

## LESSON TWELVE – THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTIONS

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

I. What is the gift of the Holy Spirit and when is it received? Does the Holy Spirit dwell in a Christian, and, if so, how? Are we guided today by the Holy Spirit, and, if so, how?

#### II. WHAT IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF ACTS 2:38?

##### THE PERSONAL INDWELLING

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##### INTRODUCTION

When Peter, on Pentecost, told believers to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ and they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, I believe he intended for them to get the idea that they would receive the Holy Spirit as a gift, and that Holy Spirit would dwell in their bodies as his temple. I am not alone in this belief.

(1) Statements by pioneer scholars.

Many of the pioneers of the restoration believed and taught the same thing. Moses E. Lard said, “To represent Alexander Campbell and Walter Scott as not believing in the immediate indwelling in the Christian of the Holy Spirit is to falsify the clearest teaching of their lives. It is to do injustice to the memory of the dead and to the faith in which they died .... I should be pained to think that even one man in a hundred” believes other than “that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian; and by this we mean that the Holy Spirit itself dwells in him, and not merely that the truth or something else dwells in him in lieu of the Spirit, and as representing it.” J. W. McGarvey said, “The expression means the Holy Spirit as a gift; and the reference is to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit by which we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.” T. W. Brents taught the same thing. Others could be cited if we had the space.

(2) Many of the great Greek scholars of our time believed Peter promised the Holy Spirit as a gift.

A. T. Robertson said, “The gift consists (Acts 8:17) in the Holy Spirit (genitive of identification).” F. F. Bruce says, “The gift of the Spirit is the Spirit Himself, bestowed by the Father through the Messiah.” Lenski says, “The genitive is appositional; as in v. 33 the promise is the Holy Spirit, so here the gift is the Holy Spirit.” The Expositor’s Greek Testament, Meyers, and others agree.

##### I. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

( 1 ) *Definition.*

(a) *Usage.* This expression occurs only twice in the Bible Acts 2:38 and 10:45.

*(b) Similar uses of the grammatical expression.* There is little in 2:38 to tell us if it means something the Spirit gives us, or if it is the Spirit as a gift. But, in 10:45 there is no doubt that this expression means the Spirit himself. First, while Peter spoke the Holy Spirit fell on them (v. 44). Next, Peter said they have “received the Holy Spirit” (v. 47). Now, the “gift of the Holy Spirit” was poured out. That which was poured out on them is exactly what fell on them; that which was poured out on them is what they received. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit which was poured out on them and the Holy Spirit which they received. The fact that this was the baptism of the Holy Spirit which Cornelius received does not change the meaning of the expression. So if the expression, “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” here means the Holy Spirit is the gift, and if the expression occurs in only one other verse, if we allow the Bible to explain itself, we must conclude that this is the meaning of the expression in the only other place it occurs.

Some contend that the expression must mean a gift from the Spirit like the expression “gift of God” means something God gives. But, in Acts 2:33 we have Jesus “received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit.” This does not mean something the Holy Spirit promised, but the Holy Spirit which was promised (Acts 1:4,5). Again, we read that Jesus died, “that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:14). Here the “blessing of Abraham” must mean salvation (Acts 3:25, 26). Along with this salvation we receive “the promise of the Spirit.” This is parallel with Acts 2:38 where those who repent and are baptized receive remission, salvation; and, along with salvation, they are promised the Holy Spirit. Here we have “the promise of the Spirit,” but in Acts 2:38 we have “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” They are both genitives of identification. We will have more of this later.

## *(2) Proof of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.*

*(a) First, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to all believers (John 7:37-39).* Here Jesus said, “If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.” Notice, any man! Then he said from within the believer would flow rivers of living water, and explained, “this he said of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive” after he was glorified. And, this would be on Pentecost and afterwards. This cannot refer only to the apostles any more than Mark 16:15-16 can refer to them. Notice the parallel:

Preach the gospel to every creature (general) = he that believeth (specific).

If any man thirst let him come (general) = he that believeth (specific).

If everyone who believes and is baptized will be saved, surely everyone that believes will receive the Spirit, according to the promise of Jesus.

*(b) Next, according to Acts 2:38 as many as repented and were baptized received the gift of the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit as a gift.* “Repent ye” is plural; “ye shall receive” is plural. If these words do not include the same persons, the same number of people, words no longer have any definite meaning.

(e) *Next, Acts 5:32 says God gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey him.* The obedience is detailed in Acts 2:38, where Peter said to believers that they should repent and be baptized in the name of Christ for the remission of their sins. And, from these passages it is certainly fair to conclude that the promise of the Spirit was to all who met the conditions.

(d) *Next, all who belong to Christ have the Spirit.* “If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” ( Rom. 8:9). From 1 Pet. 1:11 we learn that “the Spirit of Christ” is the Holy Spirit. Compare 2 Pet. 1:21. Regardless of how religious a man may be, if he does not have the Holy Spirit, he does not belong to Christ. But, according to Acts 2:38 and 5:32, if he has not obeyed Christ in repenting and being baptized, he does not have the Spirit, and, therefore, does not belong to Christ.

(e) *Next, every Christian’s body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19).* The Greek word for temple is “*naos*” and means the dwelling place of deity. The Greek has another word for the temple area, but “*naos*” was used only of the sanctuary where God dwelt. The physical body, used when the sin of fornication was committed, is what Paul had in mind, and this body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

(f) *Next, Paul says the Holy Spirit “is in you.”* And, in Rom. 8:9-11 Paul says three times that the “Spirit dwells in you.” Now, shall we take this expression figuratively or literally? A rule of interpretation accepted by all scholars says, “Words should be understood in their literal sense unless such literal interpretation involves a manifest contradiction or absurdity.” Lard says, “A word, whenever met with, is to be taken in its common current sense, unless the subject-matter, the context, or a qualifying epithet forbids it.” The man does not live who can prove that we cause an absurdity or a contradiction when we take this expression literally. Nor, can he show that the context or subject-matter forbids us to take it literally. So, Paul says the Holy Spirit dwells in our body as his temple, and we are justified in taking the statement literally.

## II. OPPOSING THEORIES

(1) *Some brethren argue, “just as ‘the gift of God’ means God’s gift, and ‘the gift of Christ’ means Christ’s gift, so ‘the gift of the Holy Spirit’ means the Holy Spirit’s gift.”* So far as grammar is concerned it could mean that, but we have seen that in the case of Cornelius “the gift of the Holy Spirit” means the Holy Spirit was given him and he received the Holy Spirit. But, does this grammatical construction necessarily mean “the Holy Spirit’s gift”? Abraham “received the sign of circumcision” (Rom. 4:11). Did circumcision give him a sign? He received a sign consisting of circumcision. So, to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit is to receive a gift consisting of the Holy Spirit. Again, those called “receive the promise of eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15). Does eternal inheritance give us a promise? This is the genitive of identification. So “of the Holy Spirit” is the genitive of identification, identifying the gift we receive when we repent and are baptized. Again, when we are approved we “shall receive the crown of life” (Jas. 1:12). Will we receive a crown which life will give us? Gift of God is God’s gift; gift of Christ is Christ’s gift; can we say crown of life is life’s gift? No! According to James the crown is the Lord’s gift as a reward. There are other examples of this construction, but these are sufficient to prove that the gift of the Spirit may mean a gift consisting of the Spirit as well as the Spirit’s gift. And, we have shown from a

comparison of Acts 2:38 and 10:44-47 that the expression “the gift of the Holy Spirit” does mean a gift consisting of the Holy Spirit.

(2) *Another interpretation of this phrase is given as follows:*

“I believe the Scriptures teach that the gift of the Holy Spirit refers to miraculous endowments that belonged to the period when these miraculous gifts were for the purpose of confirming the apostles of Christ as his apostles and providing the church with inspiration through these gifts that came through the laying on of the hands of an apostle.”

Take a look at the verbs of Acts 2:38. “Repent ye” is second person plural. “Be baptized” every one of you is third person singular but includes all persons commanded to repent. “Ye shall receive” is second person plural and includes all who are commanded to repent and be baptized. Therefore, all who repented and were baptized, according to this theory, had hands of an apostle laid on them and they received miraculous gifts, or power to perform miracles. This, according to our author quoted above, continues until the destruction of Jerusalem. Does anyone believe, can anyone believe, that every child of God from Pentecost until the destruction of Jerusalem had a spiritual gift and could perform miracles? How much traveling would apostles have to do to lay hands on every convert? Christians went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:4). Converts on Pentecost from all parts of the world went back home and made converts. If each apostle had had an airplane they could not have gone to lay hands on every convert within a reasonable time.

Paul says in Rom. 8:9 if any man has not the Spirit of Christ (the Holy Spirit) he does not belong to Christ. According to the theory under consideration, a baptized believer did not belong to Christ until an apostle got to him to lay hands on him. The people of Samaria believed and were baptized. Some time later Peter and John went down and laid hands on them. According to this theory, these people did not belong to Christ until Peter and John laid hands on them. This passage, Acts 8:14ff, is used to prove that the gift of the Holy Spirit means miraculous power, but the term “Holy Spirit” is used here in a figure of speech called metonymy. Example: we say the kettle boils when we mean the water in the kettle. So, when Luke said the Holy Spirit had fallen on none of them, and apostles laid hands on them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, he simply meant they had not received spiritual gifts given through apostles. But, they had received the Spirit of Christ (Holy Spirit) which proved they belonged to Christ.

Then there was the eunuch from Ethiopia whom Philip baptized. Philip was not an apostle; he could not lay hands on him to give him the Holy Spirit. He went back home without the Holy Spirit, according to the theory, never did get the Spirit and so never did belong to Christ, according to Rom. 8:9! Who can believe it?

But, look at the verse again. The promise is to you, to your children, all afar off, and to as many as the Lord shall call. What is the promise? Not remission of sins. They were to repent and be baptized for remission. That is a conditional commandment, not a promise. Next, the promise of the Holy Spirit was to you; that is one generation; to your children; that is another generation; then to as many as the Lord shall call, and that includes us today. Paul teaches that we are called through the gospel; Peter says the promise of the Holy Spirit is to all whom the Lord calls; therefore, if the Lord calls us today through the gospel, we may claim the gift of the Holy Spirit in

fulfillment of this promise. And, if the “gift of the Holy Spirit” means miraculous gifts, we may claim miraculous gifts in fulfillment of this promise.

Several passages speak of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. Do they no longer apply to Christians? Paul says ye are not in the flesh (dominated by the flesh) if the Spirit of God dwells in you (Rom. 8:9). What about the Christians of the first century who did not have miraculous powers? What about the eunuch? He did not have miraculous powers. Was he in the flesh dominated by the flesh simply because Philip could not give him miraculous powers? Again, if the Spirit of God dwells in you, God will give life to your mortal body by that Spirit which dwells in you (Rom. 8:4-11). If the indwelling of the Spirit means miraculous power, it follows that life will be given to the mortal bodies of those only who had miraculous powers. Who can believe that? Again, Paul said the physical body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you (1 Cor. 6:19). Did he mean only the bodies of those who had miraculous powers served as the temple of the Holy Spirit? Does this passage apply to us today the same as it did to people of the first century? Was it only those who had miraculous gifts who were to refrain from fornication because that sin defiled the temple of the Holy Spirit? If so, it follows that only the bodies of those who had such powers were members of Christ (v. 15). And, those who did not have such powers, such as the eunuch, were not members of Christ. And, the Samaritans were not members of Christ until Peter and John got there and gave them miraculous powers.

### III. OBJECTIONS TO INDWELLING ANSWERED

*(1) It has been said that Acts 2:38 cannot have reference to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit because that would mean the incarnation of deity in every Christian.* If the second person of the Godhead dwelling in Jesus was incarnation of deity, the third person of the Godhead dwelling in a person would be another incarnation. And, it is also claimed that this would make each Christian an object of worship. If there is anything to this argument it follows that Jesus was a case of double incarnation when the Holy Spirit came to him at his baptism. The incarnation of Jesus was a union of a divine person with human nature (not a human person) so as to form the God-man. When the Holy Spirit dwells in a person there is no such union. Again, the union of deity and humanity in Jesus is permanent; he is still the God-man; but the indwelling of the Spirit is not permanent. And, the union of deity and human nature in Jesus formed only one Person; but the indwelling of the Spirit in us does not make us and the Spirit one person.

*(2) Next, it is said that if the Holy Spirit dwells in every Christian he would have to be divided into as many pieces as there are Christians on earth at any one time.* The Spirit was in John the Baptist and Jesus at one time; was he divided? The Spirit was in the twelve apostles at one time; was he divided into twelve pieces? Or, will we deny that the Spirit was actually in John and Jesus? And the twelve apostles? Will we say that he dwelt in them only as he influenced them by his teaching? What did he teach little John from the day of his birth?

*(3) It is said that many verses speak of the “fact” of the indwelling, but only two tell us “how” the Spirit dwells in us, Eph. 5:18,19 and Col. 3:16.* Compare the two verses:

Be filled; with Spirit; speaking in psalms, etc., singing, etc. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; singing, etc.

It is claimed that these verses are parallel, teaching us how the Spirit dwells in us. He dwells in us through the word. Why not say they teach us that the word dwells in us through the Spirit? I can prove that from a dozen passages; but, where is the proof that the Spirit dwells in us through the word. Again, if these verses are parallel, to be filled with the Spirit must mean the same thing as the word dwelling in us. They do not tell us how the Spirit dwells in us; they tell us that the word of Christ is the Spirit that dwells in us.

Brethren for many years have used Eph. 5:18,19 to prove that the Holy Spirit dwells in us through the word, but I affirm that the command “be filled with the Spirit” in that verse has no reference whatever to the indwelling of the Spirit in Christians. The words “be filled” are from a Greek word (*pleeroo*) and, according to Thayer, mean, “to make full, to fill, fill up followed by *en* with a dative of the instrument: *en pneumatī*, Eph. 5:18.” And, Thayer says this is instrumental, meaning that the Spirit is the instrument that fills us; not the content with which we are filled. The Expositor’s Greek Testament and Lenski say the same thing. And when people are said to be filled with, or full of, the Holy Spirit, the Greek phrase *en pneumatī* is never used. I have checked every occurrence in the New Testament of the words *pleeroo*, *pleerees*, *pleetho* used with the Holy Spirit and not one time is the Greek preposition *en* used with either of these words to denote the content with which a thing is filled. This is true not only with reference to the Holy Spirit, but it is true with such words as filled with anger, strife, righteousness, etc. The Greek phrase *en pneumatī* is used in Rom. 15:16 to say we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, but this does not tell us anything about the Spirit dwelling in us. It is used in 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:9 to say that spiritual gifts were given by the Spirit, but these say nothing about the Spirit dwelling in anybody. We conclude, therefore, that since the phrase *en pneumatī* is never used to teach the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and, since other Greek phrases are always used to teach about the indwelling of the Spirit in the Christian, we are completely justified in saying that Paul was not commanding the Ephesians to be filled with the Spirit in the sense of the indwelling of the Spirit. This being true, Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16 are not parallel, and they do not teach us *how* the Holy Spirit dwells in the child of God.

## CONCLUSION

We have seen that the “gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:38 is a gift consisting of the Holy Spirit. We have learned that the same number of persons who were commanded to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins was given the promise of the Holy Spirit as a gift. We have heard Paul say the physical body of the Christian is the temple, the dwelling place of deity, in the person of the Holy Spirit, and for that reason we must not commit fornication. We have also learned that though all Christians are temples of the Holy Spirit, not all Christians, even in the first century, had miraculous powers. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit have no reference to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit given through the laying on of apostles’ hands. And, we have learned that when Paul commanded people to be filled with the Spirit he made no reference to miraculous powers, nor did he teach that the Holy Spirit dwells in people through the word.

III. How does the Holy Spirit work in today's world – miraculously or non-miraculously? (For a discussion distinguishing today's alleged miracles from Biblical miracles, see Lesson 5 under Class Notes on Miracles at [www.thywordistruth.com](http://www.thywordistruth.com).)

A. When the church was in its infancy, the information essential to the ongoing of the church – that which guided its teaching and practice – resided in inspired men. Before the end of the first century this inspiration had been transferred from men to a book – the Bible. The Bible, specifically the New Testament, became the sum of revelation and the exclusive authoritative standard of divine teaching for this age. Pending this transference of inspiration from men to the Book, holy men of God spake and were influenced in what they did by the Holy Spirit, in immediate and direct fashion, apart from any written revelation insofar as the New Testament was concerned. Those so endowed were the apostles and other faithful servants of the Lord, evidence of which abounds in the New Testament. (John 14:16, 17; 16:13; Heb. 2:1-4.)

1. In the period when inspiration was in men, and before it was transferred to the Book, this situation necessarily prevailed. It is not conceivable that in any other way could the world have been provided with credible and acceptable evidence of the divine origin of Christianity, or supplied with convincing proofs of the truth of the claims of those who preached it.
2. Hundreds of years earlier, this plan was perceived by the prophets and announcement made regarding it. (Isa. 2:1-4; Joel 2:28.) The events of Pentecost ushered in the age anticipated by Joel and were identified by Peter as “this is that” which was spoken by the prophet (Acts 2:16).

B. The miraculous endowments supplied by the Holy Spirit enabled the early proclaimers of the gospel, in the absence of a Book of inspiration dealing with the functions of the apostolic church to:

1. accomplish their work with speed and ease (Acts 8:4-12);
2. provide proof of the genuineness of their claims (Mark 16:20);
3. supply needed edification for the members of the infant church (1 Cor. 14:1-3);  
and
4. generate the greatest possible interest on the part of the people in the men and message which they preached (Acts 3:1-11).

C. There are two recorded instances of Holy Spirit baptism recorded and another implied as discussed below. All other miraculous manifestations of power by the Holy Spirit resulted from the bestowal of such gifts through the laying on of the apostles' hand.

1. There is no record that any man in the apostolic era ever came into possession of such powers in any other way.

2. Since there are no apostles present to perform this function today, and since there is but one baptism today, the element of which is water (Acts 8:34ff), neither the baptism of the Holy Spirit nor miraculous manifestations may properly be claimed today (Acts 8:16; 19:1-6).

D. In 1 Cor. 12:7-11 Paul listed 9 miraculous gifts of the spirit bestowed by the laying on of hands. Among the gifts listed are wisdom, knowledge and prophecy. It follows that if any of these gifts are available today (tongues being the one most often claimed with healings a close second), that all of them are, in which case those claiming the ability to heal and to speak in tongues ought also to possess supernatural knowledge, wisdom, and the power of prophecy. With such endowments they do not need the New Testament; they have the ability to write one of their own. As absurd as this appears, it is, in effect, precisely what the alleged tongue-speakers today have done; they have repudiated the teaching of the New Testament which we have, and have substituted their own supposed divine revelations as the basis of the doctrine which they hold. They thus join a group famous for such latter day revelations: Joseph Smith of the Mormons, Ellen White, originator of the Adventist church, and Mary Baker Patterson Eddy, originator of "Christian Science," – all made exactly the same professions, and sought to support them with the same type of arguments.

E. The truth is the miraculous gifts of the first century were temporary expedients, necessary to the proper function of the infant church, but limited to the period when inspiration was in men. In the very context in which they are designated, they are declared to be inferior to the "more excellent way," anticipated (1 Cor. 12:28:31), and they were all removed when inspiration had been fully transferred to the Book! (1 Cor. 13:8-13.)

F. This is made clear in 1 Cor. 13 when Paul says that prophecies, tongues, and knowledge shall cease. In the end of 1 Cor. 12 Paul's purpose was to designate the gifts that were essential to the proper functioning of the early church before inspiration was committed to a Book – the New Testament. Their temporary character is made clear from the fact that they were to be replaced by "a more excellent way." There is, then, a more excellent way than tongues, gifts of healing, etc. (1 Cor. 12:31). How vastly different is this concept, advanced by Paul, from that characteristic of the tongue speakers of today, who claim that such powers evidence on their part a vastly greater spirituality and a closer walk with God than any others.

G. When were these temporary expedients to be removed?

1. When that which is "perfect" (complete) came as Paul anticipated that it would. Paul draws a sharp contrast in 1 Cor. 13 between that which is to be "done away" and that which is to abide.

2. Paul uses three of the nine miraculous gifts (tongues, prophecies, and knowledge) that he had listed as representative of the whole; thus, all spiritual gifts were among those that were to be "done away."

3. It is in this age when faith and hope abide.



- a) It was in this period when faith and hope abide that the spiritual gifts were to be done away.
- b) In the next age faith will be lost in sight. It is the conviction of things not seen (Heb. 11:1).
- c) Hope will end in realization when heaven and eternal life are finally possessed; one does not hope for that which he possess (Rom. 8:24).

4. It is therefore in this age while faith and hope abide that the supernatural powers peculiar to the early church were to be abolished, and the time marked by the appearing of the perfect (complete) revelation.

- a) This occurred when inspiration was finally transferred from men to a Book – the New Testament.
- b) It is therefore the sheerest folly and the most blinding delusion to claim such powers today.
- c) Indeed, to claim such powers of the Spirit today is to deny the teaching of the Spirit himself.

H. This conclusion is borne out in Ephesians 4:7-16.

1. Paul writes that Christ provided the infant church with certain spiritual gifts for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ.
2. He then adds that these gifts were limited in duration – “till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”
3. The purpose was to bring the church to the point that it was mature – “no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”
4. If these spiritual gifts still remain, the inescapable conclusion is that the church, though some 2,000 years old, is still in its infancy.

IV. Are we guided today by the Holy Spirit, and, if so, how?

A. What avenues are open to the Spirit as means of operation?

1. Natural or physical power operating through the laws of nature.
2. Moral power or an agent operating through moral power.
3. Spiritual power (a power operating directly and without means upon the spirit of man without anything between it and the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit of God

operating upon the spirit of man, without any instrument or means, moral or spiritual.

B. Which of these powers is appropriate to the task that the Holy Spirit performs in the salvation and sanctification of man?

1. The nature of salvation does not involve a change in the body of man, nor of perception, memory, judgment, imagination, or reason; it involves the moral nature of man.

a) Man's ruin is not in his sense or intellectual faculties, but in his moral character and relations.

b) Therefore, it is a moral revolution, a moral reformation, a moral change, that is essential to the salvation of men.

2. The means, therefore, must be moral unless physical causes can produce such effects.

3. But what about spiritual power? Is it not a spiritual problem?

a) Spiritual change and moral change are terms of our own invention to describe that which it is necessary to accomplish in the salvation and sanctification of man.

b) As commonly defined—a power that operates directly and without means upon man by the Spirit without anything operating between the Spirit and man – it is evident that in this sense spiritual power cannot be used in accomplishing that change and respect the free moral agency of man; numerous and powerful means have already been used – sacrifice, prophets, evangelists, apostles, words, writings, the church, ordinances and laws to name a few.

4. That leaves, then two types of power – physical and moral.

a) Physical power operates upon matter.

b) Moral power operates upon the mind.

5. If one wishes to take a man captive by force he uses physical strength; if he wishes to take a man captive by argument or persuasion, he speaks, using arguments, allurements, or motives to move his mind to act in keeping with his desires.

C. Motives are arguments and the strength of an argument is its power to move; arguments are said to be strong or weak based on their power to move.

1. The strength of an argument is its meaning, not its length; it can operate only so far as it is understood.
2. Every spirit puts forth its moral power in words; that is, all the power it has over the views, habits, manners, or actions of men, is in the meaning and arrangement of its ideas expressed in words, or in significant signs addressed to the eye or ear.
3. The tongue of the orator and the pen of the writer, though small, are two of the most powerful instruments in the world.
4. The argument is the power of the spirit of man, and the only power which one spirit can exert over another is its arguments.
  - a) How can men like Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, or Ronald Reagan move a nation?
  - b) By words uttered by the tongue; by ideas communicated to the minds of the hearers; in this way only can moral power be displayed.

D. When we think of the power of the Spirit of God exerted upon the minds of men we are prepared to think in terms of and expect verbal communication; it is impossible for us to imagine that that power can consist in anything else but words or arguments.

1. As the moral power of man is in his arguments, so the moral power of the Spirit of God is in his arguments.
2. Thus man still retains an image of his creator, and from such analogy Paul reasons when he says, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:11.)
3. The analogy does not stop here; those who resist the arguments of the Holy Spirit “resist the Spirit.” (Acts 7:51).
4. Once one has made an argument that has been understood, he has exhausted his moral power. (Matt.13:19-23.)

E. As the spirit of man puts forth all its moral power in the words which it fills with its ideas, so the Spirit of God puts forth all its converting and sanctifying power in the words which it fills with its ideas; all the converting power of the Holy Spirit is exhibited in the Divine Record.

1. As Jesus said concerning the writings of Moses and the prophets, if men hear not, feel not, obey not the words of Scripture, neither would they be persuaded by any messenger from Heaven or Hell (Luke 16:27-31) – all of the converting power of the Holy Spirit is exhibited in the Divine Record.
2. The Word is able:

- a) To make men wise unto salvation (2 Tim. 3:15);
- b) To build up and give an inheritance among all them that are sanctified (Acts 20:32); and
- c) To save men's souls (James 1:21);

F. Does this mean that no new light can be communicated to the mind, no new arguments offered to convert men to God?

1. It is the case that this must be a reference to moral light, not natural light.
2. That being the case, this light, like moral power, is all contained in words; where there are no words there is no light.
3. If then the Holy Spirit is to communicate any new light to a soul it must be by new words or new verbal communication.
4. Should the Spirit do so, would this not mean that the first communication of the Spirit was imperfect, and that the Spirit, like other orators, does not, or cannot, express itself as intelligently at one time as at another, and its second effort is better than the first and the third better than the second, and so on.

G. But cannot there be converting power in addition to the light of the word? Asked another way, is truth all that is necessary to convert men?

1. While there is some truth that will not convert men, if the term is understood to mean "the truth" as used in scripture, the answer is yes.
2. Jesus said that he was "the way, the truth, and the life" and that "no cometh to the Father but by me." (John 14:6.)
3. To this he added, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32.)
4. There is "the truth" that has all moral power, and that is "the truth" that makes men free.
5. Assume that the subjects of a prince rebel against him supposing him to be their enemy. He could call upon other provinces to help crush them, but he determines that he will win them back and convert them from enemies to friends. He lavishes great gifts upon them, does wonderful favors from them, and sends dignified emissaries to them. Still rebelling, he sends his son to win them back, but they cover their hands with his blood. After this he has nothing left to propose except forgiveness for all of their acts of cruelty and rebellion, and a restoration to his favor and friendship on condition of their submission and return to duty. He can do no more. This is the sum total of his moral power. Their destruction or his dethronement is the only alternative; he has no other arguments to offer.

- a) This forgiveness refused, mediation is at an end.
- b) This scheme is both his wisdom and his power to reconcile everyone who receives it.
- c) It is his whole wisdom and his whole power to affect reconciliation.
- d) He who rejects it must dethrone the prince or be destroyed.
- e) No new light, truth, argument, or power can be exhibited.

H. But does not man need some assistance to believe?

1. What assistance could that be?

- a) Does man need an ability to believe that he did not have before?
- b) Does he possess a broken power to believe that needs to be repaired?
- c) Does he need some power to make him feel his need of a Savior?
- d) If the latter, is it not faith by which we discover our need of a Savior; if we did not believe the testimony of God we could not know that we had sinned against God.
- e) Faith must precede all conviction, repentance, reformation, all sorrow, all feeling of every sort.
- f) Without faith in the divine testimony, it is impossible that any thing in that testimony can move us.

2. But doesn't the Holy Spirit give some help in the beginning by working within us to make the word more powerful, or increase our strength to receive it or our ability to understand it?

- a) If the Spirit makes the word more powerful, it must be by revealing some more powerful ideas that the Word does not contain; what would they possibly be?
- b) If the Spirit helps us to understand, can that be done other than by illustrations, analogies, or more familiar terms?

I. What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to "open the heart"?

- 1. The Holy Spirit "opened the heart" of some 3,000 on the day of Pentecost with signs and wonders and the word spoken by Peter.
- 2. The power of the Spirit was displayed in the cripple on Solomon's Porch, and after Peter explained the miracle some 5,000 were converted.

3. The Lord opened the hearts of the Samaritans by miracles and signs that were done to hear the things preached by Phillip.
4. The Ethiopian Eunuch and Lydia had their hearts opened by reading the ancient prophecies and recorded miracles of the Old Testament

J. Always and in every instance of conversion there was a precedent proclamation of the word.

1. In New Testament days they were often accompanied by miracles and wonders to prove the authenticity of the message and the authority of the messenger.
2. Today those signs and wonders are recorded and by reading and hearing operate upon the hearts of men that they might be able to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that believing they might have life in his name. (John 20:31).

K. The Spirit operates in the same manner in sanctification – the increasing holiness and Christlikeness in the life of the Christian.

1. Those who receive Jesus have received His word. (John 12:48.)
2. When one surrenders to the Lord in loving, obedient faith, the Holy Spirit dwells in him, or sheds its influences of love, joy, and peace in his heart.

L. All of this teaches us how the Holy Spirit leads and guides in today's world.

1. Most, if not all, evangelical religionists believe in the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
  - a) Many, however, make the mistake of believing that the Holy spirit leads them to do certain things when in fact they are being led by their own subjective feelings, urges, or experiences.
  - b) Consequently, there are devout and sincere people who are going off in every direction, all attributing their direction to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
  - c) If all of these were truly being led by the Spirit of God, then God would be the author of confusion (not to mention often mistaken when a "God given" mission went awry), but the scripture says that God is not the author of confusion. (1 Cor. 14:33).
  - d) Moreover, this leaves us in the position of having to properly interpret our feelings, urges, and experiences and recognizing when they are from God and when they are not.
  - e) Would it not be better if the Holy Spirit just communicated God's message to us by telling us in words what he wants us to know.

2. Some will be surprised to know that this is in fact the way the Holy Spirit does now, and always has, communicated God's message to men.

a) Adam and Eve knew they were not to eat of the tree in the midst of the Garden because God told them not to. (Gen. 2:16-17.)

b) Noah knew that he was to build an ark of certain dimensions out of certain wood because God told him to. (Gen. 6:13-14.)

c) Abraham knew to leave his homeland for a new land because God told him to leave and God showed him the new land. (Gen. 12:1.)

3. The Holy Spirit is a speaking spirit. (2 Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 1 Tim. 4:1.)

a) In Rev. 2 and 3 there are letters to seven churches, each of which contains the admonition to "hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22.)

b) These passages show that the Spirit's manner of communicating his message to man is by speaking words; this takes the guesswork out of whether we are actually receiving a message from God.

4. The Holy Spirit's message is final and complete.

a) Does God have some additional message to reveal to man or is the Bible his complete and final revelation?

(1) Peter wrote: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3.)

(2) Paul wrote: "<sup>16</sup> All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17.)

(3) If as stated in these passages the Bible contains all things that pertain to life and godliness, and will throughly furnish one unto all good works, then what need is there for further revelation?

(4) Jude declared that the faith (the gospel) has been "once for all delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3, ASV.)

b) Clearly, if a "revelation" contains more than the Bible it contains too much; if it contains less than the Bible it contains too little; if it contains the same thing as the Bible it is not needed because we already have the Bible.

5. Those in error must denigrate the scripture.

a) It has always been the case that those who wish to maintain some religious error must denigrate the Scripture in one way or another.

(1) A Catholic scholar will tell you that the Bible is God's book, but that it is authoritative only in the hands of a Catholic scholar bearing the imprimatur of the church.

(2) Ask the Mormon what he thinks about the Bible and he will tell you that it is God's book when it is properly translated by Joseph Smith or another Mormon official, but that you are a fool if you think that the Bible is sufficient. (See, the lesson on Mormonism in this series.)

(3) Denominational preachers may use the Bible a great deal, but they also urge people to do what they "feel led" to do, or to do "whatever the Lord lays on your heart."

(4) That is what we should expect because these churches cannot be built up or maintained by following the Bible alone.

b) In recent years, some who formerly embraced the Bible as the sole authority in religion and as God's complete and final revelation have done an about-face, and are claiming some leadership of the Holy Spirit in addition to and beyond the Bible.

(1) Again, this is what we should expect because one cannot join hands with the denominational world in ridiculing the church for which Jesus died and in declaring it to be nothing more than a denomination while allowing the Bible to be his guide.

(2) When one speaks of being "open" to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, or when he claims to be led by the Spirit, but is teaching and practicing that which is contradictory to the Bible, he has done the very opposite of what he claims to be doing; instead of following the leadership of the Spirit, he has turned his back on the only message the Holy Spirit has given to the world.

6. Either the Bible is our only guide or it is not our guide at all.

a) Some well-known preachers have gone out from the church and continue to claim a direct leadership of the Holy Spirit, and even claim the Holy Spirit has led them to countenance instrumental music in worship, women preachers, extending fellowship to denominations and the like.

b) In fact, they even claim to be members of a denomination called the Church (capital "c") of Christ.



c) It is time faithful brethren started treating them as any denomination and extending no fellowship to them; they have left the undenominational New Testament church, the body of Christ, and have therefore left Christ. They are no longer brethren.

V. What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

A. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Matt. 3:1ff; Acts 2; 10; 2 Cor 11:5).

1. There are two explicit examples of Holy Spirit baptism: the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and Cornelius' household (Acts 10).
2. There is one implied example: the apostle Paul (2 Cor. 11:5). Holy Spirit baptism was administered by Christ (Matt. 3:11; John 15:26) or the Father (John 14:26).

B. In all cases of Holy Spirit baptism, the purpose was never to save.

1. The Holy Spirit baptism fell on the apostles:
  - a) to teach them all things (John 14:26);
  - b) to bring all things to their remembrance (John 14:26);
  - c) to enable the apostles to accurately bear witness (John 15:27);
  - d) to guide them into all the truth (John 16:13); and
  - e) to show them things to come (John 16:13).
2. The purpose of Cornelius' Holy Spirit baptism was to convince both the Jews and Gentiles that the blessings of salvation were now for all men (Acts 10:44-45; 15:8-9).
3. Holy Spirit baptism is implied in Paul's statement that he was not a whit behind the chiefest apostles (2 Cor. 11:5).
4. Paul demonstrated that he possessed those things associated with Holy Spirit baptism by:
  - a) writing inspired scripture (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 14:37);
  - b) laying on hands thus imparting the Holy Spirit to others which was done only by apostles (Acts 8:18; 19:6); and
  - c) being unharmed by a viper (Acts 28:3; Mk. 16:18).

C. Holy Spirit baptism was a promise.

1. It was not a command to certain ones for certain purposes (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5).
2. Holy Spirit baptism was first administered in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.
3. It extended chronologically to the conversion of Saul and the conversion of Cornelius.
4. There is no Biblical record that it was ever administered at any other time at any other place for any other purpose.
5. Being thus limited in time and purpose, being a promise and never a command, being administered by Deity and never by human agency, it cannot be the baptism of Eph. 4:5.