to heal, why did he not heal Timothy? Years before, Paul had sent out handkerchiefs and aprons from his body to the sick by which they were healed. (Acts 19:11-12). Why did not Paul send a handkerchief with his letter? At the end of his life (AD 67), Paul left Trophemus at Miletus sick (2 Tim. 4:20). Why did Paul not heal him before he left him?

The sign gifts (Mk. 16:17) were given to confirm the word (Mk. 16:20). Evidently, the Apostles had all three of these gifts (miracles, healing, and tongues), and possibly more. Paul worked miracles (Acts 13:8-11), healed people (Acts 14:9-10), and spoke in tongues (1 Cor. 14:18). He speaks of *signs of an apostle* and mentions signs, wonders, and mighty deeds (2 Cor. 12:12). In other words, the purpose of the sign gifts was confirming the Word. If everyone performed the miracles involved in the signs of an apostle, how would the signs of an apostle be a special authentication of apostleship?

Today, the Scripture confirms the message. When Jesus was here, He said He would give no sign but the sign of Jonah, which was the miracles of His resurrection (Mt. 12:39). If people will not hear the Scripture, they will not believe if somebody risen from the dead gave them the message (Lk. 16:31).

Speaking Gifts The spiritual gift of **apostle** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to work miracles and exercise other spiritual gifts.

The spiritual gift of **prophet** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to receive direct revelation from the Lord (Num. 12:6). The revelation may or may not have been a prediction of the future. Although the prophet must be able to predict, and the test of a prophet is that *all* of his predictions come to pass (Deut. 18:15-22), if one does not receive *direct* revelation from God and does not at least on occasion predict, he is not a prophet. Thus, the gift of prophecy is the special ability to receive and relate revelation from God, including predicting the future.

The spiritual gifts of apostle and prophet were part and parcel of the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20). After the foundation was put in place, those gifts ceased (2 Pet. 2:1). Virtually all denominations agree that there are no apostles today. If all believers were to perform miracles, miracles would not serve as a sign of apostleship.

The focus should be on Scripture, not signs, on maturity, not miracles. Should we go to church to see a sign or hear the Scripture? Should we be seeking miracles or spiritual maturity?

The spiritual gift of **Pastor/teacher** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to shepherd and teach believers.

The spiritual gift of **teacher** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to teach the Word of God. Teachers, however, obtain their message from the study of the Scripture and communicate it to others (Hodge). The one who teaches informs, instructs, explains, and expounds.

The spiritual gift of a **word of wisdom** is the special supernatural ability given to a believer by the Holy Spirit to speak wisdom (Hodge). The term "word" refers to speech or discourse. This is the ability to give wise, practical advice based on the Scriptures (Hodges).

The spiritual gift of a **word of knowledge** is the special supernatural ability given to a believer by the Holy Spirit to speak knowledge. This is the ability to understand the knowledge God has revealed in His Word (13:2; Hodges). It is the ability to comprehend, systematize, and speak doctrine, concepts, and ideas of the Word. The gifted theologian is an example of this gift.

The spiritual gift of **exhortation** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to encourage and exhort believers. The Greek word translated "exhortation" means "to exhort, encourage, comfort." The exhorter may expound and enlighten, but his main emphasis is exhortation and encouragement. Luther said, "Teaching is directed to the ignorant, exhortation to those who know better."

The spiritual gift of **evangelism** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to communicate the gospel and train others to do so.

Serving Gifts

Serving Gifts The spiritual gift of **faith** is the special supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to enable the believer to believe God to do extraordinary things (13:2) in the face of enormous obstacles. George Mueller is an example of a believer with the gift of faith.

The spiritual gift of the **discerning of spirits** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to discern whether or not something said is of the Holy Spirit (Acts 16:16-18; Robertson and Plummer). A TV ad shows a man who can discern between margarine and butter. He can tell which one is the real thing and which one is the phony. He has the gift of discerning butter. Some believers have the gift of discerning of spirits.

The spiritual gift of **giving** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to liberally give money. The word rendered "liberality" means "simplicity, sincerity." The one who gives is to have singleness of purpose and not mixed motives (Sandy and Headlam). He should not have any ulterior motives.

The spiritual gift of **leading** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to lead a group of believers. The Greek word here translated "leads" means "to put before, set over, preside, rule, govern." This word is used for ruling one's own house (1 Tim. 3:4-5) and ruling in the church (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12). The Greek word rendered "diligence" means "zeal, diligence, earnestness." Leaders are to lead responsibly, with diligence, zeal, and earnestness.

The spiritual gift of **mercy** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to be the ability to minister to the sick. As giving relates to the poor, showing mercy relates to caring for the sick (Hodge). It is to be done gladly, not with gloominess.

The spiritual gift of **ministry** is the special, supernatural ability given to believers by the Holy Spirit to minister to the needy. The Greek word translated "ministry" is used in the New Testament in a general sense of all ministries and in a more narrow sense of ministering to the needy. In Romans 12, in light of the other specific ministries, the latter meaning seems to be the one Paul had in mind.

The Greek word translated **"helps"** strictly signifies "to take a burden on oneself instead of another" (Godet). The gift of helps is the ability to take another's load off and put it on oneself. This refers to various kinds of relief, like helping widows, orphans, the sick, and strangers (Robertson and Plummer). The speaking gifts, like teaching, are directed to the inner needs, while the gift of helps is more aimed at the outward physical needs.

Summary: The appropriate response to God's great mercies to us is for us to present our bodies, our minds, and our service to Him. Since Christ sacrificed Himself for us we ought to sacrifice ourselves for Him.

This does not mean, however, that you are to find your gift and only serve in that capacity. For every remarkable ability, there is a corresponding responsibility. There is a gift of exhortation, but all are to exhort one another daily. There is a gift of showing mercy. But all are to do that. There is a gift of giving, but all are to give.

So, go serve. In one of these days, you will discover your gift when: 1) You particularly enjoy performing that function. 2) You are good at it. 3) Others comment on how well you do it.

As someone has said, "Your life is God's gift to you; what you do with it is your gift to God."

Bertoldo de Giovanni was a pupil of Donatello, the greatest sculptor of his time, and he was a teacher of Michelangelo, the greatest sculptor of all time. When Michelangelo was but 14 years old, he became a student of Bertoldo. It was already obvious that he was enormously gifted. Bertoldo was wise enough to realize that gifted people are often tempted to coast rather than to grow. Therefore, he kept the pressure on his young prodigy so that he would take his work seriously. One day, he came into the studio to find Michelangelo toying with a piece of sculpture far beneath the young man's ability. The teacher grabbed that hammer, stomped across the room and smashed the work into tiny

pieces, shouting, “Michelangelo, talent is cheap; dedication is costly!” God has given us a spiritual gift. The use of those gifts is costly.

THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The most well-known expression concerning the Holy Spirit is "filling of the Holy Spirit." It appears in the Old Testament, the Gospel of Luke, the book of Acts, and the epistles, but it is rarely spoken of in the Bible, and the only place it is mentioned in the epistles is different from the rest of the references. To further complicate matters, the verse in the epistles is difficult to interpret. What does the Bible mean when it speaks about the filling of the Spirit? It depends on where it appears.

The Old Testament

In the Old Testament, the filling of the Spirit was a sovereign act of God for a specific service. "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 'See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all *manner of* workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all *manner of* workmanship" (Ex. 31:1-5).

Sometimes, it was temporary. "The LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that *was* upon him, and placed *the same* upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did *so* again" (Num. 11:25).

Apparently, sometimes, it was more permanent. "And the LORD said to Moses: "Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom *is* the Spirit, and lay your hand on him" (Num. 27:18, 1 Sam. 16:13).

It was also associated with prophesying (Num. 11:25). "Then the LORD came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took of the Spirit that *was* upon him, and placed *the same* upon the seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did *so* again" (Num. 11:25).

It was not the normal experience in the daily lives of the Old Testament saints. It was a sovereign act of God for a specific service.

The Gospel of Luke

In the Gospel of Luke, the filling seems to be a special work of the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist is said to be filled with the Spirit *from his mother's womb* (Lk. 1:15, italics added).

When Elizabeth (Lk. 1:41) and Zacharias (Lk. 1:67) are said to be filled with the Holy Spirit, they speak the **Word of God** (Lk. 1:42-55 and Lk. 1:67-79).

Zacharias is said to **prophesy** (Lk. 1:67).

The only other person said to be filled with the Spirit in the Gospel of Luke is Jesus, who is said to be filled with **wisdom** (Lk. 2:40) and the Holy Spirit (Lk. 4:1).

These four are the only ones said to be filled with the Spirit in the Gospel of Luke and, therefore, in the Gospels. In other words, in the Gospel of Luke, not many experienced the

filling; it was a special work only a few experienced and it is associated with the Word and wisdom.

The Book of Acts

Occurrences In the Book of Acts, believers were filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and spoke with other tongues (Acts 2:4). Again, the filling of the Spirit is connected with inspired utterances, in this case, speaking in different languages [Marshall says that the verb translated "addressed" ("said" in Acts 2:14) can be used of inspired utterance; see also Acts 2:17-18; 11:28].

When Peter was filled with the Spirit, He immediately spoke the Word of God (Acts 4:8).

The believers who were filled with the Holy Spirit "spoke the Word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31).

The Seven were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3). Stephen was full of faith (Acts 6:5, 6:8), the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5, 7:55), and wisdom (Acts 6:5).

Paul was filled with the Spirit (Acts 9:17) and spoke the Word of God (Acts 13:9).

Barnabas was full of the Holy Spirit and faith (Acts 11:24).

Disciples are said to be filled "with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 13:52), that is, they were filled with joy, which comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit (Bruce).

Fill Luke uses the verb "fill" eight times to describe an **event** of filling (see "filled with the Spirit" in Lk. 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:7; 13:9). It emphasizes an event, not a state. It is an instantaneous filling mainly dealing with prophetic utterance. There were no conditions; the Spirit filled the recipients as a sovereign work of God. Evidently, it was repeatable (Peter in Acts 2:4 and Acts 4:31 and Paul in Acts 9:17 and Acts 13:9). The purpose of the filling was *for a special prophetic activity* or *for boldness in their witness of the Word of God.* The fillings lasted as long as it took to accomplish the given task (Peter and Paul).

Ice concludes that since these fillings produced prophetic utterances, which only occurred in the first century, there are no such sovereign fillings today.

Full Luke uses the adjective "full" five times (Lk. 4:1; Acts 6:3, 5; 7:55; 11:24; 13:52). It describes a **state** of fullness. In other words, this is like saying a man is "full of wisdom." He does not become full instantaneously to be wise. Rather, he is exceedingly wise and therefore is said to be full of wisdom. Hence, people full of the Holy Spirit are those who consistently exhibits the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives, which indicates that their state did not come instantaneously (as in a sovereign filling), but through a growing process.

In the writings of Luke, the filling of the Spirit is associated with speaking an **inspired utterance** (Lk. 1:41, 1:67; Acts 2:14; see also Acts 11:28), **wisdom** (Lk. 2:40; Acts 6:3, 5), **faith** (Acts 6:5, 8; 11:24), and **joy** (Acts 13:52).

Ephesians 5:18

The one reference to the filling of the Spirit in the Epistles in Ephesians 5:18, which simply says, "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the

Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). It should be immediately obvious that there is a **difference** between what Luke calls the filling of the Spirit and what Paul is speaking about here. For example, John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb. That was a sovereign act of God; John did not do anything. Paul, however, commands believers to be filled; they are somehow involved. Furthermore, the Greek **construction** in Ephesians 5:18 differs from the one Luke used.

Pardon the pun, but Paul's command is filled with problems. In the Greek text, the construction of "be filled with the Spirit" is unusual (Eadie). One commentator says "There is a certain strangeness about the construction in Greek" (Foulkes). There is no article before the word "spirit" and the preposition "with" is "in." Thus, the Greek text reads, "Be filled *in* Spirit" (see *Young's Literal Translation*). There are several suggested explanations of this construction.

1. Be filled *with* the Spirit. Even though the Greek text reads "be filled in Spirit," virtually all English translations render it, "Be filled *with* the Spirit." It is commonly assumed that this imperative means that believers are to be filled *with* the Holy Spirit, as if the Holy Spirit is the substance with which one is filled, like a glass filled with water. This particular Greek construction does not mean "Be filled *with* the Spirit" (Hoehner). If that was what Paul intended, he would have used another Greek construction (Robinson). As F. F. Bruce points out, "Paul does not say, 'Become full of the Spirit,' but 'Be filled in Spirit.'"

2. Be filled *in the sphere of* the Spirit. Others insist that the interpretation is being filled in the realm of the Holy Spirit. The idea of the sphere is in Romans 8:9, where Paul says believers are not "in the flesh, but in the Spirit." What does it mean to be filled in the sphere of the Holy Spirit? In Ephesians 5, the filling is associated with walking in wisdom and understanding God's will. In fact, before Paul mentions being filled, he says, "Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). The sphere of the Holy Spirit, the author of the written Word of God, is the will and wisdom of God.

In the Scripture, the Holy Spirit is repeatedly connected to wisdom. Isaiah wrote, "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD (Isa. 11:1-2). Jesus was said to be filled with wisdom (Lk. 2:40) before it is recorded that He was filled with the Holy Spirit (Lk. 4:1). When a problem rose in the church in Jerusalem, the apostles instructed the believers to "seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3). They chose Stephen and six others (Acts 6:5). Later the unbelievers to whom Stephen spoke "were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke" (Acts 6:10).

Furthermore, in Ephesians 5:18, Paul says, "be filled with the Spirit" and says that one of the results is singing. In Colossians 3:16, he says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly," and says one of the results is singing. It has been suggested that since the result of being filled with the Spirit and the Word dwelling in believers richly both result in the same thing, they are the same thing.

3. Be filled *by means of* the Spirit. The Greek preposition translated "in" means "by means of" in Luke 22:49 (see "Shall we strike with the sword" in Lk. 22:49; Moule, *Idiom*

Book, pp. 76-77; Hoehner). Robinson translates it, "Let your fullness be that which comes through the Holy Spirit." Bruce renders it, "Let your fullness be that which the Holy Spirit produces." If that is the meaning, the content of the filling is not specifically stated, but it may refer to the fullness of the moral excellence and the power of God mentioned in Ephesians 1:23 (Hoehner).

Frankly, the Greek construction of this command can mean, "Be filled *in* the Holy Spirit" or "Be filled *by* the Spirit." Robinson says the sequence of thought appears to be, "Find your fullness through a higher instrument or in a higher sphere," adding, "It is difficult to distinguish between the fullness which comes through the Spirit and the fullness which consists in being full of the Spirit."

4. Be filled *in and by means* of the Spirit. Still, others combine the concepts of "in" and "by" (Alford; Ellicott; Fee). Alford concludes, let the Spirit "be the region in, and the ingredient with which you are filled." That view has been criticized as being a "needless refinement" (Salmond), but maybe this unusual phrase was chosen to combine the concepts of both "in" and "by." From other passages, this much is clear: the Holy Spirit empowers believers (Eph. 3:16).

Summary: The filling of the Spirit is used in several slightly different ways in the Bible, but it is most often associated with the Word of God and wisdom. Believers are to be filled in the sphere of the Spirit with the Word and wisdom of God.

Crisis There has been a great deal of confusion concerning filling the Holy Spirit. One of the misconceptions is that the filling of the Spirit happens "once for all" or in a crisis experience that may be repeated. The filling of the Spirit is not a "once-for-all experience" (Foulkes) or a crisis experience. The command in Ephesians 5:18 is in the present tense!

Control Another misunderstanding concerns the concept of control. Many say that the filling of the Holy Spirit means the control of the Holy Spirit. For example, Hodge says, "Men are said to be filled with wine when completely under its influence; so they are said to be filled with the Spirit when he controls all their thoughts, feelings, words, and actions." There is truth to that concept, but it needs to be clarified.

It is sometimes said that when believers are filled with the Spirit, they are no longer in control but under the control of the Holy Spirit. Believers are to get off the throne of their lives and put Jesus on the throne. Or, to use another illustration, the filling is like driving a car. When you are in the driver's seat, you are in control; you must get in the back seat and let Jesus drive the car. The point of both of these illustrations is that in this view of the filling of the Spirit, Jesus is in *total control* and you are passive and not in control at all.

The problem with that explanation of the control of the Spirit is that it teaches that believers are not in control of themselves, contrary to Scripture. The fruit of the Spirit is *self*-control. Besides, it doesn't work.

Years ago, I was speaking for a pastor who had recently discovered the "wonderful truth of the filling of the Spirit." He shared his experience with me as we rode down the highway in his car. He was driving; I was sitting beside him in the front seat. In the midst of the conversation, I said to him, "Are you filled with the Spirit right this minute?" He said, "I have met all the conditions for filling the Spirit." I said, "You're fudging. I want to know if you are filled with the Spirit right at this minute?" He said, "I think I have every reason to believe that the Spirit of God has filled me." I said, "You're hedging. Are you filled with the Spirit?" He finally had to admit that he must be filled with the Spirit because

he had met the conditions he was taught for the filling. I said, “Now let me clarify. That means the Lord is in control of you right now and you are not in control of yourself.” He said, “Yes, that’s right.” I said, “I have two problems with that. The first is that if that is true, what is coming out of your mouth are the words of God, which means what you say is tantamount to inspiration. My second problem with that is, why are you speeding?”

It would be better to say that the Holy Spirit is in control because He ultimately determines what is done. A better illustration of the “control” of the Holy Spirit is that you are in the front seat, behind the steering wheel, driving the car, in control, and the Lord is sitting beside you, telling you to turn left, straight, and right. In that sense, He is in control, and so are you. That is the filling, or if you will, the control of the Holy Spirit. The directions He gives us come from the Word of God. The Spirit of God, through His Word, is directing and controlling. Any explanation that suggests a believer is no longer in control is not biblical.

It is often suggested that as a drunken man is out of control, so the believer who is filled with the Spirit is out of control. A drunken man is not totally out of control; he is “under the influence.”

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The New Testament teaches believers can have the power of the Holy Spirit. Wow! Where does it say that? Why is the power of the Holy Spirit given to believers and what do they have to do to experience it?

Jesus called the coming of the Holy Spirit "endued with power." "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49). This is the only place in the New Testament where people were told "tarry" to receive the Holy Spirit. In this case, they were waiting for the Feast of Pentecost, which was fulfilled by the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Greek word translated "endued" means "put on, cloth" (see the NASB; NIV; ESV). All believers have been endued. Galatians 3:27 says, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (see Eph. 1:3; Col. 3:10). You have received the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; Phil. 3:10; 4:13).

Why is the power of the Holy Spirit given to us? Is it to work miracles like Jesus and the Apostles? Is the power given to work miracles like Moses, who parted the Red Sea, Jesus, who walked on water, and Paul, who sent out handkerchiefs to heal people? There is a difference between what is recorded in history and what is taught for us to obey. Moses worked miracles and taught the law. Jesus worked miracles and gave us the great commission. Paul worked miracles and gave us the epistles to obey. Believers are not to teach the experience of the Apostles; they are to experience the teaching of the apostles. The Greek word "power" (dunamis) means the ability to perform. In our case, it is the ability to perform the will of God. When a Christian witnesses about the cross of Christ, the Holy Spirit has the ability to effect conviction and conversion. Believers may not feel that power, but they have it.

What do believers have to do?

Deal with Sin

Paul says, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). What grieves the Holy Spirit? In a word—sin. Look at the next verse: "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4:31). Notice, it is not just major sins of action that grieve the Holy Spirit. It is what we think of as minor sins of attitude.

One of the symbols of the Holy Spirit is a dove. A car would scare doves away, but so will tossing a peanut on the ground in front of them. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is sensitive to what we think of as peanut-sized sins. We need to deal with sins, big and small, by confessing them (1 Jn. 19); forsaking them (Prov.), and replacing them (Eph. 4:32).

Do the Will of God

Paul commands, "Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19). The word "quench" means "to extinguish, to put out." It was used to put out a fire. The Spirit, here, refers to the activity

of the Spirit or the operation of the gifts of the Spirit. In other words, Paul is saying, "Do not prohibit the free exercise of spiritual gifts in the assembly." We quench the Holy Spirit when we do not do the will of God. So, in essence, this is saying, "Do the will of God."

Everything you need to know about the will of God is in the word of God.

Depend on the Holy Spirit

Paul says, "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16). How do we walk in the Spirit? Some argue that walking in the Spirit is regulating one's life by the rule/direction of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:25 says, "Let us also walk in the Spirit." The Greek word translated "walk" in verse 25 means to "walk in line." The Holy Spirit gives believers the rule, the direction by which to order their lives. This is done through the Word of God, which the Spirit of God inspired. In Galatians 5, that rule/direction is love.

Another possibility is that walking in the Spirit means "walking by means of" the Holy Spirit; that is, walking with the help of the Holy Spirit. Believers obey the Word of God by being dependent upon the Holy Spirit for enablement. The word "walk," which denotes effort, seems to be the opposite of dependence, but maybe that is the concept Paul means to convey. It is a picture of a man walking on crutches. There is effort and dependence all at the same time.

Paul speaks of the believer being "strengthened with might through the Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16). As believers trust the Lord (Eph. 3:17), they comprehend the love of Christ (Eph. 3:18-19), and are filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19), "according to the power that works in" them (Eph. 3:20).

The Holy Spirit works in the lives of believers as they pray. In fact, the spiritual life is a life of prayer. Paul says we are to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17). Several passages speak of "calling on the Lord." Paul says, "Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). The salvation spoken of here is salvation from the power of sin, not the penalty of sin. Peter says, "And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear" (1 Pet. 1:17). Paul told Timothy, "Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim. 2:22). As we call on the Lord, He grants us the grace to do what He says. "Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). The Holy Spirit was sent to help. As we call, He helps.

Summary: Believers experience the power of the Holy Spirit to do the will of God as they do not grieve the Holy Spirit, quench the Holy Spirit, and walk in the Holy Spirit.

With gas in the tank, a driver has power, that is, the ability to perform.

Do not *push* the car.

Do not wait until you *feel* the power. If he waits until he feels the power, he will never move.

Starts the engine and push the accelerator and you will experience the power. Likewise, believers should not wait until they feel the power. They should start to witness and then they will experience the power at work.

THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In this series on the Holy Spirit, I have focused on the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the believer. So far, we have seen that the Holy Spirit gives the believer new life, indwells the believer, seals the believer, baptizes the believer into the body of Christ, gives the believer a spiritual gift for service, and gives the believer the possibility of power as the believer is filled and walks in the Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is into the body of Christ, the filling of the Spirit is being filled with the Word, and walking in the Spirit is walking in the sphere of love by depending on the Holy Spirit for the power to do that.

The next topic is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. According to the apostle Paul, walking in the Spirit and producing the fruit of the Spirit is one of three possibilities. So, to put this in perspective, let's begin by looking at the three possibilities.

Three Ways to Live Life

Live according to Law The first way to live is to live according to law. The apostle Paul went to several cities in the Roman province of Galatia and established churches in those cities. After he left the province of Galatia, teachers came to those churches Paul had established and told the people that they had to keep the Mosaic Law, and they began to do that. "You observe days and months and seasons and years" (Gal. 4:10). "Days" includes the Sabbath. "Months" refers to the monthly celebrations, the new moons. "Seasons" refers to feasts that take more than one day, such as Passover and Pentecost. "Years" refers to the Sabbatical year and the year of Jubilee. In other words, the Galatian Gentile believers chose to observe the Old Testament's ceremonial and moral laws to secure divine favor. Furthermore, they were about to be circumcised (Gal. 5:2). The point of the book of Galatians is that believers today are not under the Mosaic Law (Gal. 5:1) to be right with God (Gal. 5:4), but some try to do that. So one way to live life is to live according to law, thinking that that makes you right with God or wins His favor.

Live according to the flesh A second possibility is to live according to the flesh. "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty, only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh" (Gal. 5:13a). Believers ("brethren") have been called to liberty, that is, freedom from the Law. Now, Paul exhorts them not to use that liberty as an "opportunity for the flesh." Flesh is the tendency in people to sin. Thus, Paul is urging them not to use their liberty from the Law as a beachhead to sin.

In his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Viktor Frankl says people suddenly released from mental pressure can suffer damage to their moral and spiritual health. Being free, they can use their freedom licentiously and ruthlessly. For some, the only thing that had changed for them was that "they were now the oppressors instead of the oppressed. They became instigators, not objects, of willful force and injustice." They justify their behavior "based on their own terrible experiences." "No one has the right to do wrong, not even if wrong has been done to them" (Frankl, p. 113).

Live according to this to Love The third possibility is live according to love. "But through love serve one another" (Gal. 5:13b). Serving one another prevents liberty from becoming license.

Love fulfills the law. “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Gal. 5:14). Paul is quoting Leviticus 19:18 (and possibly Christ; Mt. 22:39-40; Mk 12:31). Romans 13:8-10 explains how love fulfills the Law. The Law prohibits harm to a person’s life, marriage, property, or reputation. Love would never hurt or harm a person or his marriage, property, or reputation; hence, love fulfills the Law.

Let me illustrate: to get a junior-age boy to take a bath, comb his hair, and brush his teeth, you put him under Law. He does these things without being told when he passes puberty and falls in love. Love fulfills the law.

Love prevents destruction. Galatians 5:14 is the general principle; the next verse is the specific application. It says, “But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another” (Gal. 5:15). Paul pictures them as biting, gulping, and swallowing each other simultaneously. Imagine two snakes slowly eating each other’s tails to consume each other (A. T. Roberson).

A Life of Walking in the Spirit

Walk in the Spirit Paul says, “I say then: walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16a). This phrase can be translated either: 1) walk in Spirit, or 2) walk by the Spirit. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, walking in the realm of the Spirit (Gal. 5:25; see also 5:18 and 6:16) is walking in love (Gal. 5:13). At the same time, we are to walk in dependence on the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:16). The Holy Spirit, then, gives believers the rule, the direction by which to order their life. This is done through the Word of God, which the Spirit of God inspired. The thrust of that rule/direction is love. The Holy Spirit also enables the believers to do that as they depend on Him.

You will, not Fulfill the Desire of the Flesh “And you will not “fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16b). Walking in the Spirit prevents fulfilling the sinful desires of the flesh. Paul explains, “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary to one another so that you do not do the things you wish” (Gal. 5:17). The sinful tendency within believers and the Holy Spirit within believers are mutually exclusive. You cannot sit and stand at the same time.

You will not be Under Law The second result of walking in the Spirit is that you are not under the Law. Paul says, “But if the Spirit leads you, you are not under the law” (Gal. 5:18). Being led by the Spirit is synonymous with walking in the Spirit, not living by some inward impulse. The practical problem of living by inward impulse is, how do believers know when the impulse is the Holy Spirit, their spirit, or another spirit? The usual answer is that the impulse must not contradict Scripture or be “in line with” the Word. That prevents excesses, but it does not solve the problem. One could have an “impulse” from a spirit other than the Holy Spirit that does not contradict the Word and is even in line with it. This approach leads to subjectivism that is foreign to the tenor of the New Testament.

Being led by the Spirit is practically synonymous with walking in the Spirit. Walking emphasizes the active part believers play in putting forth effort. Being led stresses the passive part, which is the voluntary subjection of the will, but being led does not mean there is no effort. A blind man being led by another still has to walk. Being led doesn’t mean being carried.

Just as walking in the Spirit, or being led by the Spirit, excludes fulfilling the lust of the flesh, so does it exclude living by law. The Greek text has no article before “law,”

indicating that the one being led is not under *any* law, not just the Mosaic Law or any man-made law. One following the Holy Spirit is not under the law as a rule of life.

You will not be Disinherited The third result of walking in the Spirit is you will not miss your inheritance. "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like" (Gal. 5:19-20). There are four broad divisions in this list. There are sexual sins, "spiritual" sins (idolatry and sorcery), social sins, and for lack of a better term, there are "selfish sins" (Murders and drunkenness).

Paul's point is "of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21). Paul warns them now that anyone who practices such sins will not inherit the Kingdom of God. This warning is to believers. Verse 16 says if *believers* walk in the Spirit, they will not fulfill the *lust of the flesh*. No one questions that verse 16 talks about believers. Verses 19-20 list the *works of the flesh*. In other words, believers will not do this when they walk in the Spirit. Paul is not talking about *entering* the kingdom; he is talking about *inheriting* the kingdom. In the Old Testament, everyone who entered the land inherited the land. For example, the Levites did not receive land like the other tribes. There is a difference between entering a house and inheriting a house. To *inherit* the Kingdom is to rule and reign with Christ in it. To qualify for that, one must walk in the Spirit now and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh so as to produce the works of the flesh (see Mt. 19:29).

You will Produce the Fruit of the Spirit The fourth result of walking in the Spirit is, you will produce the fruit of the Spirit. Paul says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23). Notice that fruit is singular. The singular implies there is a unity in the manifestation of these virtues. Also, a fruit is a living thing that grows. The fruit of the Spirit is love, which grows. The other aspects of the fruit are also growing. Joy helps produce more joy.

Love is choosing to do what benefits the other person. Joy is an inward delight not based on nor affected by outward circumstances. Peace is an inward tranquility and serenity from knowing one is rightly related to God and others. Longsuffering is patience, which probably refers to people (endurance, which is not listed in this passage, concerns circumstances). Kindness is just that and probably refers to the disposition of the person (Lightfoot). Goodness is very similar to kindness. It has been called "kindness in actual manifestation." Stott says, "Kindness is a question of disposition and goodness of words and deeds." Faithfulness is faithfulness and trustworthiness. Gentleness refers to meekness, considerateness, and sweet reasonableness. Self-control is mastery of one's desires and impulses without reference to any particular desire or impulse.

No doubt, with a twinkle in his eye, Paul adds, "against such, there is no law," that is, there is no law against these kinds of things. This understatement underscores the superiority of the grace system. It also indicates that the nine virtues, like the long list of vices, is only suggestive (compare "such" in verse 23 with "the like" in verse 20).

You will be what You Are. The fifth and final result, yes, and even a major reason for walking in the Spirit, is that you will be what you are. "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:24-25). To understand these two verses, one must recall that the moment

believers are converted, they are crucified and raised (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:1-11). In the context of Galatians 2:20, it was the Law to which believers died. Here, it is "the flesh with its passions and desires." In the words of Eadie, "In and through union with Christ believers themselves die to the law and escape its penalty; but at the same time the flesh is also crucified, its supremacy is overthrown."

Believers not only died with Christ, but they are also raised with Christ so they might be alive to God. So Paul adds that since we live in the Spirit, let us walk in the Spirit. Galatians 5:25 sounds like an echo of Galatians 5:16, and it is. The passage has come full circle to where it began. There is, however, a slight difference. The word "walk" in verse 25 differs from "walk" in verse 16. The word here comes from the word "row" and means "to walk in line," but the idea is the same as in verse 16.

Walking by the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), being led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18), and keeping in step with the Spirit (Gal. 5:25) are three different ways of viewing the same thing. The Holy Spirit has given the believer the line to walk in that He has inspired the Scriptures. As believers obey the Word and depend on the Spirit for enablement, they are said to be walking by the Holy Spirit; they are the ones being led by the Holy Spirit.

Summary: The results of walking in the Spirit are 1) not fulfilling the desire of the flesh, 2) not being under the law, 3) not being disinherited, 4) producing the fruit of the Spirit, 5) being what you are.

Galatians 5 presents three possibilities: 1) legalism (5:1, don't be entangled again with a yoke of bondage), 2) license (5:13, don't use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh), 3) liberty (5:1, 13), which is a life of love and walking in the Spirit. Legalism produces self-righteousness. License permits sin. Liberty produces service. Don't use liberty for license; be led by the Holy Spirit. Not having the Law doesn't mean lawless. The Holy Spirit replaces the Law as a guide. Believers do not need the Law; they have Him.

Suppose I told you that you must drive 55 miles per hour; it's the law. Would you do it? No! Okay, suppose I told you that the state was going to take down all speed limit signs. Would you go around deliberately speeding, hitting, injuring, and killing? You might not, but some would. So suppose the state came up with a whole new system—no law, but a policeman in the front seat with you every time you drive. What would you do then?

Don't use liberty for license—love. Some will say, "That's nice. I wish it were that easy. I wish the Lord were here to tell me what to do. Okay, so I'm not under the Law. What is my guide? What is the standard?" The answer is love.

"The New Testament clearly teaches that we do not live under the Law of Moses. This freedom, however, does not imply a lack of responsibility. I was reminded of this truth as I read about a Michigan state policeman who had stopped the same man twice in one day for reckless driving. The offender was weaving in and out of traffic at speeds up to 93 miles per hour. When he was finally pulled over to the side of the road, he flashed an official seal and signature of the U.S. Secretary of State. He announced that he was consul general of another nation and had no intention of keeping the laws of this land. Impatiently, he honked his horn while the patrolman radioed headquarters and was informed that a foreign diplomat cannot be detained except for serious crimes. Upon learning this, he said to the man, 'Even though you aren't subject to our laws, you could at least have some regard for the safety of our people'" (M. R. De Haan II, *Our Daily Bread*, 6/13/1975). Freedom in Christ does not give us the right to do as we please but the liberty to do as we ought.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In this series on the Holy Spirit, I have focused on the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. We have seen that the Holy Spirit gives the believer new life, indwells the believer, seals the believer, baptizes the believer into Christ and the body of Christ, gives the believer a spiritual gift for service, fills the believer with the Word and wisdom of God, and empowers the believer to do the will of God. There is one more work he does. He transforms believers. What does that mean?

The Holy Spirit Transforms Believers

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). The Holy Spirit transforms believers. The Greek word translated "transformed" means "to change into another form, to transform, to transfigure. Christ's appearance was changed and was resplendent with divine brightness on the mount of transfiguration.

Regeneration When people trust Jesus Christ for the gift of eternal life, they are changed. The change is called regeneration, which means they are given a new spiritual, divine life. It is called being born again. That is different than transformation.

Transformation As people who have trusted Christ for the gift of eternal life grow, they are changed. This change is called transformation. It is growth "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). It is growth from immaturity to maturity. It is growth into Christ-likeness.

Let me illustrate. One of the qualities of Christ-like spiritual maturity is kindness. Anybody, even an unsaved people, can do acts of kindness. They can even learn to be kind. Transformation is different. It is when a virtue like kindness becomes who they are. It is their character. The question is, how does a person become spiritually mature, that is, Christ-like? There are several answers to that. Several factors are involved, but transformation is the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18). Believers do not need reformation; they need transformation. The Greek word translated "transformed" is the word from which we get the English word "metamorphose." When the caterpillar undergoes metamorphosis, a glorious butterfly emerges.

Believers Must Cooperate

Beholding According to 2 Corinthians 3:18, what believers must do is, with an unveiled face, behold the glory of the Lord. What does "unveiled face" mean? In the Old Testament, when Moses met the Lord on the top of the mountain, he returned with the glory of the Lord shining on his face, but the children of Israel could not look upon it. So Moses put a veil over his face (2 Cor. 3:13). Thus, the glory of the Lord was veiled. Paul says that *all believers* can now behold the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face, as if in a mirror. "There was no veil over it; no obscurity; nothing to break its dazzling splendor, or to prevent its meeting the eye" (Barnes).

What does beholding the glory of the Lord as in a mirror mean? The mirror is the Word in general and Jesus Christ in particular (2 Cor. 4:4; Jn. 1:14; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). Believers do not behold the glory of the Lord directly; they behold the glory of the Lord indirectly as if they were looking in a mirror, only they do not see themselves in the mirror; they see the Lord. So, beholding the glory of the Lord is contemplating God's revelation of Himself in His Word.

As believers contemplate the Lord in the Word, they are changed from glory to glory, which means they are changed gradually. In other words, they grow and growth takes time. To say the same thing another way, maturity does not happen all at once; it is little by little. In Abraham's day, the land we call "Palestine" was occupied by several nations. God's judgment on those nations was that they would be removed (Gen. 15:16). God promised the land to the Israelites, but He did not give it to them all at once. He gave it to them "little by little." The Old Testament records, "And the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you little by little; you will be unable to destroy them at once, lest the beasts of the field become *too* numerous for you" (Deut 7:22). "And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land becomes desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. Little by little, I will drive them out from before you until you have increased, and you inherit the land" (Ex. 23:28-30). Likewise, God does not give us spiritual maturity all at once; it is little by little, which means it takes time—a lifetime.

Because growth is gradual, taking place slowly over time, you may not even be aware of the subtle changes taking place.

I have a primary doctor who has been my primary doctor for 15 years. Because of the spinal cord injury I had 7½ years ago, I have been in his office more than once a year for a physical. He wants to see me every three months. Except for the annual physical, these are short visits. One of the results of those multiple visits to the doctor is I have gotten to know the nurses and office staff. One of the young girls in the office is particularly friendly. My wife, whose primary is in the same office, and I talked about how sweet this young girl is. On a visit to see the doctor several months ago, this young lady and I got into a conversation and I found out she was getting married, but she didn't have anyone to perform the ceremony. I said offhandedly, "I'm a pastor; I could do that." She got excited and said, "I would love for you to do that.

Recently I performed the wedding. It was on the beach in Oxnard. They set up a small tent on soft sand quite a ways from any pavement. The tent was only large enough to hold me, the bridegroom, and the bride. They set up two sections of chairs for the guests, and the bridal party walked down the aisle barefoot. It was a lovely wedding, but there was one problem. It was scheduled to start at 3 o'clock. By 4:15, we were still waiting for the bridal party's arrival. At that point, my doctor approached me and said, "Can you do this ceremony in four minutes?" When I asked why he wanted to know that, he said, "I've been here since 2 o'clock!" In other words, his patience had run out. I thought about that, it dawned on me that even though I had waited, I wasn't impatient. I used to be very impatient, but I think I have grown over the last several years. I was more patient, but I was not aware of it.

"We experience gradual transformation. As we observe Christ's glory, we advance in Christ-likeness and reflect His glory, not in our faces but in our characters (cf. 2 Pet. 3:18).

This glory will not fade but will increase over time, providing we continue to contemplate the Lord. The Spirit, who is the Lord, is responsible for this gradual transformation. [See Robert A Pyne, "Antinomianism and Dispensationalism," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 153:610 (April-June 1996):141-54.]" (Constable).

Renewing Paul writes, "But be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). Believers are transformed by the renewing of their minds. The Greek word translated "renewing" means "renewal, renovation," and the one rendered "mind" means "mind, understanding, reason, thought, purpose." The renewing of the mind is the continual keeping fresh and vital the mind's understanding of and desire for the will of God (Hodges). This is no doubt a reference to "spiritual mindedness" mentioned earlier (8:4). As the mind, the heart, and will of believers are fixed and focused on the Word of God in general and Christ in the Word in particular, they are transformed more and more into Christ-likeness (2 Cor. 3:18, the only other place in Paul's writing where the word "transformed" appears).

To put renewing and clear focus, consider the context of Romans 12:2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Rom. 12:1a). Paul is basing his appeal on everything he has said from Romans 1:18 through 11:36. The word body is to be taken literally, because of the mention of the mind in verse 2. The Greek word translated "present" is the same one that was used in Romans 6:13, 16, 19. In Romans 6, this word is used to convey the connotation of the use of the body either for sin or for righteousness. Our sacrifice is living. The Old Testament animal sacrifice was dead. The sacrifice of our bodies in obedience is holy; a sacrificial life is set apart to the Lord.

Consequently, our sacrifice is acceptable to God. God is well pleased with the presentation of our bodies in righteous acts. He delights in such sacrifices. Our sacrifice is further described as our "reasonable service." The Greek word translated "reasonable" is the word from which we get the English word "logic." In light of God's great mercies, a life of obedience is rational and reasonable.

Romans 12:1 is often used to urge believers to "dedicate" themselves to the Lord as an act of consecration. Though that may benefit some, it is not what the verse describes. It would be much more accurate to say that this verse calls for a life of obedience. The believer is urged here to present his body by obeying the Lord (Rom. 6:13, 16). You can *decide* to do that in a service, but it can only be done *as you obey*.

Paul continues, "And do not be conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). The Greek word translated "conformed" is only used here and in 1 Peter 1:14 in the New Testament. The Greek word translated "world" is not the normal word for world. It is the word for "age." Paul exhorts the believer not to be continually molded and fashioned by this passing age. J. B. Phillips renders this, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold." In an auto plant, a huge piece of flat metal is fed into a massive press that blows it with unbelievable pressure. The sheet of metal is conformed to the mold of the press. Out comes the hood of a Chevy, a Ford, or a Toyota.

The spirit of this age is selfishness. Every individual is obsessed with his or her happiness or his or her needs being met. That is conformity to this world.

The design and result of this transformation are "that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2). By being changed through a renewed mind, you will prove in your experience the will of God. This will is further described as good, acceptable, and perfect. The word translated "perfect" means "to reach its end,

finished, complete." Being transformed results in God's complete will, which is good and pleasing to Him. Many think of God's will as bad news. It's not. It's good.

The paraphrase of J. B. Phillips captures the message of these two verses: "With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship to give Him your bodies as a living sacrifice consecrated to Him and acceptable by Him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its mold, but let God remold your minds from within so that you may prove and practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all His demands, and moves toward the goal of true maturity."

Desire "Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious" (1 Pet. 2:1-3).

Summary: As believers behold the glory of the Son of God in the Word of God, the Spirit of God gradually changes them into Christ-like spiritual maturity.

Believers behold the glory of the Lord in the Scriptures and are transformed by the Spirit of the Lord into the same image from glory to glory. This is not a fading glory. It is an ever-growing and greater glory. It has also been unveiled that it is on public display.

"As we gaze, we reflect more and more of His image (cf. 1 Jn. 3:2), until it is fully formed in us (Gal. 4:19). "And so the man into whose heart the Light of Christ has entered progress from one stage of spiritual glory to another, until at last (Rom. 8:29) he becomes fully conformed to the image of the Son of God" (*Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*).

In the White Mountains of New Hampshire is a famous pass known as Franconia Notch. Years ago, high on one of the rocky walls protruded a granite formation that resembled the profile of an old man looking over the valley (it collapsed in May 2003). It was called "The Old Man of the Mountain." Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote a story based on that rock formation called "The Legend of the Great Stone Face."

According to the story, a boy named Ernest lived in the valley beneath the great stone face. His mother told him about an ancient legend. She said, "Someday, a man will arise, born in this neighborhood whose countenance will resemble the great stone face which you see on the side of that distant mountain." As Ernest looked, he saw in the rock what appeared to be the features of a fine nobleman. From that time in his early years, he spent time concentrating on that inspiring sight. He longed for the day when he could see a real face as kind and as wise as the one that appeared in the rock. Carefully, he scrutinized individuals within the village-like Mr. Gathergold, General Blood and Thunder, and the one called "The Poet." Each time, however, he was disappointed, yet he never became discouraged in his search, cheerfully performing his daily duties and always seeking to help others. Over the years, he gained the respect and admiration of all who knew him. One evening, while he was Randall Riel to a group of his neighbors, the setting sunlit up his countenance. Suddenly, the man called "The Poet" pointed to him and exclaimed, "Look, there's the man who resembles the great stone face." After looking at the image in the mountain and looking for an individual who bore that resemblance, Ernest had become like the Great Stone Face.

The point of the story is that whatever we look on with approval, we become like. Add to that the work of the Holy Spirit and you have how believers are transformed over time into the image of Christ.