

The Ambassador of Heaven

An Elementary Study of the Holy Spirit

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Preface

This small book is an unworthy attempt to explain the person, work, and purpose of the Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. Far superior works exist and are available from numerous vendors. But in an effort to present this large subject in a simple, systematic, and concise way---this book is written.

This enormous subject cannot be contained in even a brilliantly written, or much larger book. In fact, a true understanding of the Holy Spirit cannot be adequately detailed in books and writing anyway. The Holy Spirit must be experienced through living faith, personally known, and learned from, to be truly understood.

But the seeking Christian must start somewhere. Because so much awaits the seeker in the realm of the Spirit, a responsibility rests on every Christian to learn more and more about this glorious Personality, a knowledge recommended by Christ himself. There is no excuse for Christians to ignore the abundant information about the Spirit. It is most relevant to open the mind to greater and greater views of this magnificent subject.

The Bible and the writings of all of God's prophets is the best source of "information" on the Spirit. Unfortunately, much of what is written about the Holy Spirit is theoretical rather than practical. One aim of this small book is to create a practical, experiential approach to the subject.

Preface

Another aim is to document the subject briefly rather than exhaustively. Many works list and catalogue quotes, passages, and verses with such verbosity that the reader is lost in the milieu of words and loses interest. Therefore a simple approach might be the best for some.

The following chapters are outlined according to the stock investigative questions known by every person: Who?, What?, When?, Where?, and Why? Without questions, there are no answers. So hopefully these questions will cause the reader to further discover the truths of the Spirit, in a fresh and living way. May the Holy Spirit lead each reader through this simple exercise to an improved knowledge of the truth as it is in God. May he find in the Holy Spirit a personal friend, a divine guide, and a spiritual healer. May he learn to know Christ's personal envoy, the Spirit of his own presence---the *sent* Ambassador of Heaven, in a new and greater way.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Understanding the Nature of the Holy Spirit

Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.” John 3:5

It is quite simple. No new birth, No spiritual life, No baptism of the Spirit---equals---*no part* of the eternal kingdom of God. Without a renovating transformation by the Spirit of Christ, the pearly gates of heaven will open to no man or woman.

Let’s think in these chapters about the Holy Spirit. Let us ask ourselves the question, “What is the Holy Spirit?” Or should we ask it this way—“Who is the Holy Spirit?” Is the Spirit an unattainable, unsolved mystery? What does the Holy Spirit do? Why is it called the Holy Spirit? What does it look like? What color is it? What is it like?

We don’t ask these questions blasphemously. It is human, and it is natural and necessary to ask these questions. But we must humbly limit ourselves to what has been revealed and what we are able to understand. The rest is foolish to speculate on.

We must begin by recognizing the limited, myopic vision of humanity. All around us are things that we perceive as real, but we can’t see them with our eyes. Yet they are very genuine and acknowledged realities:

Who is the Holy Spirit?

1. wind
2. radio waves
3. atoms
4. viruses
5. electricity
6. telephone voice's
7. etc.

Our minds are confined by physical conception, by definable space and presence. Some of the mystical and philosophical sciences teach that there is nothing that is real, and others teach that everything is real. Both of these conceptions are probably wrong to a certain degree. What we can believe is that certain realities exist, but that not all of those realities are perceptible through our five senses. God is both “spirit,” on one hand, and a “grounded reality” on the other. But the human mind is extremely limited when attempting to understand the greatest reality of all---God. We are very, very small, in the company of the divine.

In this first chapter we are taking time to think about “Who the Spirit is.” In other sermons we will focus on His work, what He does in us, and how we can receive Him, and the promise of His power to come. We will ask whether or not we can have the Holy Spirit and how to know if we do. We will explore some elementary questions about the Holy Spirit for our spiritual education and personal growth.

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The Name of the Spirit

Names given for this distinct being of the Godhead are: the Holy Spirit, The Holy Ghost, The Spirit, the Comforter, and other variations as well.

The word “holy” carries the nuance of being special and distinct, set apart, like no other, something demanding respect. It means “special.” The word “spirit,” is used not to denote fear and mystery, a nuance sometimes associated with the word “ghost,” but rather to indicate a real being that simply can’t be perceived by human eyesight. “Spirit” is the same word as “wind” (Gk. *anemos*, Heb. *ruach*). Jesus when speaking to Nicodemus likened the work of the Spirit to the wind. As the poet Christina Rossetti writes: “who has seen the wind, neither you nor I. . . but when the tree limbs bend low, the wind is passing by.”

Jesus himself called the Spirit, “the Comforter.” The actual word is “*paracletos*” which means, “one called alongside.” Sometimes the same word is translated as a “lawyer, or “advocate.” But this is really and anemic and impersonal translation of the word. It signifies much more than a lawyer—a battle buddy, a partner or companion, a sacrificing and reliable friend.

NOW WE MUST IDENTIFY WHAT THE SPIRIT IS. Yes, we have a right and a need to know.

Jesus says the Spirit was his other self. John 14-16. He came to take the place of Jesus. Not ultimately to replace him really, but to testify of Him, and stand in his stead. The Spirit was to represent Jesus and be his ambassador. But he is more than this. Jesus said, “I will come to you.” The Spirit not only represents Jesus, but more directly ministers the actual presence of Jesus himself.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Telephone advertisements use such slogans as “reach out and touch someone” in an effort to convince us that the phone privilege comes close to actually being present with the person we are talking with on the phone. We’re not. But it’s the next best thing to being there. The Spirit is like this, except Jesus promises that he is really present *through* the Spirit.

WHY DID JESUS SEND THE SPIRIT?

“The Holy Spirit is Christ’s representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Savior would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high.” DA 669

In one verse Jesus says He will **send** the Comforter. In the next verse Jesus says **He** will come to His disciples. Consequently, though not one and the same, the Spirit and Christ are inseparably united with the Father in the salvation of mankind. The Spirit is Christ’s agent here on the earth. He is “The Vicar of Christ.” Now you can see who the true vicar of Christ is and how blasphemous it is for anyone, especially man or Pope, to claim such a title. There never would have been a Pope, as we know it, if the true knowledge of the Holy Spirit had not been lost.

We are warned to not fall into the trap of some who teach that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force, a concentration of energy, a part of God. It is paramount that we see Him as a PERSON and as FULLY GOD. (AA P. 50)

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At college this author ran into a group of people who proclaimed a very airy and nefarious view of the Holy Spirit. It did not lead to good things. There is no cause for such a misunderstanding. Clear, really, is the Bible doctrine of the real personhood of the Holy Spirit. Some of the common heretical or extreme views of the Spirit's nature are as follows:

1. Modalism—God the Father was the God of the Old Testament, Jesus is the same God, who came to earth as a man, and the Holy Spirit is the same God after the ascension.
2. Mother—Some popular teachers liken the Spirit to a Mother. Since God is the Father and Jesus is the son, the Holy Spirit is the mother. While the Holy Spirit does have typically feminine qualities, but the Bible does not anywhere teach or suggest that the Holy Spirit is a woman. Anthropomorphism probably carries this idea too far. Christ was probably not “literally” God's son, but God uses human pictures to help us understand the close relationship of the Father and the Son and even the Spirit.
3. Energy—Some try to teach that the Holy Spirit is an extension of God and not God himself. The Spirit is God's power, not a separate person.

But there are Scriptural reasons to teach that the Holy Spirit is indeed a separate and distinct person, even as the Father and the Son are separate and distinct persons:

1. The Holy Spirit is 24 times in just John 14, 15, and 16 referred to with separate and distinct personal pronouns as *He*, *Him* and *Whom*.
2. Jesus calls the Spirit a Comforter, or “Paraclete” which was always a title that a person held.

Who is the Holy Spirit?

3. Personal types of relations are ascribed to the Spirit:

- KNOWLEDGE

“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

Only a being can have intelligence, and “know.”

- WILL

“All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. “1 Cor. 12:11. An influence or an “energy” has no *will*. It has no ability to discriminate and make choices. (Likewise, a computer just does what it is told to; it has *command* keys).

- MIND

“He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the *mind* of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:27

“It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.” Acts 15:28 The Holy Spirit has a mind.

- COMMUNION

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“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.” 2 Cor. 13:14 The Holy Spirit can commune with others.

- GRIEF

“Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30 Only a person, or intelligent creature, can grieve.

- CAN BE INSULTED, TEMPTED, AND LIED TO

“And hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace.” Heb. 10:29

“Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord” behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.” Acts 5:9 Peter said, “Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Acts 5:3, 4

Now we ask—who but a person can have knowledge, the power of choice, authority to make that choice, a mind, can be communed with, can be grieved, insulted, and lied too? It has to be a *person*. “Mac,” my MacIntosh Computer, doesn’t get upset if I don’t use him. I like and appreciate my computer, but I don’t have a person to person relationship with it. I can’t grieve it—insult it (Well...), lie to it. “Mac” has no choice. The computer can’t really say, “I’m not going to work today.” Sometimes “he” doesn’t, but that is not because he made an intelligent decision not to. In addition, the Spirit creates (Job 33:4), regenerates (John 3:5-8), resurrects (1 Peter 3:18), and authors prophecy (2 Peter 1:21).

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This concept is in harmony with these inspired statements:

“Evil had been accumulating for centuries, and could only be restrained and resisted by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who would come with no modified energy, but in the fullness of divine power.” *TM* 392

“The Comforter that Christ promised to send after He ascended to Heaven, is the Spirit in all the fullness of the Godhead, making manifest the power of divine grace to all who receive and believe in Christ as a personal Savior. There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these great powers—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will cooperate with the obedient subjects of Heaven. In their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” *Testimonies*, Series B, no. 7, pp. 62, 63

The book *Evangelism* even describes the Spirit of God as being “a person just as much as God is a person” and walking on the campus of Avondale college. Pp. 616, 617.

YES THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON, OR IS LIKE A PERSON.

But we cannot, remember, ascribe to The Spirit a nature, physically like ours. Though the Spirit is real we are warned off the ground of attempting to explain—(and let me assure you there are always those who think they can) what the nature of the Holy Spirit is.

You see, we are safe in knowing the Holy Spirit is a real being, that he is divine, omniscient, omnipresent, and so forth. We are instructed urgently to understand his work, in our lives, in the world. But it is futile to investigate what he looks like, and what form he actually takes.

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“The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them; but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden.” AA 51, 52

Again—in words so much superior to my choice—

“It is not essential for us to be able to define just what the Holy Spirit is. Christ tells us that ‘the Spirit is the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father. ‘ It is plainly declared regarding the Holy Spirit, that in His work of guiding men into all truth, ‘He shall not speak of Himself.’” AA 51, 52

The Spirit testifies of Jesus. That is His job, and that is our job too, and mine as a minister. So as we talk about the Holy Spirit, we do not try to bring forward a new God as it were, or to subjugate Christ in the process. We learn about the Holy Spirit, because we have been instructed to do so and because Jesus said so much about it. It was really the burden of His parting words to the disciples. We learn about the Spirit so we can know more of the truth of Christ and be saved by His name.

It may seem illogical to teach and preach about one God, and yet believe there are three Gods. Yet this is the very same context in which we are told that in our mortal human cocoon, we cannot understand it. Our most sophisticated simile or metaphor will always be awkward, inadequate, and crude. The reason is that it is not humanly understandable.

But for instance; Water is water whether it is ice, or rain, or vapor. A triangle is one figure, yet it has three sides. We do not worship three God’s. We worship

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one. Yet He is manifest in three separate and distinct personalities, the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit. $1+1+1=3$, yet $1 \times 1 \times 1=1$.

St. Patrick supposedly taught the Trinity with the “Shamrock,” or three-leafed clover. It is one plant, with three petals. But, of course, even these symbols are not adequate in explaining the Trinity.

WHEN THIS SUBJECT NOT DWELT UPON, DROUGHT

However, even though there is much we cannot understand about the Spirit, there is much that we can understand. This is why it is important that we study about the Spirit. When this subject is not studied, spiritual lethargy and spiritual draught is always evident.

Do you want to see that changed? Do you want to know more about your friend, the Spirit? Do you want to be filled with the Spirit? Do you want to know to be used by the Spirit of Christ to do things for him? Do you want to be guided by the Spirit? Then you need to learn more about how the Holy Spirit.

The following story is a good illustration of how the Spirit works. The reader is instructed to trace the work of the Spirit in this story and note in what ways the Spirit works and how this accords with the work of the Holy Spirit as outlined in the Bible:

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HIS LIGHTEST WHISPER

By Lois Christian Randolph

It was six o'clock, and almost time to stop my colporteur work for the day. Just one large white house left. There I found the woman busy canning peaches in a small kitchen that seemed strangely out of place in her large house. Reluctantly she let me in, and asked me to sit down.

"I must keep on working. What do you want?" She was filling jars with peaches, done by the open kettle method. "In less than an hour I have to be at the church to help with the ice cream social. I have baked cookies all afternoon besides doing all this canning." Cookie pans placed everywhere around the kitchen testified to her activity.

Without success, as I really did not have her attention, I gave her a brief canvass. "Really I should be dressing right this moment. Today I'd better not waste any time looking at your book," she told me.

Being an inexperienced colporteur, I didn't realize that I should have made another definite appointment with her. As I walked across the lawn at the side of her house, something whispered to me, "Sit down. Rest in that lawn swing." But I hurried on.

More urgently the impression continued. "Stop. Wait. You are tired. Rest in that swing." However, resting in that fashion was just what the conference field secretary, W.A. Bergherm, had told me not to do. "Never sit down by the roadside (I was walking from door to door) to rest in plain sight of people whom you have canvassed or whom you will see later. Always give the picture of an active and enthusiastic saleswoman."

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The voice was too insistent to be denied. I sat down. Moments later the kitchen screen opened and the busy lady called out, "Come back here. I want to talk to you."

Obediently I re-entered her kitchen. "Please forgive my thoughtlessness. Even if I am busy, I should have offered you something to eat. Here's a dish of peaches, and help yourself to all the cookies you can eat. I've made plenty." To me this was a feast. Walking from door to door, I had to eat my dinners and suppers wherever I happened to be when mealtime came around.

Further lack of skill in the nineteen-year old colporteur was evidenced by the fact that I did not think of bringing up the subject of my book once more. The woman had the first time turned me down with an air of finality. She had to bring up the subject while I was eating. "What type of book are you selling?"

While she had her back turned to me and was still filling jars with peaches, I gave her a brief resume of *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*, by W.A. Spicer. "And why are you out in a small town like Erie and in the country nearby selling this book?"

"Because I want to go to college, and I am trying to earn most of my way. Also I want to help people understand the Bible better."

To my utter astonishment the lady said, "Put me down for one of those books. You said that it tells about the prophecies in Daniel and the Revelation. It might give me some light." Grateful for her change of heart, I wrote down the name of Mrs. Frank Quade in my prospectus and my order book, and left.

Six months later, while I was in college, I received a letter from Mrs. Moulton, the only Adventist in the small town of Erie, Illinois. "You may be interested to know about the result of the book you sold to Mrs. Quade, that woman who was so active in her church. She and I kept last Sabbath together."

On the previous Friday Mrs. Quade had gone to several of her neighbors. "Have you read that book the young girl sold us last summer?"

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“Not yet. What’s so exciting about that book? I bought it mostly to help the girl get her education.”

“It has the truth in it,” declared Mrs. Quade. “It tells us that we should keep the seventh day as the Sabbath; That Sunday keeping is a plant that our heavenly Father has not planted, and it should be rooted up. Tomorrow I am keeping my first Sabbath, as God has commanded.”

She continued, “I sat up till one o’clock the other night reading *Our Day*. The message in that book is tremendous.”

On the Tuesday following the visits with her neighbors Mrs. Quade unexpectedly fell dead from a heart attack. She died in the same kitchen where she had ordered the volume that radically changed her religious thinking. Providentially the “lightest whisper” had given her a second opportunity to order *Our Day in the Light of Prophecy*.

The first Sabbath Mrs. Quade kept became her last.

--*The Youth Instructor*, Oct. 5, 1965

WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Why Was the Spirit Given?

In the last chapter we talked about the Holy Spirit and what He is like. We re-discovered that He is a person, albeit we cannot understand in human terms His nature. He can think, can be communed with, can be insulted and grieved, can make decisions, and can plan and create. He is always present, is all-wise, and is all-powerful. He is just as much God as God is.

But He does not speak of Himself. He points to Christ. So when we talk about the Spirit, we are not talking about something separate from Christ. We are not introducing a new God. We are rather becoming acquainted with the unified work of all the members of the “Godhead” of which Jesus is the most visible to us humans, the link between heaven and earth.

Remember that we read that unless we are born of water and of the Spirit we cannot enter the kingdom of God---

---Therefore, we must have the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

---Without the Holy Spirit we are as dead as a dead man, a body without the Spirit –without the breath of life.

Jesus was born of a woman (humanity), and was conceived in the Holy Spirit (divinity). God was His Father. Babies are born in water, a symbol of the Spirit also.

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So we are born of humanity. We were born in water. But we do not have as part of us the divine nature. We have only a human nature. Jesus came and sends His Holy Spirit to us to change that.

When we are born again, baptized with the spirit and in water, God in effect through the Spirit intends to recreate our natures after the divine nature (True re-incarnation?) (2 Peter 1:3, 4). Not that we become divine—this would be blasphemy—but we receive an indwelling and a changing by the divine after the divine.

Says Ellen White:

“Christ’s humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature.”
DA 123

The Work of the Spirit

In this chapter we ask: WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT? What does he do? Why do we need Him?

The first thing he does is testify of Jesus. A list follows:

1. **He Testifies of Jesus**—He “does not speak of himself.”

John 16:26—Points to Jesus—represents Him. Celebrities have agents who represent them. Corporations and Institutions have public relations personnel who do the same thing. God has a SUPER agent, as well.

What is the Work of the Holy Spirit?

2. He Makes Jesus Present With Us

(John 16:7)—Jesus said to the disciples that it was better that He go away. Jesus' presence would then be no longer localized. Some wish that they could walk with Christ as the disciples did. But this human arrangement is actually very awkward when considering how many people have this same wish. Therefore Christ makes his presence within reach of all. What a gift!

Danny Shelton the administrator of the Three Angel's Broadcasting Network was a carpenter when God called him to start at Television station that would herald the Three Angel's messages. Danny could have remained a carpenter and still addressed this calling. But he found that it was better for him to leave that behind and go full-time in administrating the broadcasting company. In such a way it was better for Jesus to leave this earth, with its human limitations.

Few realize the sacrifice that Jesus has made in becoming a human being. Even though he is the divine Son of God, with all authority, he is still bound in his human form. He has bound himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken.

Explains Ellen White again:

“Henceforth through the Spirit, Christ was to abide continually in the heart of His children. Their union with Him was closer than when He was personally with them.” SC

74

This is why Jesus could truthfully say before his ascension: “I will come to you.”

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3. He Reveals to us TRUTH

THE SPIRIT IS CALLED “THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.”

READ JOHN 16:13—The Spirit will “guide you into all truth.”

There was a guide in the deserts of Arabia who was said never to lose his way. He carried in his breast a homing pigeon with a fine cord attached to it's leg. When in doubt as the path to take, he tossed the pigeon in the air, and the pigeon quickly strained at the cord as it tried to fly in the direction of home. So it led it's master unerringly home and people called him the “dove man.” So—Holy Spirit—dove of heaven is willing to lead us.

Froom, *The Coming of the Comforter*, p. 59

There are false guides all about us. It is important to have the Holy Spirit as a guide when making the decisions of our life:

“The doubleheader train was bucking a heavy snowstorm as its steam engines pulled it west. A woman with a baby wanted to leave the train at one of the little stations along the route.

She repeatedly called, “Don't forget me!” to the brakeman responsible to call out the stations they approached. Her husband was to meet her.

The train slowed to a stop, and a fellow traveler said, “Here's your station.” She hopped from the train into a storm. The train moved on again.

Forty-five minutes later, the brakeman came in. “Where's the woman?”

“She got off at the last stop,” the traveler said.

“Then she got off to her death,” the brakeman responded. “We stopped only because there was something the matter with the engine.

They called for volunteers to go back and search for the woman and child. When they found her hours later, not far from the track where they stopped, she was covered with ice and

What is the Work of the Holy Spirit?

snow. The little boy was protected on her breast. She had followed the man's directions, but they were wrong—dead wrong.

Paul declares Christ is the one Mediator between man and God. Peter emphasizes there is no other name given under heaven whereby we must be saved.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our only Authority. His blood has made atonement for our sin. Only He can tell us how to reach our final destination. Depend on the One who has experienced death and provided redemption for you, the One who will walk with you through the valley of the shadow of death.”

Adapted by Ron Carlson

Reprinted from: *Moody Monthly*, 2/83

- a. The Holy Spirit particularly helps us understand the Scriptures (SC p. 91). “Never should the Bible be studied without prayer.”
- b. John 16:13, last part, says – “He will show you things to come.”

The Spirit authors all prophecy—thus is the best interpreter of prophecy. Too many people study prophecy without pleading with the Spirit for guidance. This is why there are so many divergent views of prophecy.

4. The Spirit Convicts of Sin

READ JOHN 16:8—“when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment.” There is a right and wrong in most aspects of life. The Spirit informs our conscience, and tells us when we are on the wrong path. Conviction is not the same as guilt. Guilt is what comes when we ignore conviction. We need wisdom some times in our lives. As the famous prayer of

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St. Francis of Assisi says: “God grant me the serenity to change the things I can, accept the things I cannot, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

5. The Spirit Reveals What is Right

- a. He sanctifies—convinces of righteousness, and guides.
- b. The Spirit helps us make decisions.

Many years ago, the throne of Russia was once occupied by two boy princes. They sat side by side and gave their decisions on the gravest questions. Their judgments were so wise and just, that men marveled that princes so young and inexperienced could know so much of statecraft, or speak with such discretion on questions so difficult. But the secret was that close behind the throne where they sat, hidden by a thin veil, was the Princess Sophia. She heard the cases brought to them, and gave the decisions which they pronounced. Those boys referred everything to her, and waited until she whispered to them the wise answer they delivered.

So with the Holy Spirit. We are to refer every matter to Him and wait for His decision. Then what He bids us do we are to do. *3000 Illus*, p. 350.

It would be well if more attention was given to the voice of the Spirit in church councils, in family decisions, and in personal matters.

6. Power to Witness

In the last chapter an example was given at the end of the chapter of how the Spirit works in witnessing. Sometimes the Spirit imparts wisdom that supplants our conventional wisdom. But the Spirit knows what approach is best for each situation.

What is the Work of the Holy Spirit?

7. Brings Joy and Fullness

Unlike some cans of soda, which momentarily assuage thirst but soon leave the desire for more, the Spirit always delivers full satisfaction. Say the Scriptures:

- Acts 13:52 “And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.”
- Romans 14:17 speaks of the “joy of the Holy Ghost.”
- Joy is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23).
- Jesus said, “I am come. . . that you might have life, and that more abundantly” (John 10:10).

CONCLUSION

The story is told that during one season the waters of the Niagara River failed to reach the falls. It was either frozen, or the seasonal watershed was not sufficient to keep the river flowing.

People came to see the falls but were disappointed. All they saw was the ugly escarpment and the piles of rocks below. Only a trickle of water could be found coming over its crest. It was not at all the spectacular sight known to thousands of annual visitors.

Finally, the waters returned and tourists and locals again experienced the fullness of the experience. What rejoicing there was at the return of the mighty cataract.

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So it is with the need for the Spirit. The world is great need of Spirit power. It is in great need for the waters of the Spirit to return in abundance. What joy is anticipated to see the Holy Spirit poured out in glory and fullness.

---Many see the need of the Holy Spirit in their lives?

---Many need to see more power in their lives, more effectiveness in their witness? There needs to be more spiritual prosperity in their work. Better families, better marriages. What we all need is the Holy Spirit? Yes, we need it desperately.

Do you want the Holy Spirit to baptize you? The next chapter talks about why we don't have the Holy Spirit, or why it doesn't seem we do? It addresses how to receive the Spirit. It speaks about how to change our lives. May each let Jesus through His Spirit do that work for them.

WHY ISN'T THE HOLY SPIRIT RECEIVED MORE FULLY?

Why is it necessary? How to Receive the Holy Spirit

“Men are dying, and we face the last crisis, so we work on frenziedly, much like the toiling disciples who labored all night and caught nothing. But in the early gray of the dawn, a few minutes in the direct presence and under the specific direction of the Master, filled their erstwhile empty nets.”

---L. Froom, *The Coming of the Comforter*, p. 91 (Luke 5:3)

A lady went to a jeweler to have her watch fixed. He disappeared to the back and soon returned with it running perfectly. Surprised, she asked how he could fix it so soon. He told her it only needed a new battery. “Battery? Battery? No body said anything about a battery. I’ve been winding it every morning!” she said.

A lot of Christians do not realize the necessity of the inner power of the Holy Spirit to handle things they *think* they must take into their own hands.

What a difference the power of God makes. Christ knew that humanity was burdened with an enormous task to take the message of the gospel to the world. The Day of Pentecost, and its outpouring of power was a signal that Jesus was keeping his promise and that the Kingdom of God was underway. The Spirit was sent to aid Christ’s disciples in their work and to encourage them with heaven’s approval and approbation.

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Nansen, the arctic explorer had been gone for months facing the dangers of the north. He wrote a note to his family, tied the message to his faithful carrier pigeon and sent the bird over ice and a thousand miles over water, where at last it dropped into the cote (chicken coop) at the home of the explorer's wife (Norway), and she knew that all was well. So with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the heavenly dove. The disciples knew that Jesus was alive, the Spirit's coming and His manifest working were proofs of it.

3000 Illus., P. 350.

The giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was a result of Jesus receiving full power at the right hand of God. Jesus there began anew His work in the heavenly sanctuary as our high priest.

“When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from Heaven to His followers, as a token that He had as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was Anointed One over His people.” AA 38, 39

The question comes to us today, WHY HAVEN'T WE RECEIVED THE SPIRIT MORE FULLY?

Was the Spirit just for then?

Why Isn't the Spirit Received More Fully?

Is it only for the future?

“To us today, as verily as to the first disciples, the promise of the Spirit belongs. God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word.” *8T* p.20

“The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it.” *EV*. P.701.

1. The first reason for not receiving a greater measure of the Spirit is that “we” haven’t **asked** for it---at least through **earnest** prayer (*5T* 158) (*AA* 49, 50-51). It is offered in “infinite plentitude” (*AA* p. 56).

“We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost...we need it more today...Without the Spirit...it will be in vain that we labor to present the truth. p.49.

Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the spirit, every worker should offer his petition to god. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. *AA* pp. 50, 51

The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ’s parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the

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promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude. AA p. 56

STRANGELY, THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A GIFT THAT WE ASK FOR!! This is because we can't demand it—only God can give it.

Read Luke 11:9-13. God wants us to ask. The word ask is found in his “formula.”

ASK

SEEK

KNOCK==ASK

God won't give us the wrong thing. (Have you ever been sent the wrong thing?) God gives us exactly what we need, no cheating. He gives us good gifts.

Many years ago in Siam, Thailand of today, when a king wanted to bring down someone in his kingdom, he would give him the gift of a white elephant. Since a white elephant was considered sacred, only the best of care and feed must be given to it. It could not be given away because it was a gift from the king. The care of the animal eventually impoverished the king's enemy.

So it is with the gifts of the world. They come to us as something seemingly great, but once we have received them, they are almost impossible to get rid of and eventually bring us to our ruin.

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But God only gives us good and lasting gifts. And he gives them according to the need of our heart despite the ineptness of how we ask.

When my daughter, Stephanie, was little, she used to ask me to pick her up so I could hold her or carry her. However, being so small she would ask in what would be a strange way for some, but in a way that her parents soon understood perfectly. She would say: “I want me to lift you up.” Even though she got her pronouns backward we regularly knew she simply wanted us to pick HER up.

Likewise in this passage (Luke) Jesus uses such an example. In the Aramaic language certain words could sound almost identical, but mean totally opposite things. In fact the word for fish, a good thing for a child, sounds very similar to the word “serpent,” a decidedly bad thing for a child. But any decent parent could figure out what the child really meant. No parent would give a child that asked for some fish, a harmful snake instead.

Bread=stone
Fish=serpent
Egg=scorpion

In this way God will answer our need. He will give us not what we mistakenly or foolishly ask for, but will give us what we really need and in our heart know we are intending to ask for. The Holy Spirit is one of those gifts that God promises in this very context.

2. Another reason we do not receive the Spirit in full measure is **incomplete submission** to God. Only a part of us is given to the Spirit, so only a part of the Spirit is given to us. (8T 21), (Ev 699), (MB 21).

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Let Christians put away all dissension, and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. 8T p.21

When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure: but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. EV. P 699

To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart surrendered for His indwelling. MB p. 21

It is the human tendency to “do it our own way.”

In my youth I helped my Dad remove a gas tank from the ground. I was quite worried about how we were to get it out. It was too heavy to pull out with any equipment and I didn’t want my Dad to have to hire a crane. My Father didn’t seem to be too worried about that. He just went to digging.

I exercised my mind on how to get the tank out of the ground. *Maybe we could pry up one end, put boards under it, and drag it out with the pickup. No that wouldn’t work.* In my mind I saw a giant tripod, with ropes, cables, pulleys—a block and tackle. Where would we get all this? It was a great worry. A real challenge.

When we got the dirt from around the top of the tank shoveled out I could see we were going to have trouble because it was pretty well fastened in place. It had been there a long time. But dad wasn’t worried. I watched as he calmly walked over to the faucet, turned it on, dragged the garden hose over to the hole, let the water spill in. “Come,” he said, “let’s go eat lunch.”

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When we came back the tank was nearly completely floated out of the hole. All that remained was to drag it over the edge with the truck and a few planks as skids. This we did in moments with no problem.

“What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. Jesus knew their destitution, and told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high.” EGW R& H, FEB. 18, 1890

One faithful missionary tells a great story about raising pineapples next to his house in the South Sea Islands. The natives would either steal them, or ruin them. This circumstance became an enormous problem for the missionary, and he became very angry and frustrated trying to protect and raise the pineapples. The whole episode became also detrimental to his relationships with the natives and his gospel mission to them.

Finally, the missionary “gave” the pineapples to God, relinquishing all selfish rights to them asking God to do whatever he wanted or would allow with them. With that being done, the natives stopped stealing the pineapples and began even listening to the message of the gospel given by the missionary. In other words, the Spirit took over the auspices of the pineapples, and also took over the consciences of the natives. God’s power did far more than the missionary in his human temper and limits ever could.

Sometimes I simply illustrate to children that they can’t be full of the Holy Spirit if they are full of other things. I take a jar, one with ugly plastic creatures in it, and attempt to fill it with the water from another equally sized jar. Of course, I

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can't, and with the counsel of the children remove the ugly things from the jar so that it can hold all of the water and be "full" of the Spirit. This simple lesson is really for everyone, but really isn't so easy to fulfill in life, especially by adults.

It is hard to LET GO, and LET GOD:

A very tired traveler came to the banks of a river. There was no bridge by which he could cross. It was winter, and the surface of this stream was covered with ice. It was getting dark, and he wanted to reach the other side. He debated much about whether or not the ice would bear his weight. Finally, after much hesitation and fear, he got down on his hands and knees and began, very cautiously, to creep across the surface of the ice, hoping that by distributing the weight of his body, the ice would be less apt to break under the load.

After he had made his painful and slow journey about halfway over the river, he suddenly heard the sound of singing behind him. Out of the dusk there came a four-horse load of coal driven by a man singing merrily as he went his carefree way. Here was the traveler, fearfully inching his way on his hands and knees. And there, as if whisked along by the winter's wind, went the driver, his horses, his sleigh, his load of coal, over the very same ice! (Source unknown)

3. Another reason the Spirit is withheld is **dissension** among church members or family members. (DA 672) —The Spirit was given when the disciples were "in one accord."

Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church, and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His people "to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2:13 But many will not submit to this. They want to

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manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. The power of God awaits their demand and reception. This promised blessing, claimed by faith, brings all other blessings in its train. It is given according to the riches of the grace of Christ, and He is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive. DA p. 672.

4. Another block to the Spirit's reception is the lack of consistent **purity of life** (ML 58) W40. It is when the "character of Christ" is perfectly "reproduced in his people," that he will come to claim them as his own.

Once there was a meeting of great power down in Tennessee, and one of the variety of church members who blew hot and cold, one who was revived at each annual revival meeting but backslid in the interim, was praying in the group with great emotion. There was one present, an old woman who knew him well, who read correctly his character, and had witnessed his many revivals and backslidings. So when he suddenly burst into prayer for the fullness of the Holy Spirit to be given him, the old woman emphatically cried, "Don't you do it, Lord. HE LEAKS!!!" So many of us fail to retain the bestowed blessing. (Illus, p. 350)

5. A final reason is that men and women simply **spurn the gift** that God has offered. There is no appreciation of the heavenly gift. (AA 50) W41. (Some of us have seen people spurn gifts. It is one of the most distasteful things one can ever witness)

HOLY SPIRIT: RESISTING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Spurning a gift and resisting the Holy Spirit are very much the same thing. There is a point after which the appeals of the Spirit are no longer offered (or better---"received"):

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A gentleman had a pet dove which would light upon his shoulder, walk down his arm and eat out of his hand. One day he decided to experiment with it. As it was eating out of his hand he gripped it a little. When he relaxed his grip the dove flew away and lighted upon a tree. It looked sad. The man coaxed and called. Finally the dove, very reluctantly, came back. He repeated just what he had done before. The dove again flew away and acted as before, but this time the man had to call and coax much longer. It seemed it would never return, but finally it did. The man again repeated what he had done. When he relaxed his grip this time, the dove flew farther away and lighted upon a tree. It drooped its wings and looked perplexed and grieved. The man began to coax and call, but the dove lifted its wings and flew away. He never saw it again. The Lord says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." We may resist and grieve Him and one day He will depart forever.

---By William Moses Tidwell, "Effective Illustrations."

God is willing and able to give us of the spiritual riches of heaven. But there needs to be a suppliant attitude among his followers before he can give it in its fullness:

"In the saving of the souls of men, God does all the work, making man his instrument..."
RH, May 6, 1890

The Holy Spirit is given to those who ask, who completely submit to God and completely trust in faith that God is able to do as he has promised. To such the Spirit will be given in full measure. "Come, Holy Spirit. Revive the church, TODAY!"

WHEN IS THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN?

When do you know you have the Holy Spirit? When will it be given in fullness? Do you have the Holy Spirit?

DOES ANY PARTICULAR CHURCH HAVE IT?

DOES ANY PARTICULAR PERSON HAVE IT MORE THAN ANOTHER?

WHAT IS THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT?

The author of this book has been part of many discussions on this subject. Recently, to this writing, he was part of a minister's discussion on this subject. The question was: do we, or don't we have the Holy Spirit? Of course, no one thought he or she *didn't* have the Spirit, but the same ministers weren't so much in agreement on how one "knows" that he or she has the Spirit. The dialogue was most interesting.

Typically, in my conservative denomination, with even the mention of the term, "baptism of the Spirit," some get uneasy, because of connotations associated with other Christian, charismatic or Pentecostal, religions.

It is important to look at the Scriptural foundation of this subject and ask: "what does it say about this baptism of the Spirit? Is it a real experience? Can you know if you have it or not? Let us look at some texts:

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TEXTS ON BAPTISM

1. **John the Baptist:** Parallel passages: (Matt. 3:11, Mark 1:6, Luke 3:16, John 1:33)

“**John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water;** but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” (Luke 3:16)

2. **Peter**— later remembered Jesus’ words---“John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 11:16)

3. **Jesus**—Acts 1:4,5,8. (Read) Here the apostles are told to wait and pray for the promise that they would receive the Spirit and power after so many days. **(The narrative presents the coming of the Spirit as a definite, ascertainable experience).**

They were to wait until it happened. If they didn’t know when it happened they would still be waiting in Jerusalem today!

4. **John’s Disciples**—Acts 19:1-7. Certain of John’s disciples discovered by Paul “knew” they hadn’t received the Spirit. In fact they didn’t even know about the Holy Spirit. So it seems one can certainly know when he has or hasn’t received the Spirit.

5. **Apostles**—Acts 8:12, 14-17. In these passages the “Baptism of Holy Spirit” is treated as a separate and distinct anointing.

When is the Spirit Given?

All these aspects referred to above seems to indicate that the baptism of the Spirit is a real, and definite experience to be expected by the person of faith.

Jesus definitely had the baptism of the Spirit. When he was baptized, the Spirit ascended upon him as a dove.

So should every follower of Christ. Review the following quotes:

QUOTES RE: BAPTISM OF SPIRIT

“We are to wrestle with God in earnest prayer for a **baptism of the Holy Spirit**, that (we) may meet the needs of a world perishing in sin.” R & H March 31, 1910

“We need people who realize their soul poverty and who will earnestly seek for the endowment of the Holy Spirit. As we talk of the matchless charms of the divine Redeemer, our hearts will be melted and endued by the Holy Spirit. We must be clothed with power from on high by the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**. There is help for us no other way.” R & H, April 5, 1892

“If we are to learn of Christ, we must pray as the apostles prayed when the Holy Spirit was poured upon them. We need a **baptism of the Spirit of God**.”
R & H. Nov. 11, 1909

“What we need is the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. Jesus knew their destitution, and told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high.” EGW, RH, Feb. 18, 1890

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“If divine power does not combine with human effort, I would not give a straw for all that the greatest man could do. The Holy Spirit is wanting in our work.” IBID

“O, how we need the divine presence! For the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** every worker should be breathing out his prayer to God.” TM, p. 170

“Why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit, since this is the means by which we are to receive power? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, preach concerning it” The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to us than parents are to give good gifts to their children. **For the baptism of the Spirit** every worker should be pleading with God.” BT, p. 22

“For the **daily baptism of the Spirit**, every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely. Especially should they pray that God will baptize His chosen ambassadors in mission fields.....AA, pp. 50,51

“We must be endued with power from on high; we must have the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** before we leave this place.” R & H, June 24, 1884

“We must have the holy unction from God; we must have the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**.” R & H, Dec. 15, 1885

The Filling of the Spirit

Jesus was our pattern and exemplar in His relation to the Holy Spirit. Please note: His birth, growth, testing, ministry, miracles, death, resurrection, and organization of the church, were all through the moving and operation of the Holy Spirit. It was this complete filling and possession by the Spirit that made our

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Lord what He was as a man. Every action of body and mind was due to the Holy Spirit, as the following scriptures selected from many of like import, indicate:

“The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:35

“Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil.” Luke 4: 1,2

“Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about.” Luke 4:14

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him.” Acts 10:38

“If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.” Matt. 12:28

But a simple “knowledge” of the Spirit is not the whole answer to knowing whether one is baptized of the Spirit. **The “Baptism of the Spirit” can be falsified or counterfeited:**

MATTHEW 7:15-23

In Matthew 7:15-23 Jesus gives a detection system for the “baptism” of the Spirit and other such claims. Jesus says that one can know by the FRUIT, or the outcome. In this passage we are told that it is not necessary to immediately accept anything as genuine; in fact it is required, that every claim should be tested for its

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authenticity and even something further, given time for ripening. Virtually the same test is given in the Old Testament (Deut.) for a false prophet. God said that one should wait and see if the claim of the professed prophet came true before believing the prophet. Even this required studied examination.

GALATIANS 5:22, 23

In Galatians 5 the fruit of the Spirit is given. Any claim should also be consistent with the true virtues of the Christian faith, including humility, quietness, and selflessness.

In Morris Venden's book, *YOUR FRIEND, THE HOLY SPIRIT*, he lists attributes of revival and reformation that will be found even at a "false" revival or demonstration. When reading these, anyone can see that the tests of true "baptism" need to be very stringent indeed:

1. "You will find there an undeniable presence or power that senses cannot deny.
 2. You will see the miraculous. You will see and experience that which cannot be explained by human reasoning.
 3. You will find great emphasis on the Bible and on Jesus.
 4. You will find a great emphasis upon love as our great need and upon the happiness and joy that come when we love one another.
 5. You will find what may appear to be a more exalted system of religion, a deeper experience of faith, or deeper insight into spiritual truths.
 6. And finally, you will find people whose lives have been changed."
- (p.74)

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ACTS 5:32 gives one of the best “fruit inspection” tools or at least the best pre-requisites for receiving the Spirit: The Spirit is given in greater measure to them that “obey” God. The best way of knowing of the Spirit's reception in one's or someone else's life is to note whether or not they are keeping God's commandments.

The Spirit is Given in Different Ways, at Different Times, for Different Reasons:

It is also paramount to realize that the outpouring of the Spirit is not always the same for everyone---personally and/or corporately. It has been likened to two different rivers. Some rivers are calm, and peaceful, others are swift and active.

Sometimes there is a great stir of emotions, and a more gripping manifestation. This more “dramatic” presentation of the Spirit is much like, Pentecost, it is more volcanic, and notable. Sometimes it causes a life to be turned violently upside down. Such was the call of Paul, or Saul.

But it is not always this way with the Spirit. Barnabas too, was filled with the Spirit. But Barnabas, and even in some ways Jesus, it was manifest in a much quieter way. Sometimes it may be related a little to the personality of the individual. Elijah wanted an “Elijah experience.” But Elijah found that God sometimes speaks with the still small voice as well. Elisha also wanted an “Elijah” experience, but God chose to give Elisha an “Elisha” experience instead.

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A river is also filled in two ways:

1. It can come from heavy, torrential rains amid great noise, turmoil, and commotion. There is a rush—and it overflows—even sometimes with violence. (Flooding is an example of this)
2. Or, it can come from the melted snows, calmly, steadily rising until it is full, without any noise or disturbance or commotion.

IN BOTH THE STREAM IS FULL. Thus the Spirit does not always come with earthquake, wind, and fire.

“When the Holy Spirit works the human agent, it does not ask us in what way it shall operate. Often it moves in unexpected ways.” TM 64

“Doesn’t work according to the devising of any man.” TM, p. 65

The Spirit is Already Poured Out

What seems to be the answer to the “when” question, in this author’s mind is that in a way the Spirit has been “poured out,” since creation. But it is or has been received in varying quantities. The question is not, “when will God pour out his Spirit?” The question is: “When will God’s people receive his Spirit into their hearts in it fullness?”

The world was created through the agency of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit was active throughout the Old Testament, though it isn’t often given separate attention. Jesus was “born” by the Spirit, and so the Gospel of Luke presents it. At his baptism Jesus received the Spirit, but it was not that he did not have it

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before. The Spirit was given him then in the form of gifts that would enhance and glorify his ministry. But he was just as “full” of the Spirit when working as a carpenter in his father’s house.

Likewise, Jesus “breathed” on his disciples the Spirit when he met with them before his ascension. But at Pentecost the Spirit was poured out *for the purpose of enabling the disciples* with similar gifts to which Jesus received at his baptism. These gifts were given for a specific function and purpose, that being to give the Gospel to the *then known world*.

The gifts God wants to pour out upon his present church are *perhaps, but only perhaps* of a similar nature. In some ways the gifts are for our “now-known world” could likely differ in certain ways from the gifts given at Pentecost. The gift of tongues or the ability to communicate in foreign languages is not perhaps so crucial today as it was on THE DAY of Pentecost. Today that particular gift is rarely needed (and when it is, God provides it). We now have indigenous educated missionaries who can learn the native languages, we have translators, we have computer software and the internet, we have technological sound equipment, and we have high speed printing presses that can translate or print most any language with ease. Noah’s time didn’t require the gift of tongues either. There was only one language. But perhaps the gifts of the Spirit at that time included “boat-building” abilities.

The bottom line is that the gifts of Spirit are given for specific purposes, which may vary with the time, or with the receptiveness of the beneficiaries. It is up to that selfsame Spirit to honor men with these gifts as he sees fit, and when he sees fit. The Spirit is *always available* and willing to fill men and women who are ready to receive it, and who finally receive it in the way the Spirit knows is

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best for the time and place. Every true follower of God is endowed with the Holy Spirit, to a degree, even from birth. How far the Spirit's filling will go depends on the nature of its reception.

Some people may not seem to others to be as full of the Spirit as some others. But the filling of the Spirit is not necessarily related to spectacular demonstration or miraculous ability. These are in some way human standards. The divine standard is a heart full of Grace that is moved at God's promptings to do whatever task, small or large, that God prompts it to do. The person who does this is the person that is full of the Spirit. He may not speak in tongues or heal people, but he knows God, and fills the place to which God has called him. This humble servant HAS the baptism, just as much, perhaps, as anyone else. I have met people like this, who may not be famous here on earth, but who are absolutely in heaven's hall of fame.

The Latter Rain

Of course, the day is coming when God will exalt his purpose by a special outpouring of gifts to expedite the coming of Christ. But this anticipation in no way negates that individuals can receive the Spirit in its fullness even today.

The Ultimate Test:

The ultimate test of being baptized by the Spirit is perhaps best described in the following quote:

“Who has the ear? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ's, our

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thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. All we have and are is consecrated to Him. We long to bear His image, breathe His Spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things.” E. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 58.

Yes! This is how you know if you are baptized by the Spirit. It isn’t that you can speak in tongues, preach, prophesy, heal, and so on. Jesus warned that all of those things could be, and would be counterfeited. It is if you love and obey Christ. Following are some observations about the characteristics of revival and fervor that we noticed previously can be found in both true and false movements. It is important to recognize in these that the dramatic, the miraculous, even the Christ-centered can at times be the work of the enemy:

1. As to “an undeniable presence or power that your senses cannot deny” the book *The Great Controversy*, wisely exhorts: Satan “will present his temptations to men in a manner to pervert the senses of all who are not shielded by divine power.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 554.

2. On seeing the miraculous it says: “Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed and many undeniable wonders will be performed.” *Ibid.*, p. 558

3. Concerning the emphasis on the Bible and Jesus: “As the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, ...Their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.” “While it [spiritualism] formerly denounced Christ and the Bible, it now professes to accept both.” *Ibid.*, pp. 588,558.

4. As to a great emphasis on love: “Love is dwelt upon as the chief attribute of God.” The enemy “appeals to the reason by the presentation of elevating themes; he delights the fancy with enrapturing scenes; and he enlists the affections by his eloquent portrayals of love and charity.” *Ibid.*, pp. 558,554.

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5. Concerning a more exalted system of religion Ellen White says: Satan professes “to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith.” *Ibid*, p. 589.

6. And what about changed lives? “Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnesses since apostolic times...The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work, and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God’s special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world.” *Ibid.*, p. 464.

Here is another statement on this issue:

“The tempter often works most successfully through those who are least suspected of being under his control...Many a man of cultured intellect and pleasant manners, who would not stoop to what is commonly regarded as an immoral act, is but a polished instrument in the hands of Satan.”

Ibid, P. 509.

The devil doesn’t put everybody in the gutter. He’ll make use of some people whose lives appear to be changed—supposedly the good, the moral, the ethical, the kind and loving. Let us ask ourselves another question. If the devil got a person on drugs, don’t you suppose he would have the power to withdraw those temptations, allowing the addict to gain the victory over drugs? Isn’t this

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possible? So, even a changed life does not always necessarily prove the power of God.

When you compare these points, you come to this inevitable question: If one cannot decide truth on the basis of any of the above conditions, then on what basis can one decide? It has to be on the basis of truth, especially as taught in the Scriptures.

“Antichrist is to perform his marvelous would in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. Ibid.

So it basically comes down to who really controls you. Christ, or Satan?

REFILLING NECESSARY

A once for all filling is not taught in Bible. Neither is once saved, always saved. When it comes to the Spirit everyone needs fresh supplies, new bestowments on a regular basis—in fact daily, even hourly or even less.

As Leroy Froom has observed, “The trouble is that many are trying to do God’s work with the power they received ten years ago. We are all leaky vessels.” *Froom*, p. 175.

HOW DID JESUS RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT? HOW DID HE SUCCEED?

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With Jesus it was a “daily” thing:

“From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. *Daily* He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit.”

Think of the things that God can do with the spirit filled person. A father, a mother, a son, a daughter, a teacher, a minister, a businessman, a farmer, whatever. There really is not limit to the filling of the Spirit. It can become so dominant in the life that that life is but an echo and re-echo of the Spirit. This is how Enoch walked with God.

NO LIMIT

“There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God.” 8T 19

Every person, who has their life rooted and grounded in the Spirit, will be useful and successful for God. They will have a calm and abiding peaceful trust in God. They will obey His will. They will not be moved by excitement or threat. They will not be moved by every wind of doctrine. They will be led and governed by the true Spirit of Christ who will baptize them deeply in the ocean of God’s love and grace. They will ignore the surface winds and be moved by only the deep currents of the Spirit.

Writes one: “As you fly over the North Atlantic Sea you will see the awesome sight of icebergs floating in those cold and icy waters. If you look carefully you will see a pattern develop: small icebergs will be moving on one direction and

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gigantic icebergs will be moving in another. The explanation of this phenomenon is that surface winds are driving the small icebergs while the huge ones are controlled by the deep ocean currents.

There is a lesson in this for us. Lives are driven by two forces. “Small lives” are often driven to and from by the surface winds of change, petty problems, and disagreeable circumstances. Despair, depression and discouragement overwhelm. On the other hand, there are “great lives,” gigantic in stature, which are never moved by the petty blowing of the surface wind. These great lives, with foundations running deep in immovable faith, are controlled by the deep-running movements of a wise, loving and all- powerful God. Let the winds blow? Let them move others around! Despite what happens, these lives remain steady and sure.

Job is a good example. He said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.” (Job 13:15). And Paul could say, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed.” (II Cor. 4:8). Though surface winds or momentary trials become severe, keep trusting in the Lord, and let the deep currents of his love and power carry you along.”

WHERE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT TODAY?

Power to Witness

Do we use the Holy Spirit, or does the Holy Spirit use us? Which way is it? What does the Holy Spirit require of us as regards sharing the Gospel with others?

Following is a testimony written by one person who became a Christian later in life:

As a non-believer I had thought many Christians were weird, spreading leaflets on street corners and nabbing strangers. I was terrified that if I said anything at all about Christ, my friends would consider me just as strange. And I would agree with them. There was a part of me that secretly felt evangelism was something you shouldn't do to your dog, let alone a friend.

To evangelize, it seemed, required insensitivity and an inclination to blurt out a memorized gospel outline, without inhaling, to every stranger you met. It never occurred to me that my pre-Christian, unredeemed, almost common-sense understanding about how to relate warmly to people might be valid. For instance, I knew how offended I had been as a non-Christian when someone tried to push religion on me, without even discovering who I was or what I believed. That was a proper response, I see now, for I should be offended when I'm being treated as someone's evangelistic project instead of as a person.

Yet when I became a Christian I thought I was supposed to toss in my common sense perceptions in order to be spiritual. I thought I was called to "offend for Jesus' sake!" How I thought I was supposed to evangelize went against my very grain. But, I felt, with a somewhat twisted logic, "Is it really so

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much to ask if I turn people off as soon as I meet them when you think of all that Christ has done for me?"

Still, I knew Christians were called on to do hard things. And because it was so hard to do I thought such evangelism had to be spiritual. The result was that I would put off witnessing as long as possible. Whenever the guilt became too great to bear, I overpowered the nearest non-Christian with a nonstop running monolog and then dashed away thinking "Whew! Well, I did it. It's spring of '74 and hopefully the guilt won't overcome me again till winter of '75." (And my non-Christian friends hoped the same!)

LET Your Light Shine

What about this? Do we have a "duty" to witness? Are we commanded anywhere to go "witnessing?" Should witnessing be "intentional" or should it be "disinterested?"

Let us notice what Jesus said:

*"Ye **are** the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." 5:14,15,16*

The NIV is more accurate—

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You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a **bowl**. Instead they put it **on its stand**, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” NIV

THIS VERSE IS A DEFINITIVE AND KEY TEXT ON THE SUBJECT OF WITNESSING.

There are many Christians who like the fellow above say in their hearts: “I feel guilty when I don’t witness.” Does this scratch, by any chance, anyone---where it itches—if you know what I mean? Does anyone have that experience? For instance, have you ever felt like you failed to be a witness for Christ? Did you ever let an opportunity go by and you kicked yourself for it later? Do you feel guilty for not doing more for your Lord? Should you feel guilty? Should we? How are we to witness? Why aren’t there more results to our witnessing and our evangelizing?

I think Christians, and especially Seventh-day Adventist should talk candidly about this subject, because I think many need some help here----maybe even some answers. This author continually does. He has not completely mastered this subject yet. In fact, he hasn’t even come close. Yet maybe the reader can relate to this dilemma as well.

When studying about the Holy Spirit one is perhaps forced into some new conclusions that can open his eyes to the part humans play in the winning of souls---that is, “persons,” to Jesus.

To begin with even though everyone is, no doubt, well-meaning when they use the word “souls”---or the like. But even this objectifies the target of our

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evangelism into a statistic or an impersonal conquest. “Souls” are not objects—but people for whom Christ died. Let’s all remember that.

One time at a minister’s meeting each minister was reporting on his baptisms and evangelistic activity. When one minister talked of the “precious soooo-uls” he had baptized the entire conference erupted with amens. When another minister referred to his similar activity though in a different manner, such as “saving lives for the kingdom,” only a few said any “amens,” and not with the same fervor. While rescuing others for Christ is what Christianity is about, it is unfortunate when people become *trophies* or *objects*, rather than people who we love and wish to point to the Savior. It would be wonderful if sharing Christ would never, ever, be placed together with “statistics,” until Jesus comes at least.

To better understand this subject it might become useful to discuss some true and false questions. These questions are not inspired, or necessarily valid one way or the other. They are simply posed to get us to understand the process of imparting the Gospel in perhaps a better way. There may be no particular and complete “right,” or “wrong” answer.

TRUE OR FALSE QUESTIONS:

1. To be a “witness” primarily means to “evangelize?”
2. We are to be “intentional” witnesses, that is we are to “try” to witness for Christ.
3. God has given us the task and the ability to win souls to Christ.

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4. When there is a lack of baptisms and conversions it is usually because the message is not being preached as it should be or because the Holy Spirit is lacking.

5. Guilty feelings for not witnessing come primarily because we have truly fallen down in our God-given duty toward our fellow man.

6. A public evangelistic meeting is probably the best way to reach people for Christ.

7. Lots of social activities, a preacher who has exciting messages, programs that are inspiring and speak to need related areas, are valid signs of a Spirit-filled church.

LET US EXAMINE EACH OF THESE QUESTIONS BRIEFLY---

1. To be a witness primarily means to “evangelize?”

a. First of all, what is a witness?

Webster gives these definitions:

1. *Attestation of a fact or event: testimony*
2. *One that gives evidence. Spec: one who testifies in a cause or before a judicial tribunal.*
3. *One asked to be present at a transaction so as to be able to testify to its having taken place.*
4. *One who has personal knowledge of something, etc.*

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Many Christians and even non-Christians have heard the phrase “ye are my witnesses,” taken from Isaiah 43:10. While Christians do talk a lot about God, witnessing as an “activity,” is not at all what the passage is really talking about. Jehovah’s Witnesses have taken this text as their banner, not really aware, it seems, that it is not talking about an active sharing of one’s faith but rather a passive one. Beginning with verse 9, it is really talking about a great court scene—God’s people are there described as witnesses of what **God** has done. Absolutely nothing is said about what they, the people, are doing. It is about what God is doing---the faithful are simply observing and watching. God’s people are therefore more passive in this text than active.

Simply said: they are “observers of God’s grace.” (The English word “witness” comes from the Anglo-Saxon, “witam” meaning, “I know.” [*Froom*, p. 104]---Thus it means: “one who knows something,” in this case, something about God.)

Witnesses are seldom volunteers, willing their way into the legal process. Especially this is true in a judicial sense. Sometimes witnesses are even subpoenaed or “forced” to appear. In fact, certain witnesses immediately come under suspicion and are dismissed if they openly push their own view or opinion for personal reasons. Witnesses are “called” to the witness stand because of what they see and know, many times totally without any prior intention of being there. How many witnesses ever “planned” to be witnesses? Especially before the judicial event? Most witnesses didn’t know the crime or event would happen, but they were there and saw it, so this is why the court is interested in their testimony. So in a primary sense a witness is not one who necessarily aims to make converts to his view, but is simply one who saw or experienced the event and who tells

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objectively what he saw. The court takes the responsibility to decide what should be believed, or not believed.

So to “witness,” it seems, in a evangelistic sense, is perhaps to share, **when asked or appointed**, about what **God** has done. In the *Great Controversy* all are witnesses of God’s work and goodness. In heaven someday we shall all bow before the throne to declare that God is holy and just.

To Continue:

True or False?

2. We are to be “intentional” witnesses, that is we are to “try” to witness for Christ.

First, we have defined a “witness.” Then, “What is Evangelism?”

To evangelize is to literally give “good news.” (Greek) That is all that the term signifies. To be a “reporter.” A witness. Unfortunately some advance this term to mean that it means to “get people baptized,” or “converted,” “born-again,” or the like.

However, “evangelism” may or may not win (a problematic expression in itself) souls. In fact nowhere in the Bible does it clearly give “techniques,” “advertising schemes,” and “formulas” for “winning souls.” While the Bible does tell Christians they have a responsibility to tell others about God when asked, it does not really lay upon them imperatives to witness. It does say to “go

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and teach,” but teaching implies a willing student audience who is requesting the service, even paying tuition sometimes, not the other way around.

If we are to be followers of Jesus, His values must permeate our values. We need to be concerned more with how our lives reflect his love, his holiness, his obedience, than with the latest witnessing techniques. When we live as Jesus did, in his power, and with his presence, **seekers will be drawn to us**. Evangelism should not be a dreaded task to be ticked off every Wednesday, and Saturday. Rather, sharing Jesus should become a true delight, and evangelism should become a “lifestyle.”

This author is by nature a very shy person. While I often dread or sometimes feel uncomfortable with “intentional,” “planned” evangelism, the same is not true with other witnessing scenarios. When someone asks me about my faith, or I am given opportunity to glorify God’s movement in my life, the dread changes to joy. Even though shy, if the opportunity to witness comes spontaneously, I am delighted to share anything I know, or anything from my own experience that could help. Most anyone is. It is natural and automatic.

But just the opposite is often true in typical evangelistic “efforts:”

A story is told about a young man who found it very difficult to go “witnessing.” His pastor sat him down in his office one day and told him that if he found witnessing embarrassing and scary, that likely God did not want him to do it, so he really didn’t “have to witness.” It was o.k. Greatly relieved the young man bounded out of the pastor’s office and happily told nearly everyone he met, “I have just discovered I don’t have to witness!” “I don’t have to witness!”----

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Of course, what was he actually doing?!

I have serious questions whether “intentional” evangelism, or at least intentional evangelism when the heart is not into it, is **ever** the right thing to do. It is exactly what the Pharisees did. They did their works and preached their opinions “to be seen by men.” But Jesus says to “let” our light shine (let it sneak out in spite of ourselves), a passive circumstance, and so in this way to be seen by men. Evangelism that is not disinterested, but is designing, forced, and sensational, also turns out many times to be warped, manipulative, condescending, and patronizing. Instead, witnessing should be natural and spontaneous.

If there is widespread interest in Gospel truths that cannot be covered by person to person labor, then perhaps evangelistic meetings may be needed to address several people at once, since personal attention cannot be given all of them and the interest is there. But if evangelistic meetings are given to target an area for proselytes, or to create interest, usually such efforts are met with resistance among the other Christian groups in the area and a bad taste is left in the district. Damage is done by the appearance of “sheep stealing” tactics. But when interest is developed by example, through un-trumpeted lives of integrity, and works of service and love, what a different climate of receptiveness exists! “Tell when asked” is a wonderful witnessing principle. It is also a wonderful principle to apply to proud parents, as well.

It is usually something cheap that needs to be advertised. Especially if witnessing requires advertising, then perhaps it should be examined why it seems to require it. Most people are turned off by self-advertising. People generally would rather see a sermon than hear one. One quiet and truly selfless life has

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more genuine witnessing power than a thousand commercials or placards. This is in part what Jesus was saying by “letting” our light shine. Besides Jesus is the true light that enlightens every man. We are more reflectors, maybe even just empty light bulbs.

God’s original plan in the Old Testament was for the nation of Israel to show by **example** the advantages of knowing God, and as a central light on a hill other nations and peoples would be drawn to them. This would be their opportunity to invite these nations to become followers of the one true God. Unfortunately, Israel failed miserably in carrying out their divine appointed role.

Jesus came to demonstrate how to let our light shine. He did no showy advertising, scheduled no evangelistic meetings, staged no televised healing services. In fact he even told certain ones to keep their enthusiasm quiet and tell no one what he had done for them. Yet Jesus did preach and teach and heal. The Bible simply describes Jesus’ method as one where he “went about doing good.” Most are comfortable with that *method* of evangelism! The emphasis on not on reaping but on sowing. God is the reaper. Christians are not primarily reapers. They are to be sowers of the good seed. The reaping and the harvest, Jesus says, will come at the end of the age.

TO WITNESS FOR CHRIST

Writes Ellen White:

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“No man can impart that which he himself has not received. In the work of God, humanity can originate nothing. No man can by his own effort make himself a light bearer for God.” Col 4:18

“Christ does not bid His followers **strive to shine**. He says, **Let** your light shine. If you have received the **grace** (*unmerited favor*) of God, the light **is in** you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord’s glory **will be** revealed. The light **will** shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. **You cannot help** shining within the range of your influence.”

“Witness” is not something you do, then, but something you **ARE**.

Certain writers have noticed that there are no commands in later New Testament to “witness.” There are many commands to live circumspectly, to care for others, to live for Christ, but really no commands such as “get out there and *win* somebody.” Peter and John, who healed a man who asked for alms, simply tell the Jewish authorities that they “can’t help” but share what Christ has done to them. This is the kind of witness, I think, that God wants. It is natural, and without ulterior design. Its motivation comes from **within** and not from **without**.

Jesus commands us to “let” our light shine, not “strive” to shine. In fact, in the same sermon Jesus actually tells men to not “try, and shine”—if one may observe. These are surprising statements.

In the same Sermon on the Mount, chapter six, we find:

- 6:1—take heed that ye do not your alms before men—
- 3—let not thy left hand know what your right hand is doing!!
- 6—pray in secret
- 17—fast in secret

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In other words Jesus says to allow the light (Jesus) to shine so that others will glorify Jesus—not ourselves----even the way we believe, or our church. Let others do the bragging. And let others do our advertising. Their advertising will be much more effective, and a lot cheaper than ours! To not “let your right hand know what your left is doing” has to be describing the fact that the purest and most honest witness is one that “unintentional.” Blatant advertising is suspicious, at best.

No person, or church body really has much to brag about in themselves anyway. We do only in the sense of what God has provided and done for us. This we may shout from the housetops. But of our own merits and successes—no, no, never! Big mistakes are made when a church or individual markets itself, or markets itself as God’s special people. Especially when that church or individual later turns out to be a fraud, or has elements that are fraudulent, is it very tragic.

A genuine product needs no advertising. The Holy Spirit is really the one to do our advertising for us. It might not be too far off to consider that certain religious advertising is actually a worldly “substitute” for the Holy Spirit. This is a frightful and arresting thought.

3. True or False?: “God has given us the task and the ability to win souls to Christ.”

Notice what these statements say:

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“In the saving of souls of men, God does **all the work**, making man His instrument. Man cannot manage the work of God in his own way, for the outward work is vain unless God works with it.” RH, May 6, 1890. (Froom, P. 99)

Then evangelism is “God’s work” not ours-----. He uses us, but it is not our work, and in a sense not our responsibility. What every person and every church needs is not works and methods, but the Spirit. We don’t need to “finish the work.” Instead God needs to finish **his** work in and through us.

“It is the absence of the Spirit that makes the gospel ministry so powerless. Learning, talent, eloquence, every natural or acquired endowment, may be possessed; but without the presence of the Spirit of God no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. On the other hand if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them channels for the outflowing of the highest influence in the universe.” BT, p. 21,22

“Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church... on conditions.... That we surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us...But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given...DA 672, see also 671.

True or False: 4. When there is a lack of baptisms and conversions it is always because the message is not being preached as it should be or because the Holy Spirit is lacking.

It only **may be** because the Holy Spirit is lacking. In the previous statement it says this is why the gospel ministry is so powerless sometimes. But the Spirit

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may be poured out, it may be offered in infinite plenitude, with **no response** from the human heart.

In the days of Noah, Noah preached for 120 years. The Bible says Noah was a perfect and upright man—chosen of God. Did he do a poor job? Don't you think he had the Spirit? But only 8 people responded to his preaching, at least of those living when the flood came.

Many church presidents have floated, even enforced, the idea that each pastor should have a minimum of so many baptisms as a result of his work. This dangerous and abusive practice is really nowhere authorized by God. It is true that usually there should be some fruit of righteous labor. But God nowhere guarantees a certain harvest. This is the Holy Spirit's work, and the Holy Spirit's work ONLY.

At one point Jesus had all the people leave him. Only the twelve remained. And one of those had a demon. Yet Jesus was still full of the Holy Spirit. But there weren't always seen great results, at least at that time, even by the perfect Christ. So it is sometimes. We need to simply learn from God how to plant and leave the results, *even the decisions*, up to God.

5. Guilty feelings for not witnessing come primarily because we have fallen down in our duty toward our fellow man?

Will Baron, a New Age priest—forced himself to go to shopping malls and beach boardwalks to witness for *Satan*—who he later discovered he was working for. During these times he was plagued with guilt for not witnessing enough. If he would go—he felt relief temporarily, at least. He got some of the very same

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feelings some of us get when we feel we are “failing as witnesses.” What might be the difference? Or is there any? Does the Holy Spirit convict us, or guilt us. There is a monumental difference.

One wonderful truth is that the Holy Spirit provides the MOTIVATION as well as the power. Don’t try to drive yourself to do witnessing. Our primary responsibility is to know God, and ask for him to show us where He can use us. We are not to make grandiose plans, and exploit great ideas of our own without a true calling of the Spirit. Under no circumstances should one lay upon another person a load of guilt about sharing their faith. This principle has been extremely abused. The danger in this is that the person shares his faith out of fear and guilt, and so it turns out to be a false and damaged witness anyway.

True or False?

6. A public evangelistic meeting is probably the best way to reach people for Christ.

(cf. DA p. 151,152)

We are repeatedly told that personal work, and the work of Jesus in relieving people’s felt needs, is the prescribed method of evangelism. Prayer, and ministry of this sort is the best recipe for success. It is only through praying for the Holy Spirit, an empowering that will bring every other blessing “in its train” that the church will be imbued with influence and will be successful in winning souls for Christ. This and only this will work. Programs, salesmanship tactics, tireless training, rigorous goals, management by objectives, and the like are all quite useless. In fact they sometimes get in the way. God will never fully bless such methods, because men will think that the success was in the method and not in the Spirit. When the church totally relies on the Spirit, then and only then---signs,

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wonders, and material success will follow the believers. They won't have to "get" decisions. There simply will "be" decisions. A desperate appeal is made to church leaders and church workers to please, finally learn, this important lesson.

True or False?

7. Lots of social activities, a preacher who has exciting messages, programs that are inspiring and speak to need related areas, are signs of a spirit-filled church.

Many false churches are very active. They are filled with excited and happy—looking people. They have great programs. But not all of these churches, according to the Lord's direction, are Spirit-filled churches—at least the Holy Spirit. Many do not realize that there is also an "UNHOLY SPIRIT."

HOW TO BE A WITNESS?

- **KNOW JESUS PERSONALLY** (often happens through His Word)
- **PRAY TO THE FATHER**—(Jesus went from the mountain to the multitude)
- **ASK FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO DIRECT** (not one soul is ever converted by a human being. The Holy Spirit does ALL the work).

**DO THE PRIVILEGE THAT LIES NEAREST—PRAYING AS YOU DO---
AND THEN SHARE WISELY, WHEN GIVEN LICENSE, WHAT JESUS HAS
DONE FOR YOU.**

Through the Holy Spirit's work, by precept and example working through each person, the world will be won for Christ.

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WITNESS: ACTIVITY vs. LIFE-STYLE

WITNESS AS ACTIVITY

1. A thing that you do
“I do witnessing”
2. Programmed
“At 3:30 on Sabbath”
3. Leader’s expectations
determines type of witnessing
4. Big reports, flashy promotions
5. “White Gloves:
“I’ll stand up here on this stage
and sing at you down there
about the gospel.”
6. Makes very few demands on
one’s life-style
7. Primarily to strangers
8. Emphasis on crowds
(Big ones!)
9. Structured
10. Trained

WITNESS AS LIFE-STYLE

- The kind of person you are
“I am a witness”
- Divine appointment
“As God sets up His encounters”
- Spiritual gifts determine
type of witnessing
- A life-style of humble service with
no deliberate recognition.
- “Dirty Fingers”:
“I’ll get deeply involved in your life-
style, since that is the medium for
The message.”
- Makes very heavy demands on one’s
life-style, since that is the medium
for the message.
- Primarily to friends—even very new
friends, won thru acts of service
- Primarily one-to-one
- Structured and Spontaneous
- Trained and untrained

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11. Timed

Continuous

(Thanks to Dr. Gordon Mattison for sharing this paradigm with the author)

There is a story about a European Lord who traveled often. One day a peasant man, who lived near the Lord's castle, said to his friend, "Well, the Lord is at home." "How do you know?" asked the friend. The man pointed up toward the castle. "When the Lord is at home, the castle is all lit up." When the Lord is at home in the castle of a Christian's life others should be able to see that the castle lights are burning.

A people prepared have the opportunity of inviting the Lord of Light to take up residency in the castle of our hearts. Let the Light shine!

---- "but be filled with the (Holy) spirit."
Ephesians 5:18

"Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving, sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be 'laborers with God'."

The Acts of the Apostles, P. 56

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THEME SONG

“COME HOLY SPIRIT”

**Come as a wisdom to children
Come as new sight to the blind
Come, Lord as strength to my weakness
Take me – soul, body and mind.**

**Come as a rest to the weary
Come as a balm for the sore
Come as a dew to my dryness
Fill me with joy evermore.**

**Come like a spring in the desert
Come to the withered of soul
Oh, let your sweet healing power
Touch me and make me whole**

**Come, Holy Spirit I need you
Come, sweet Spirit I pray
Come in Your strength and your power
Come in your own gentle way.**

Where is the Spirit Today?

“Christ determined that when He ascended from this earth, He would bestow a gift on those who had believed on Him, and those who should believe on Him. What gift could He bestow rich enough to signalize and grace His ascension to the mediatorial throne? It must be worthy of his greatness and His royalty. He determined to give His representative, the third person of the Godhead. This gift could not be excelled. He would give all gifts in one, and therefore the divine spirit, that converting, enlightening, and sanctifying power, would be His donation...”

6 S.D.A. Bible Commentary, p. 1052