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Recommended Citation

Colley, A. O., "The Work of the Holy Spirit" (1950). *Stone-Campbell Books*. 510.
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The Work
of the
Holy Spirit

By

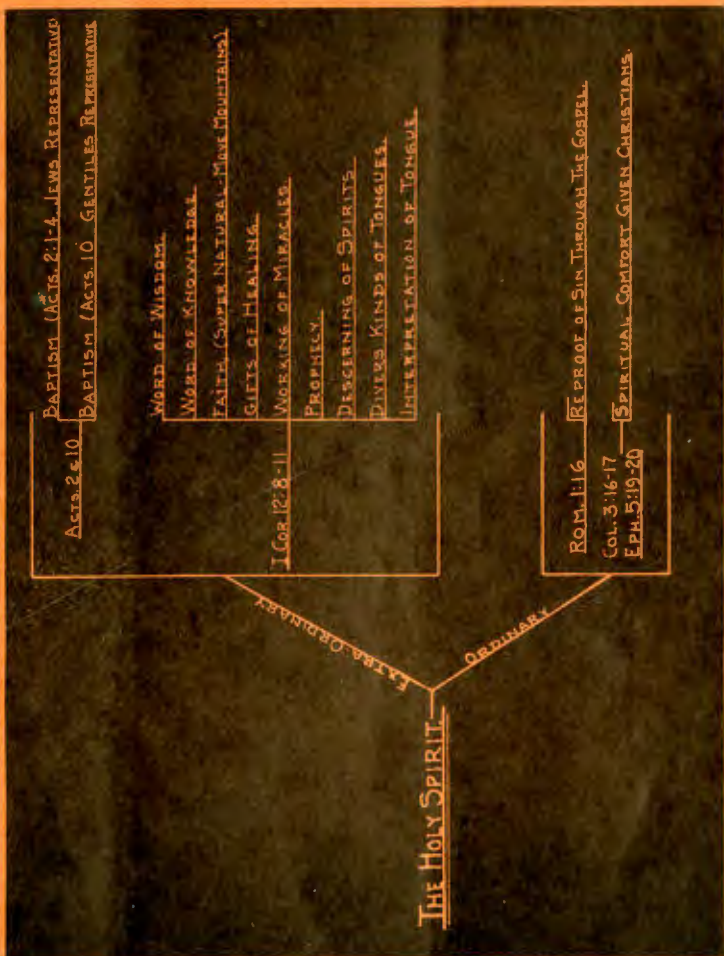
A. O. COLLEY

2008 SUMMITT AVE.
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A PLAIN DISCUSSION OF AN IMPORTANT
SUBJECT

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EXPLANATION OF THE DIAGRAM: The Holy Spirit has two branches of work. One (upward prong), "extraordinary" or miraculous. The lower part of it represents the "ordinary" gifts that must be present in all conversions, and also continue for all time with Christians. The miraculous has ended, but the "ordinary" manifestations will continue as long as conversion and comforts of the Spirit are needed.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

Some few years ago, while living in Tennessee, I was chosen to represent the church of Christ in public discussion on "the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion." This was variously stated in debatable terms. It was not uncommon to hear men affirm that "in conviction and conversion the Holy Spirit operates on the sinner's heart independently of the written or preached word." Others would not come out quite that plain, but all who believed that man was born depraved would affirm some form of the doctrine of "direct influence of the Holy Spirit." Those who were leaders in the efforts to establish "direct influence of the Spirit" usually referred to their religious opponents as not believing in the operation of the Spirit. I believe I learned many things from observation and experience that have proven valuable to me in these years of service that I have given to the Lord.

This subject cannot be understood by "muddling" all phases of it together. It must be considered in the following way:

1. *The Spirit Without Measure.*

John the Baptist said concerning Jesus: "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3: 34.) Christ is the only one referred to in the Bible as receiving the Holy Spirit "without measure." Therefore, we inquire, What are the different "measures of the Spirit," and who, in New Testament times, received them?

2. *The Baptism Measure.*

Next to the "without measure" that Jesus received was the "baptismal measure," which was received by the apostles on the day of Pentecost and the house of Cornelius. (Acts 10.) These two cases were for the same purpose and are put down in the Bible as "the like gift." (Acts 11: 15-17.) They were both miraculous, and neither was to be perpetuated for *all time*. Both the apos-

ties (Acts 2) and the house of Cornelius (Acts 10) spoke with tongues, showing that these were miracles.

3. *The "Laying on Hands" Measure.*

This "measure" comes next. Those who had had the baptism of the Spirit had the power to lay hands on others and bestow "spiritual gifts." This was done in many cases to inspire for special work in the days before the New Testament was completed. In this measure we find the "healing of the sick," with other miraculous gifts of the Spirit that some enthusiasts claim are possible now. This was practiced during the early days of the church—until the perfect revelation was complete. "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13: 10.)

4. *The "Gift of the Spirit" Measure.*

Under this heading I wish to discuss plainly the ideas, set forth mainly by some of my brethren, known as "the personal indwelling of the Spirit." I shall treat this in the body of the article as fairly and as nearly in harmony with the principle, "Let brotherly love continue," as is possible.

5. *The Converting Power of the Spirit.*

The mission of the Holy Spirit, as promised by Jesus when he should go back to his Father (John 14: 15-17; 16: 7-15; 7: 38, 39), was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4; Luke 24: 49), giving them power to preach and bear testimony for the risen Lord (Acts 1: 8).

We now discuss the above big subject in a brief way. We desire to help all and hinder none. We are all fast passengers to another world. Time is short at best; so let us use it well.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT WITHOUT MEASURE.

John 3: 34 (quoted above) is the only place where one is said to have received the Spirit "without measure." This is good evidence that all other offers of His blessings were, according to his plan, by some less measure

than that which was given to Christ. The Holy Spirit came upon Christ in a "visible form." "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3: 16, 17.) So complete was this "filling with the Spirit" that Jesus could say: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6: 63.) He could breathe on them and say, "Receive ye the Spirit," and it was so. He finally told the apostles that it was necessary that he go away, saying: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (John 16: 7.) He had already told them: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, . . . even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14: 16, 17.) Note the difference in "with" and "in" in the foregoing quotation. Jesus said while he was here and *with* the apostles, "He [the Spirit] dwelleth with you," and promised them that when he (Christ, to whom the Spirit was given without measure) left them, the Spirit that was then *with them* (because it was *in him without measure*) would be *in* them. This referred to the next measure of the Spirit, which the apostles soon received. (Acts 2: 1-4.)

II. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

This measure of the Holy Spirit was of long standing as to the mind and the purpose of God; for, in Joel 2: 28, we have the prophecy that Peter quotes and applies on the day of Pentecost in the following language: "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men

shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." Peter plainly says "This is *that*" which was prophesied by Joel. Some claim that kind of baptism is still being performed, or in some way is perpetuated to our day. This cannot be sustained for the following reasons:

1. There is one baptism to be practiced now. (Eph. 4: 4.) The letter to the Ephesians was written A.D. 64.

2. This one baptism was authorized by Christ after his resurrection from the dead, to be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28: 19, 20.) It was to be for "all nations" and was to last "always, even unto the end of the world." (See verse 20.)

3. This "one baptism" could not be Holy Spirit baptism, for it was to be performed in the name of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would not likely be "agent" and "element" in the same performance.

4. The apostles and those whom they taught should be the administrators of this one baptism, but God only was to be the administrator of Holy Spirit baptism.

5. The Holy Spirit baptism was a *promise* and not a *command*. (Matt. 3: 11, 12.) It was to *certain persons*, not to all men, to be fulfilled "in a few days." (Acts 1: 5.)

6. This promise was fulfilled when representatives of "all flesh," as Joel had prophesied (Joel 2: 28), received him in that form, the apostles representing the Jewish flesh, or nation (Acts 2: 1-4), and the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10: 44-47).

There is neither reason nor Scripture for trying to claim that the baptism of the Holy Spirit, with the attendant blessings, was promised to be extended to us or for all time. Dangerous errors have arisen as a result of such claims. These errors are taught by overzealous persons who evidently have no well-defined conception of a proper division of the word of God. They proceed to work up the audience into a religious frenzy, getting some of them into a rather hypnotic "spell," causing them to gab and chatter—what they call "speaking in

tongues." But no one seems to understand "in his own tongue, wherein he was born." (Acts 2: 7, 8.) The sin of such is, people who are thus misled are very hard to convince of their error, that they may believe and obey the truth. All error is dangerous. It is to the heart what "dope" is to the body. Dope does not remove the disease nor the pain resulting from it, but renders the body less sensitive to it. Error does not save, but often puts the individual where truth is neither sought nor desired.

Other Errors.

The error of teaching that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is now "the one baptism" (Eph. 4: 4) was illustrated to me once while I was holding a revival in Rector, Ark. An elderly gentleman, a preacher of no mean ability for a denominational church, who believes in the baptism of the Spirit as a present-day reality, asked me if I had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. I answered that I had not. He forthwith told me that I had no right to preach, as the Lord would not call one to preach who had not had remission of sins, and that the remission of sins was promised only to those who had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. I then, rather earnestly, asked just when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit. He promptly said: "On the day of Pentecost." (Acts 2: 1-4.) "Then," said I, "how do you account for their preaching for nearly three years with Jesus before this, their baptism of the Holy Spirit? Were they sinners all this time?" He became rather excited and said to me that I was far too young to try to instruct him on such vital questions. To this opinion I was forced to agree by his sudden decision to leave me. On this, note the following:

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was to be "for all flesh," Jews and Gentiles (Joel 2: 28-30), fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius (Acts 2: 1-4; 10: 44-47.)
2. It was to be given to make witnesses. (Acts 1: 8.)
3. It was to come upon them "in a few days" after the ascension of Christ. (Acts 1: 5.)

4. It was to guide the ones to whom it was given "into all truth." (John 16: 13.)

5. It was to comfort the apostles and reprove the world. (John 16: 7-11.) Under his guidance the apostles produced the New Testament.

Conclusion.

There are but two cases of the baptism of the Holy Spirit recorded in the New Testament. The first one is in the second chapter of Acts, and the other in the tenth chapter. They were for the same purpose. (Acts 11: 17.) Neither of them was to save the recipient, for the apostles had been preaching for nearly three years before they were baptized with the Spirit, and it was a "like gift" to the Gentiles.

III. THE "LAYING ON OF HANDS" MEASURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

In the special or miraculous age of the church, when the apostles, who had been baptized by the Holy Spirit, were yet with the church, we find them laying on hands and bestowing "the gift of the Spirit" to various ones. Jesus chose these (the original twelve apostles) while he was here on earth and before his death. He set them in the church for the purpose of working through them for the perfection of the saints and the full work of the church. (Eph. 1: 18-22; 4: 1-16; 1 Cor. 12: 24-31.) The Lord, through these, gave to the members different gifts, about nine in all. No one man was promised all of them. They likely just had one gift each, as we would judge from the reading of 1 Cor. 12: 4-12. They were commanded to covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet they were promised "*a more excellent way.*" (1 Cor. 12: 31.) This was during the reign of the "special gifts," the "creative period" of the church. The Lord always "creates" by miracles, but "*natural law*" perpetuates. The Lord established the church and completed the writing of the New Testament by miracle, and then put "the seed" of the kingdom (Luke 8: 11) in the church to perpetuate its existence for all time.

In the "Childhood" Days of the Church.

There is a period in the lives of all human beings called "childhood days." During this period we must have the guiding hand of father or mother. If bereft of such natural guidance, then some one must assume such guidance, as childhood is not able to guide itself. In 1 Cor. 13: 11 we have just such a statement made concerning the church. The Lord, at that time, worked by the inspired apostles and prophets (Eph. 3: 5), revealing his will to them and empowering them to lay hands on others and qualify them to do miraculous things. But these gifts did not go to the *third party*. So, in the absence of an apostle, or some one upon whom an apostle had laid his hands, these miraculous gifts did not extend. Philip, who was one of the "seven" upon whom the Lord laid hands (Acts 6: 1-6), was able to work miracles in Samaria later (Acts 8: 1-9), but was unable to bestow the gifts of the Spirit upon others. So they sent back to Jerusalem for Peter and John, two of the apostles, to convey such gifts of the Spirit to the Samaritans. (Acts 8: 14-18.) Men falsely claim such power now, but they are unable to produce any more than a "pretended miracle," which is a hypnotic influence that one mind may have over another, or the power of "mind over matter," which may be according to well-known laws of science; but the Lord has nothing to do with such, for the time and purpose of miracles were passed when the Lord, by his servants, the apostles, revealed and confirmed unto us the word that began to be spoken by Jesus. (Heb. 2: 1-4.) We shall never need another miracle to make oak trees as long as we have the acorn to grow them from according to natural law. Just so, we will never need another miracle, as long as we have the New Testament, God's revealed law, to make Christians and guide the church.

Inspired Officers.

We read in the above Scriptures that among other helpful teachers there were "*apostles and prophets*" in the New Testament church. This is plainly taught in Eph. 3: 5. This passage says that God made revelations to the "*apostles and prophets.*" These officers became the

foundation stones upon which the church stands. (Eph. 2: 20.) The Lord baptized the apostles with the Holy Spirit to guide them, and inspired his prophets that he used to direct the workings of the church until they, together, produced the perfect law of liberty; then we only have them as the foundation of our faith. By the laying on of the apostles' hands they qualified deacons to know how to minister to the poor, which also gave the ones who received their hands the power to work miracles. This is found in the case of Philip. He was first ordained to help look after the neglected widows (Acts 6: 5) by the laying on of the apostles' hands. After this service we next hear of him as a great teacher at Samaria (Acts 8: 5-8); and though he could work miracles because he had the apostles' hands laid on him in Jerusalem, he could not lay hands on others and bestow the Holy Spirit. When the time came for the special gift of the Holy Spirit to be given, they had to send for the apostles, who were still in Jerusalem, to do that, for none but those who had been so chosen of the Lord for that purpose could lay hands on others and bestow the Spirit. "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (Acts 8: 14-18.) We have no laying on of hands now to bestow the Holy Spirit, nor men who can work miracles as could Philip as the result of the hands of apostles being laid on them; for all the apostles have long since done their work and passed to their reward.

During their lives the apostles laid hands on the evangelist Timothy, and he had a "gift" bestowed on him that Paul admonished him not to neglect. (1 Tim. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 6.) They also laid hands on elders, which qualified them to do miracles and even to heal the sick. (James 5: 14.) They did not just "get better" nor "feel better," and were not admonished to "come back tomorrow night and we will heal you." "*You shall be healed*" was God's promise, and there were no failures. When our present-day pretenders fail to work miracles or heal folks who are brought to them, they back off and say: "He is just too big a sinner." But this passage says: "If he have committed sins [when the Lord's elders were

healing], they shall be forgiven him." Why the difference? One was as God directed, and the other is as uninspired and deceived men are directing. When there is a real disease to cure that they cannot *hypnotize*, they claim the fault is with the patient.

I Do Not Discourage Prayer for the Sick.

There is a vast difference between one praying for the Lord to use means to bless those who suffer, and guide in his providential way those who must go under the surgeon's knife, and those who teach that the Lord still works by miracle in "healing the sick." The one is in the divine system, the other is misguided zeal. The Lord promised to be with the apostles, and to confirm their words with miracles (Mark 16: 15-20), and we learn from the Acts of Apostles that he did work with them, by their hands, to confirm those upon whom "fear came" (Acts 2: 28-43; 5: 11, 12). The great salvation was first preached, or began to be spoken, by Christ, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, with signs, wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. (Heb. 2: 3, 4.) Since we have the "more excellent way," "the perfect law of liberty," "the great salvation," and it confirmed by miracles, we will never need another miracle until we need another revelation from God to be *confirmed*.

· IV. THE INDWELLING, AND WITNESS, OF THE SPIRIT.

Our Claims Defined.

All the brethren, or nearly all of them, take the position that the Lord uses the instrumentality of his word to quicken and convert the sinner. After he is thus converted, or saved, some of us believe the word of God is still his only communication from the mind of God to the heart or intelligence of man; but there is still another class of preachers who say they have "a spiritual influence" that they call the "indwelling Spirit," that is promised, as they think, to all Christians now, if they will claim it. They get vexed at us if we ask them just what that Spirit that they claim is "indwelling" does for them that the Spirit through the word cannot do for them and all other Christians. We believe today that our Lord's

only communication with the souls of his disciples is through his word; that he is able to communicate his ideas to us in that way; and that the only way we can have access to him and have his assurance of "divine presence" is the promises he has made us.

The Promise, or Gift of the Spirit.

We are told that Peter, on the memorable Pentecost, promised "the gift of the Spirit" to those who would repent and be baptized. (Acts 2: 38.) Yes, Peter made that promise to them, and it is to us, as I view it, the same as to them. But what does "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in that passage mean? We read again, in Acts 5: 32, from the same speaker: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Here both the apostles, who were to speak as the Spirit directed, and the obedient believers are said to witness to the divinity of Jesus and that the Lord had given the Spirit to those who had obeyed him. But we still ask, What is "the gift of the Spirit" referred to in these and other kindred passages? Is it some "special indwelling," or a common family blessing that all baptized believers may share? To my mind, it is the family blessing that is promised. Then, what is that?

Family Blessing—Gift of the Spirit.

I believe, and so teach, that we receive what he calls "the gift of the Spirit" by believing in and obeying the gospel. I found this belief and teaching upon the following Scriptures: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3: 2.) Here the Spirit is said to be received by the hearing of faith. Now, still we ask, What is "the gift of the Spirit"? The "gift of the Spirit" is a gift that the Spirit bestows upon believers. The *supreme gift* is sonship, or spiritual life. This is to be had only in Christ. (Eph. 2: 1, 2.) The greatest gift that the Spirit can offer to him in his dead condition is *life*. But what is life? It is *union*. Death is separation. The sinner is separated from Christ, and is, therefore, dead while in that condition; but the gospel is

preached to him, and he is commanded to obey it for two great promises. The first promise is "remission of sins," which the Lord has promised us through the merits of Christ's shed blood. But there is an additional promise in the passage (Acts 2: 38), and that is, "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]." What does "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" mean? It just means that you will be in *union* with Christ, which is life. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. 3: 6.) It is here stated that it is the work of the Spirit to give life. To whom does he offer this life as *his gift*? To those who repent and are baptized for that purpose, or with that in view. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5: 17.) The gift of the Spirit is spiritual life that comes as a result of being in *union with Christ*. This is also called "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." God becomes our Father and we become his children when the Holy Spirit, through his teaching, leads us into Christ and bestows upon us the family blessings of "sonship," which allows us to call God "our Father." To me, there is no mystery or supernatural power brought to bear upon us either before or after we have obeyed the gospel. We are told by some who hold the "direct indwelling" theory that it helps them to live better to have that feeling of "personal direct indwelling." I have never seen how error would help any one. Truth believed, trusted, and confidently followed will bring to the soul every joy that was intended for him by our Father in heaven.

But we are said to have the Spirit in us. (Rom. 8: 11.) Yes, and in the same chapter, just one verse above that one, it says that Christ is in us. We read also how Christ dwells in us. (Eph. 3: 17.) "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." And in 1 John 4: 12, God is said to dwell in us. Now, are all three of these divine Beings "persons?" Yes. Then how do they dwell in us? Personally or representatively? My conception of it is that God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit have coöperated in bringing to us the ideals of Christianity, through the instrumentality of the word of God, and those believing

and receiving the divine instructions from the same into their hearts, so as to fill their lives with the thoughts contained in it, are said to have God, Christ, and even the Holy Spirit in them, but neither of the three dwells there personally. This is taught in the following Scriptures: Eph. 5: 18, 19; Col. 3: 16; 17. To fill a Christian with "the word of Christ" and to fill him with "the Spirit" is said to produce the same results in these parallel passages of Scripture. "Things equal to the same things are equal to each other." Therefore, we conclude that God has chosen the "word of God" to represent him in his dealings with the sons of men in this world below, and when his word dwells in us richly, or abundantly, we are filled with him (his ideals), with Christ, and with the Holy Spirit.

We are gravely told by the advocates of the "personal indwelling" theory that if we do not have the Spirit *in us* we will not be raised from the dead. This is founded on a misconstruction of Rom. 8: 11. The man that lives by the Spirit's teachings has the Spirit in him, as stated above, keeping his body under subjection, and will be raised to an *immortal state*; and those who live after the flesh, who will not go by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, will never see that state. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." (Rom. 8: 13.) But will *all*, both good and bad, be raised from the dead? Yes. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15: 22.) "But every man in his own order." If a man has lived and died a Christian, he will be raised to the order, rank, or place of a Christian; and if he has lived a wicked or disobedient life, that is the order or rank in which he will be raised in the resurrection. But enough on this.

The Witness of the Spirit.

The word "witness" carries the idea of "testimony." The apostles were to bear "witness" for Jesus in all the world after the Holy Spirit should come upon them. (Acts 1: 8.) We are to receive their testimony and bring our lives into harmony with the same. No one who refuses this need claim that the Holy Spirit bears witness with his

spirit that he is a son of God. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8: 16.) This is often quoted and claimed as an experience by those who have never obeyed the Lord as taught by his word. They have no right to such claims. There are *two witnesses* here referred to. Both must testify to the same thing to bear witness "with" each other. Paul, with the Roman brethren, could claim such harmony, because they had done just what the Holy Spirit, through inspired men, had commanded them to do. The Holy Spirit commands us to hear the gospel (Rom. 10: 17); to believe in Christ (Rom. 10: 9); to repent of our sins (Acts 17: 30); to confess Christ (Rom. 10: 9, 10); and to be "buried with him by baptism" (Rom. 6: 4). The Romans had evidently done all of that. They were living, many of them, by the "law of the Spirit of life." (Rom. 8: 1-4.) Well could Paul say: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8: 14.) If we want the Spirit of God in us, we must bring our lives into harmony with his teaching.

V. THE SPIRIT'S OPERATION IN CONVERSION.

We mean by the word "operate," influence, and by "in conversion," the act of turning from Satan to God.

There are three theories on this question that men have tried to prove by the Scriptures. First, that God, whether in time or in eternity, known or unknown to man, will in due time impress his will on man, and through such impressions will save everybody. This is known as "universal salvation." If this is so, then no one is in any danger of being lost. Second, that there is an "elect" and a "nonelect" people; that somewhere, somehow, God will, either in time or eternity, impress the "elect" by his Spirit and bring them to know him and his will concerning them. This is held by those who claim that man is so totally depraved, even from birth, that God's wrath rests upon him as a result of inherited nature from father to son, transferred from Adam to children now, which is called the "direct operation of the Spirit" theory. This theory is founded largely upon man's inability to receive

the word of God, on account of the depravity of past generations. The theory is highly modified by different teachers, some disavowing the original doctrine of "elect and nonelect," but holding tenaciously to the theory of "infant depravity." The objections to the old theory, as above stated, by many present-day advocates, is, that it exposes them to the embarrassing position that "infants dying" in that state must be "regenerated" before they can go to heaven. This has led to many modifications of the old theory. But turn it as you please, it is the old doctrine of "infant depravity," with God's wrath upon it until enlightened by "direct power of the Spirit" to enable it to receive the truth and be saved by it. And this "direct" power to be given must come from God. If this never comes, and man lives and dies in that state of depravity that was transferred to him (as per the theory), never receiving the "direct power" to enable him to believe and be saved, who will be responsible for those who are finally lost? Not man, for he could not act until acted upon by the direct power to take away depravity. Then who is responsible for the finally lost? Of course the theory makes God responsible for the lost.

The third position is, that God, who through Christ gave us the gospel plan of salvation found revealed in the New Testament, used the Word as a "means" through which all religious thought is conveyed to the soul; that such truths are called the "gospel," the "word of God," and the "word of truth." God has, in his own wisdom and mercy as expressed in the death of his Son, given to us the gospel, which is declared by the apostle Paul to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Man has the power to believe and to obey the gospel, or else the writer of this passage did not understand the plainest words, and but mocked their helpless, hopeless condition by thus expressing to man the chance to be saved by God's power.

After Jesus died for man, he gave the great commission to the apostles: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16: 15, 16.) If man is so depraved by nature that he could not receive

such power, why send them "into all the world" to preach it to every creature? Why threaten to punish man for failing to believe and obey the gospel, if he could not do so without some additional power that he did not possess and without which the gospel could not be obeyed? The Lord holds man responsible for not obeying the gospel, and even threatens to punish him "with everlasting punishment from the presence of the Lord." (2 Thess. 1: 7-9.)

In the parable of the sower (Luke 8: 11) Jesus said: "The seed is the word." Oat life is in oat seed; corn life is in corn seed. The real germ of all life is in the seed that reproduces that thing. Just so, the seed of Christianity is in the word of God. God speaks through his word (not through direct power of the Spirit) by inspired prophets and apostles to represent him here. (Heb. 1: 1, 2.) This is referred to as the Spirit speaking (1 Tim. 4: 1) expressly, or plainly. Any message the Lord ever authorized men to carry to other men was made plain enough that both the messenger and the people to whom it was sent could understand it. The Spirit *used men to do the speaking*. (1 Pet. 2: 21.) Men had never understood this great message until God, by the Spirit, revealed it unto the apostles, after which they wrote it to the Ephesians and others, and said: "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." (Eph. 3: 4.) The Holy Spirit used the mouths of individuals to express God's will to man. (2 Sam. 23: 1, 2; Acts 1: 16.) By these Scriptures we can see that God used men, the tongues of men and their writings, to convey the Spirit to the hearts of men. "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." (Gen. 6: 3.) How did God's Spirit "strive with man?" Not directly. How, then? "Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets." (Neh. 9: 30.) Men resist the Spirit by resisting the Lord's inspired speakers. (Acts 7: 51, 52.)

The Spirit operates today just as he did in the days of the apostles. When the Lord was ready to convict and convert the world, he inspired the apostles and baptized them with the Holy Spirit to qualify them to speak. They

began "as the Spirit gave them utterance." (See Acts 2: 1-4.) This speech caused wicked men to cry out, "What shall we do?" The same gospel preached to lost men today, when all false theories of "direct power" are left out, will bring the same results. "They that gladly received his word were baptized." The Lord added them to the church. (Acts 2.)

When the Lord was ready to convert the nobleman of Acts 8, he sent a man, Philip, to preach Christ unto him. (This would not have been necessary, if the Spirit was to act without the word.) The man to be converted did not know that what he was reading referred to Christ—"like a lamb dumb before his shearer," etc. (Acts 8: 29-35.) The Spirit, through Philip, God's servant, led him to believe, confess, and be baptized. (Acts 8: 36-40.) No one could misunderstand this by reading it without some theorist helping him to becloud it. Just so with every case of conversion in the Acts of Apostles. There was some man there, who was guided by the Lord's Spirit, to preach the gospel unto him. He still converts men by that same power, the gospel. It has lost none of its power.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

1. *Born Depraved.*

The first objection that has been urged by men whom I have met upon the "Spirit's power in conversion" is that men (babies) are born with the depravity or sin of Adam upon them, and just the gospel truths are not able to take that away or convert them while that is upon them. Therefore, they argue that it takes more power than can be put forth through the gospel to save men.

Those who make the above claim found their objections on such passages as Job 14: 4: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." They put the argument about as follows: "All are born of woman. Women are unclean. (Job 14: 4.) Therefore, those born of woman are unclean." And this is translated by them to mean that infants are born depraved. Turn to the fourteenth chapter of Job and read it, and this will need no reply. You can observe here that Job is not talking

about the condition of infants at birth, but he is talking of mankind. They are all subjects of death of the body. He could see no escape from the grave. (Job 14: 5-11.) Job lived before the resurrection of the body was plainly taught, and evidently did not understand it as it is *now revealed*. (1 Cor. 15: 20-23.) This argument that "all that are born of woman" are depraved would prove too much, for Jesus was born of woman, and surely he was clean and pure. Children of even one believing parent are also said to be "*clean*." (1 Cor. 7: 14.) "That which proves too much really proves nothing."

2. *Children Shaped in Iniquity, Born in Sin.*

Another favorite argument made by those who say the Bible is not sufficient to convert and save man, and that they must have "direct power of the Spirit," is based on the following passages: "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. 51: 5.) "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." (Ps. 58: 3.) I want to ask the advocates of depravity: First, is the above true of all babies today—all "shaped in iniquity"? Second, do all come forth from the mother "speaking lies"? Third, are they sinners before they speak lies, or do they speak lies and become sinners? Fourth, is sin the cause of depravity, or is depravity the cause of sin? Fifth, which was first in Adam?

To those who prefer truth to error, I submit:

First, turn to Deut. 23: 2: "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord." Second, Gen. 38: 24-27. You here find a plain case of bastardy in the case of Judah with his daughter-in-law, Tamar, violating the law referred to in Deut. 23: 2. Third, Matt. 1: 3, and count from Judah to David, and you will find that David was conceived in *the tenth generation from Tamar and Judah* and was born *into the eleventh*. He was, therefore, free to enter into the congregation of the Lord by being the eleventh generation from the broken law. I do not believe the Lord meant to teach by the above passages that all little babies are

"conceived and born in sin," making them children of the devil before they were born. Such doctrine plainly contradicts 1 Cor. 7: 14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." It contradicts the statement of Christ about children (Matt. 18: 3), and so is false.

3. "*Were by Nature Children of Wrath.*" (Eph. 2: 3.)

Those who advocate the theory of "direct operation of the Holy Spirit" and deny that the New Testament contains the power of God to save the lost (Rom. 1: 16) claim to find in the words, "were by nature children of wrath," that babies are born (and even before they are born) with God's wrath upon them.

1. The word "nature" has more than one meaning. In this and other passages that we shall refer to it takes a secondary meaning, about like we would say "second nature," which is more in line with "custom, habit," etc.

2. The same word, "nature," is used in 1 Cor. 11: 11: "Doth not nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" Nature does not teach that, if we give it its *first meaning*. But the customs of the people, where they practiced hair cutting for the men, did teach that lesson. But it is just as *natural* for a man's hair to grow long as it is for a woman's hair to grow long; but the habit, or custom (nature) of the people taught that it was a shame for men to let their hair grow long. This custom does not teach the Chinaman that "it is a shame" for him to wear long hair, for the custom there is different. The Ephesians were "dead in trespasses and sins," because in time past they "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air." It was what *they had done that brought God's wrath upon them*. It was what they were by nature (their habits, customs, walking wrong) that caused the wrath of God to be upon them.

3. Please see Rom. 2: 14 and see how "nature" (the same word) caused the Gentiles to be good and to do the will of God. Pretty good "nature," w.sn't it? Well, they

had learned it from association with the Jews, and had taken up *their habits and were practicing them.*

4. And if there is *still* a doubt that men could not, while in this condition (dead by nature from the time they were born as per the theory), receive the truths of the Bible and be saved without a direct operation of the Spirit, read Eph. 1: 13 and see just how the inspired writer tells how they received the truth and how they were saved by it. They were said to trust in Jesus after they *heard the word, the truth, the gospel of their salvation.* Turn also to Acts of Apostles, and you will find just how they first heard error preached by one "knowing only the baptism of John," and how it was corrected, and how they were then baptized by the authority of Jesus, and finally by the laying on of hands of Paul, before one word is said about their "receiving the Spirit." (See Acts 18: 25; 19: 1-6.)

4. *The Natural Man.*

"Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, for they are spiritually judged." (1 Cor. 2: 14.) The advocates of the "direct operation of the Spirit" try to teach from this passage that the "natural man" is the sinner before conversion, and the "spiritual man" is the Christian. The passage is not used to teach any such ideas. It is used to teach the difference between *inspired men*, through whom God revealed his will, and *uninspired men*. This is clearly taught in the twelfth and thirteenth verses of this same chapter. The one is *natural* and the other *supernatural*. The apostles and prophets, through whom the Lord revealed his will, were *supernaturally guided*. All today are to depend on the New Testament; hence, all are "natural" men now, saved and unsaved. If the natural man is the unconverted man, and the New Testament cannot be understood by the unconverted, and they are in that condition from birth, why this *big effort on the part of those holding the theory* to teach Sunday school or to teach the

Bible in any way, since men, unconverted, cannot understand it? Why even try to preach to them? Is it just to "feed the sheep"?

Conclusion.

The gospel of Christ (Rom. 1: 16) as it *is*, preached to man *as he is*, is sufficient to convert him and lead him to Christ, where the Lord has promised to forgive his sins in obedience to the divine commandments submitted to him (Mark 16: 15, 16; Acts 2: 38); then to lead him in the light of Heaven's truth (1 John 1: 7) and provide for him a home at last.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Eccles. 12: 13.) "God is no respecter of persons." (See Acts 10: 34, 35.)

Submitted in the fear of God and the love of his truth.

Closing Words on the Work of the Spirit

Since closing these articles I have noticed in the press one friendly criticism in regard to "the indwelling Spirit." Two criticisms on the baptism of the Spirit came by letter.

The first was upon my statement of the Holy Spirit being "a family blessing." What I mean by "family blessing" is this: God promised Abraham: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curs-eth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12: 2, 3.) Acts 3: 25, 26 shows that Christ came to fulfill that promise. This promise also included the Gentiles, as shown by the apostle Paul, if they would believe in Christ (Gal. 3: 7-9) and obey his will. They became "sons" by being baptized into Christ. (This is a family term—"sons.") "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed [a family term], and heirs [a family term] according to the promise." (Gal. 3: 29.) Heirs according to *what promise?* The one that God made to Abraham in Gen. 12: 3. When was it first applied? On the day of Pentecost. "For the promise is unto you [what promise?], and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2: 38, 39.) The man who criticized my position on the baptism of the Holy Spirit being a promise and ending when it had fulfilled his mission, also informed me that he could "speak with tongues" and do other miraculous things today. He cited me to Acts 2: 39 to prove that it was the promise that was to be for all nations—"you and your children and them that are afar off." Also the brethren who think that a "personal indwelling" of the Spirit is enjoyed today try to prove it by this same verse.

I do not believe that Acts 2: 39 proves either of these positions. "The promise is unto you, and to your children," etc., refers to the promise that the Lord made to Abraham, that he would bless all nations through his seed, which is Christ. (Gal. 3: 14.) "The gift of the

Spirit" referred to here and in Acts 2: 38-39 was spiritual life *in Christ*. "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." (2 Cor. 3: 6.) The "gift of the Spirit" is not the Holy Spirit himself, but his precious gift ("life") which allows us to call God our Father and Jesus our elder brother and to enjoy the fellowship of all others who are in Christ. Live, love, and be happy all the days of your life here as a Christian, and "inherit everlasting life." (Eph. 1: 14.)

When we become Christians, we have spiritual life. This is sometimes referred to as eternal life, because it is the same kind of life we shall have in eternity. The only difference is, we have *life in Christ here* and the promise of eternal life (1 John 2: 25; Rom. 2: 7; Matt. 25: 46) in the world to come.

