

Back To Basics

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A Monthly Journal Dedicated To Teaching First Principles

SPECIAL EXPANDED EDITION:

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Johnie Edwards

The Holy Spirit is not what many seem to think. It is important that we get back to basic Bible teaching concerning the Holy Spirit.

1) **SOME THINGS THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT.** There are those who think of the Holy Spirit as a mystical *it*. The Holy Spirit is not an *it*. There are those who think of the Holy Spirit as something one *gets*, like getting the mumps or measles. Scriptural teaching never refers to one getting the Holy Spirit like that. One was heard to say, as he held the Bible under his arm, "I have the Holy Spirit under my arm." The Holy Spirit is not the word of God, but the word of God was "revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3:5). The Holy Spirit is not a direct operator today. Many believe the Holy Spirit operates today separate and apart from the Bible. Everything the Holy Spirit is said to do for man, the Holy Spirit does it through the word of God.

2) **SOME THINGS THE HOLY SPIRIT IS.** Since learning some things the Holy Spirit is not, we are better able to know who the Holy Spirit is. The Holy Spirit is a divine *He*. John

recorded, "When *he*, the Spirit of truth is come, *he* will guide you into all truth: for *he* shall not speak of *himself*; but whatsoever *he* shall hear, that shall *he* speak: and *he* will shew you things to come" (Jn. 16:13). The word "he," in reference to the Holy Spirit, suggests personality. He is a divine person. The Holy Spirit is also a truth-revealer. Writing the Ephesians, Paul penned, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph. 3:3-6). Peter put it this way, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21). May we be content to leave the Holy Spirit in His place!

We trust and pray this special issue of *Back To Basics* on the Holy Spirit will enrich your spiritual knowledge.

INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Z.T. Sweeney, "Dead Yet Speaketh"

Publishers Note:

The following lines in INTRODUCTION of *The Spirit and the Word* by Z.T. Sweeney (1849-1926) well express our objective in this special expanded edition of *Back To Basics. The Spirit and the Word* is available by calling 1-800-428-0121.

The Holy Spirit is not obtained from the deductions of logic, the conclusions of philosophy nor from the investigations of science. All these are as silent as the grave regarding his presence and potency.

It is solely and distinctly a matter of divine revelation. It is not my purpose, therefore, to view this subject in the light of philosophic induction, logical deduction nor scientific investigation, but solely in the light of God's revelation. I shall gather the teaching of God's word around several important phases of the nature, mission and work of the Spirit. I do not speculate upon what God may do through His Spirit; I put no limit upon the power of the Spirit. He may work in a thousand ways, for aught I know. I am treating solely of that work of the Spirit which God has made plain in his revealed word.

The Old Testament has eighty-eight distinct

references to the Holy Spirit. In these references there are eighteen names applied. The New Testament refers to the Spirit two hundred and sixty-four times and uses thirty-nine names. Five names are common to both Testaments, which leaves fifty-two different appellatives for the Spirit. Seventeen appellatives express his relation to God, five his relation to the Son, five indicate his divine nature, seven describe his own character, while seventeen are used to indicate his relation to man. He is called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of his Son, of the Lord, of Truth, of Grace, of Holiness, of Glory, and of Adoption. He is called the Comforter, but this term never denotes his relation to man in general. It always describes a special relation to the apostles and their work.

The subject may be made plain or simple according to the manner we may treat it. If we view it in the light of psychological manifestations in our own hearts, or in the lives of those around us, which are ascribed to the Spirit, we shall find ourselves wandering in a maze of mystery. If we follow the word of God, which is the only source of knowledge, we shall find ourselves walking in a light that shall grow brighter as we proceed.

Back To Basics

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USE OF THE WORD "SPIRIT"

John Isaac Edwards

Failure to understand how the word "spirit" is used in the Holy Scriptures has led some to misunderstand the Holy Spirit.

1) **FOR EXAMPLE.** Without considering the use of the word "spirit," one may read Ecclesiastes 11:5, – "As thou knowest not what is the way of the *spirit*, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all" – conclude the way of the Holy Spirit is incomprehensible and argue, "One cannot understand or explain the way and working of the Holy Spirit, no more than he can tell how the bones do grow in the womb." But, when you know that the word "spirit" only occurs 19 times in Ecclesiastes and never refers to the Holy Spirit, but to the spirit of man, the spirit of beast or the attitude or disposition of a man, the conclusion and argumentation is destroyed.

2) **DIFFERENT APPLICATIONS.** The word "spirit" is put to use by holy men of God in several, distinct ways in both the Old and New Testaments. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, for instance, cites eighteen different applications of the word "spirit" in the New Testament. Since no word is a part of speech until it first appears in context (the first rule of grammar), we do not know the meaning of the word "spirit" until we consider the context in which the word is used.

3) **USE NOT DETERMINED BY PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF ARTICLES OR BY CAPITALIZATION.** "Spirit" does not have to be accompanied by the article "holy" (holy Spirit), nor does the word have to be capitalized ("Spirit"), in order for the

Holy Spirit to be represented. In Matthew 22:43, – "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying" – "holy" is absent and "spirit" is not capitalized, yet the Holy Spirit is the application for Mark 12:36, a parallel passage, reads: "For David himself said by the Holy Ghost..." Thus, "David in spirit" (Mt. 22:43) is equivalent to "David...by the Holy Ghost" (Mk. 12:36).

And there are occasions where the word "spirit" may be capitalized, but the Holy Spirit is not intended (according to the context). Some examples include: Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6; 1 John 4:13. Let us use spiritual words in spiritual ways.

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THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

James Buchanan

A careful examination reveals that the Holy Spirit is personal. Not only is He personal, but He is also divine, as much deity as the Father and the Son.

1) **HE WAS WORKING AT CREATION.** Moses recorded that “the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). In verse 26, he records that God said, “Let us...”, implying that there were several involved in creation. Even the Hebrew word *elohim* for God implies a plurality.

2) **HE HAS WISDOM.** When God appointed Bezalel as chief craftsman of the tabernacle, He declared, “I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship” (Ex. 31:3). These characteristics do not belong to a mere force, but to a vibrant, active person.

3) **HE HAS INSTRUCTED.** Nehemiah declared that God gave the Spirit to the Israelites with the statement, “You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them” (Neh. 9:20). The Spirit continued to instruct even into the gospel age, with the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise, “But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth” (Jn. 16:13). The Spirit was the great revelator in God’s eternal purpose, for even the great truths of the gospel were revealed by the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9).

4) **HE CAN BE GRIEVED.** Paul warned the Ephesians to “not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30). Not only can He be grieved, but He also is the one who sealed them when they were saved.

5) **HE BEARS WITNESS OF OUR SALVATION.** In Romans 8:16, Paul declared that the Spirit “testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.” Some would make the Spirit into a generic force. What judge would accept a deaf and dumb witness as proof of anything? Surely the Spirit is personal in nature.

6) **HE IS ETERNAL.** The Hebrew writer calls Him “the eternal Spirit” (Heb. 9:14).

7) **HE IS CALLED LORD.** In 2 Corinthians 4:17, Paul says, “The Lord is the Spirit,” and, at the end of his thought, in verse 18, says, “the Lord, the Spirit.” Paul refers to the Spirit with a divine title. Surely there can be no doubt as to the deity of the Spirit.

8) **HE IS INTERCHANGED WITH GOD.** Ananias lied to God (Acts 5:3) and yet tested the Spirit of God (Acts 5:9). All believers are born of God (Jn. 1:12) and of the Spirit (Jn. 3:5). The Spirit is omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-8) as is God (Acts 17:27). If someone walks like God, talks like God, looks like God, acts like God, and has the same nature and power as God, it seems that this individual would be God.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Bob Waldron

There can be no doubt that in the New Testament we learn more details about the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, the study of the Spirit and His work in the Old Testament furnishes us with helpful information. Here are several things to consider about the Holy Spirit.

As with the other members of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit was present at the creation (Gen. 1:2). Job said, “By His Spirit the heavens are garnished” (Job 26:13). By studying the work of the Father and the Word and the Holy Spirit in the creation and in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom we can see a pattern. God purposes, the Word executes, and the Holy Spirit finishes and perfects. We must handle such matters gingerly, because the Bible does not indulge our desires to know all about how the Godhead works. We must be satisfied with the little we can glean by observation.

During the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was also at work revealing the will of God, guiding men in that process, and confirming their message by signs. Peter writes, “Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). The claim of inspiration is not only made in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and many others, it is also made by Old Testament writers themselves. David said, “The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and His word was upon my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2; cf. Ezek. 2:13).

Concerning the work of confirmation, God reassured Moses that the signs He would do through him would induce the people to believe that he was God’s spokesman (Ex. 4:1-9). When Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal, it was not only to see who was the true God, but also who was God’s

true servant (1 Ki. 18:36). See also 1 Samuel 12:16-18; 1 Kings 22:28; Isaiah 38:1-8 and many others. God both revealed His will and confirmed His spokesmen by the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

Another interesting aspect of the Spirit’s work is that there are certain things He does that are not easily categorized into revelation, inspiration, or confirmation. His work in the creation is an example. Another is the control He exerted over men at times. When Saul pursued David to slay him, he came to Naioth in Ramah, and “the Spirit came on him...and he also stripped off his clothes, and he also prophesied before Samuel, and lay down naked all that day and all that night” (1 Sam. 19:23). For purposes of preventing His will from being thwarted, God immobilized Saul through the Spirit’s control.

An important lesson about the Holy Spirit is taught in the story of Samson. His marvelous strength was given to him by the Holy Spirit (Judg. 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14). If anyone knew what it felt like to have the Holy Spirit, it would have been Samson. Yet, when his Nazirite vow was broken, and the Spirit departed from him, he did not know the Spirit was gone until he went out to grapple with the Philistines. He learned it when he found out that what he could normally do through the Spirit, he could no longer accomplish. Thus, when people indicate today that they can feel the Holy Spirit within them, they contradict what the Bible clearly teaches in the story of Samson. The Holy Spirit did not produce some tangible sensation. His presence was made known through what He enabled a person to do.

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THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTS 2:38

Elmer Moore

“**T**hen Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” No doubt, the New Testament indicates that the penitent, baptized believer receives the “Gift of the Holy Spirit.”

What does this have reference to? Does the language indicate the Spirit is the GIFT or the GIVER? The phrase “gift of,” may suggest either. If I should promise you the gift of the Ford foundation, what would I be promising you? It could mean either the Ford foundation was the gift, or was the giver. Other matters must be factored in. Many arbitrarily infer that the statement means the Spirit is the GIFT. This they assume. You will note that the writer immediately states for to you is “the promise, and to your children and to all that are afar off...” (v. 39). What promise is he speaking of? The promise in Acts 2:21 is the promise that salvation would be available to both Jew and Gentile, referred to as “all flesh.”

Look at a comparison between the GIFT of the Spirit and the PROMISE of the Spirit: **Acts 2:33 - Received the PROMISE of the Spirit.** Note: He did not receive the Holy Spirit; He received what the Holy Spirit PROMISED (Ps. 132:11). **Acts 2:38 - Received the GIFT of the Spirit.** Note: They did not receive the Holy Spirit; they received what the Holy Spirit gave (Acts 2:21); namely, salvation and all of its equivalents.

The word “gift” implies the gift itself. As well, it implies a giver and a receiver. For example, look at the phrases: “Gift of God” (Jn. 4:10). God is the giver, living water is the gift, and the one who asks is the receiver. Again, in

Ephesians 4:7, “the gift of Christ,” grace in the distribution of gifts. The “gift of the Holy Spirit,” the salvation and blessings of the promise (Acts 2:21, 30). The gift of God is not God, but what He gave. The gift of Christ is not Christ, but what He gave. The gift of the Holy Spirit is not the Holy Spirit, but what He gave. In each of the above passages, you have the same word, “gift.” You have the same structure. They are all used in the same sense, specifying what God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are doing. **QUESTION:** What kind of logic will cause one to argue that in the first two examples God and Christ are the GIVERS, but in the third the Holy Spirit is the GIFT? The obvious truth is that the gift of God is not God, but what He gives; the gift of Christ is not Christ, but what He gives; the gift of the Holy Spirit is not the Holy Spirit, but what He gives.

Note a comparison of Acts 2:38 and Acts 26:18. In Acts 2:38, men were told how to receive remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 26:18, Paul writes that he was sent to open men’s eyes that they might “receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ.” Acts 2:38 names “gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 26:18 shows this to be “an inheritance among them that are sanctified.” This is a Biblical description of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

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THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Johnie Paul Edwards

Paul said, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant” (1 Cor. 12:1). Even with the apostle’s plea for knowledge concerning “spiritual gifts,” ignorance of “spiritual gifts” continues today, and has led many to teach and practice things contrary to God’s word.

1) **SPIRITUAL GIFTS.** The very nature of that which was received by early Christians was *spiritual*. That is to say, the gifts were *supernatural* or *miraculous* gifts, rather than natural gifts. These gifts fulfilled the predictions of prophecy that God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21), and the promise of the Lord that signs shall follow them that believe (Mk. 16:17-18; Acts 8:13).

2) **SPIRITUAL GIFTS.** “For to one is given by the Spirit...” (1 Cor. 12:8) may best explain why the word “gifts” is used. These spiritual or supernatural abilities were given by the Spirit of God and manifested that the Spirit of God was with the recipient. It was the Spirit’s choice who received what particular miraculous manifestation; not man’s choice (1 Cor. 12:7, 11). Paul affirms, at least ten times in 1 Corinthians 12, these gifts were from God (vv. 4-13). The term “spiritual gifts” means the gifts of the Spirit and shows the source to be in the grace of God.

3) **MISUNDERSTANDINGS CONCERNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS.**

Some misunderstand the nature of spiritual gifts. The nature of the gifts involved the supernatural; not the natural. Things that are done through natural ability cannot be called “spiritual gifts.” One could learn to speak a for-

eign language through natural ability by thoroughly studying the language, but the gift of tongues involved speaking a language one did not know and had not studied (Acts 2:5-13).

Some misunderstand who received spiritual gifts. Men today do not receive these supernatural abilities and do not need them as the early church did. Early Christians needed spiritual gifts for the confirmation of God’s spoken word and the edification of the church. But when the spoken word was confirmed by supernatural acts and became the written or “perfect” word of God, that which was in part (spiritual gifts) was taken away (1 Cor. 13:10). Spiritual gifts were not general, but special.

Some misunderstand how spiritual gifts were given. Some received miraculous power from the Spirit through a baptism. Jesus promised the apostles (and only the apostles), “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:5; 11:16). The apostles were overwhelmed by the Spirit in Acts 2 when “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” The miraculous powers given to the apostles were the “signs of an apostle” mentioned by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:12: “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.”

Others received supernatural power through laying on of the apostles’ hands. There was a vital connection between the laying on of the apostles’ hands and the transfer of the power

of the Holy Spirit. The story of Simon the sorcerer reads, “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money” (Acts 8:18). All such supernatural power was given by the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10:44, while Peter was speaking the word of the Lord, the “Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word.” What was “poured out” of the Spirit was called “the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 10:45) and “they heard them speak with tongues” (Acts 10:46). This outpouring of the Holy Spirit resulted in its recipients possessing a supernatural gift.

This outpouring in Acts 10 was for the purpose of convincing the Jews that to the Gentiles also was “granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18). The nine spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, from *the word of wisdom* to *the interpretation of tongues*, were imparted by the apostles of Christ after their baptism of the Holy Spirit. Paul laid his hands on some newborn Christians at Ephesus, who then began to speak in tongues and prophecy (Acts 19:1-6).

Some misunderstand the differences in spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts were diverse in that they differed one from another. Paul taught the Corinthians, “Now there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:4) and “there are diversities of operations” (v. 6). The gifts differed in the work they enabled each one to perform. The nine spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 differed one from another. Even the seeming inseparable gifts of wisdom and knowledge were different in that the “word of wisdom was the ability to reveal divine truth, and the word of knowledge was the ability to teach the truth thus revealed” (J.W. McGarvey). For this reason, Paul asked the Corinthians, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?...” (1 Cor. 12:29-31). But as differ-

ent gifts were bestowed on different individuals, some of them became a source of pride and envy among the saints at Corinth.

Some misunderstand the purpose of spiritual gifts. The intended purpose of spiritual gifts is clearly set forth in Scripture. Mark records, “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following” (Mk. 16:20). Hence, gifts of a spiritual nature were given by the Spirit of God to early disciples to confirm (to make firm, establish, make secure, W.E. Vine) the spoken word of God. God, through the Holy Spirit, provided man with both a complete revelation and the external signs (miracles) which made it credible.

If God’s messengers did not have their message confirmed by supernatural evidence of its divine origin, none could be persuaded that God was its author. Further, the apostle asked, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?” (Heb. 2:3-4).

The Lord’s spoken word of salvation was made sure by the apostles through miraculous manifestations. On one occasion, the supernatural was so obvious and convincing that those who observed the wonders considered Paul and Barnabas gods (Acts 14:11). Paul argues that such became a “badge of authority” for the apostles of Christ, attesting to the fact that they were truly God’s messengers (1 Cor. 12:12). Further, as the spoken word was confirmed by spiritual gifts, it would result in the edification or building up of the church. Paul taught, “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal” (1 Cor. 12:7) and “Even so

ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church” (1 Cor. 14:12).

Some misunderstand the duration of spiritual gifts. The apostle revealed that while faith, hope and love would abide, spiritual gifts would *fail, cease, and vanish away* (1 Cor. 13:8). Spiritual gifts were “needful in developing the infant church, but as that institution passed onward toward maturity and perfection (Heb. 5:12-14; 6:1; Eph. 3:14-21; 4:11-16), they were outgrown and discontinued, because from them had been developed the clear, steady light of the recorded word, and the mature thoughtfulness and assurance of a well-instructed church” (J.W. McGarvey).

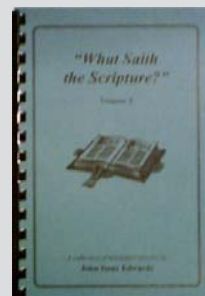
Since the apostles were the link between the Holy Spirit and the church in the dispensing of the gifts, the apostles’ death marked the breaking of the link and signaled the end of the miraculous gifts. In 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, Paul identifies the gifts and then points out that “when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” The word “perfect” is in contrast to the “know in part” and refers to the totality of the knowledge God intended to impart to man. As this revelation was being given, part by part, it was being confirmed by accompanying miracles. The testimony of the apostles and others was proven valid by their miracles. These demonstrations confirmed the word then, and the same demonstrations confirm the word now. Being provisional, to bear witness to the truth orally delivered, and temporary, spiritual gifts were not permanent, and therefore ceased.

Since the word of God is now in the book, we do not need the special endowments of the Spirit. There are two reasons why the gifts of the Spirit are not now imparted. First, there are no apostles now to impart gifts. Second, there is no further need for miraculous revelations.

Some misunderstand the difference between spiritual gifts in the Bible and supposed spiritual gifts today. The signs that were to accompany those who believed included: casting out demons, speaking with new tongues, picking up serpents, drinking any deadly poison without being hurt, and laying hands on the sick so they would recover (Mk. 16:17-20). With the claim must be the power to prove the claim. Where is the proof? Further, modern preachers who claim such power do not talk like the Spirit-filled apostles talked. The apostles commanded believers to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38). Do these modern-day claimers of such power tell sinners to do such?

Spiritual gifts may be likened to scaffolding used in the erection of a building. When the building is completed, the scaffolding is removed. Or, you might compare spiritual gifts to a tugboat. When the mighty ship of the church was pulled away from the harbor, the tugboat (spiritual gifts) was cut loose and the mighty ship of the church was able to sail on its own. “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant” (1 Cor. 12:1).

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Kid's Activity Page

Paul Adams

Memory Verse: *"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant"*
(1 Corinthians 12:1).

Nine Gifts Of The Holy Spirit

Unscramble the words below to reveal the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit found in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

S M I D O W

— — — — —

G N E W O L K D E

— — — — —

T H I F A

— — — — —

L I N E G A H

— — — — —

S C R A M I L E

— — — — —

C O P P E R Y H

— — — — —

R E S D I N G C E N F O T R I P S I S

— — — — —

S T E G O N U

— — — — —

R A T R E E T T O P I N N I F O G N E U S T O

— — — — —

***"Suffer the little children to come unto me,
and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God"*** (Mark 10:14).

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Johnie Edwards

One way the Holy Spirit was manifested is through “The baptism of the Holy Spirit.” That there is controversy on this subject, most would not deny. We just need to get back to the basics of what the Bible teaches about this important subject.

1) **PROMISED TO THE APOSTLES.** Holy Spirit baptism was in the form of a promise, but never a command. Luke recorded, “And, behold, I send the *promise* of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49). Jesus taught the apostles many things while with them, but not everything He wanted them to know. So, God sent the Holy Spirit to do two things for the apostles. “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall *teach you all things*, and *bring all things to your remembrance*, whatsoever I have said unto you” (Jn. 14:26). Now we know that there were two offices of the Holy Spirit: a teaching office and a reminding office.

2) **RECEIVED BY THE APOSTLES.** If you will begin reading Acts 1:2, with the word “apostles,” and trace the pronouns (them, you, ye, they, us) through Acts 2:4, you will learn that

the apostles “were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance.” No one on Pentecost received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, except the apostles. Read it!

3) **ADMINISTERED BY THE LORD.** One would think that men administer Holy Spirit baptism as we hear men preaching on this subject. Not so! According to Matthew 3:11, Jesus is the administrator of this baptism. John said, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but *he* that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; *he* shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire.”

4) **RECEIVED BY GENTILES.** On a special occasion, Gentiles, in the person of Cornelius and his household, received Holy Spirit baptism. As a study is made of this baptism, be sure to read Acts 10 & 11, because Acts 11 puts the occasion in chronological order (Acts 11:4); Acts 10 does not. The only reason Gentiles received Holy Spirit baptism was to convince the Jews that “God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:15-18). Any other use made of this Holy Spirit baptism is a misuse!

IF YOU CLAIM HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM...

Have you been with the Lord from the beginning? (Jn. 15:27). Can you speak a language you have not studied? (Acts 2:4-11). Do you have a complete and infallible recollection of what the Lord said? (Jn. 14:26). Do you have to give thought before you speak? (Mt. 10:19-20). Why are you and others who claim Holy Spirit baptism members of different bodies, seeing there is one Spirit, one body, and one baptism? (Eph. 4:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:13). Why do you and others who claim Holy Spirit baptism teach contradictory doctrines, since there is one Spirit, the Spirit of truth? (Jn. 16:12-13). Could some “Holy Spirit baptized” believer answer please?

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BORN OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Cecil Douthitt

This article points out what it means to be born of the Holy Spirit as taught in the New Testament.

1) CHRIST TAUGHT ABOUT BEING BORN OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. When Nicodemus came to see Jesus, in John 3:1-8, he knew Christ was a teacher come from God (v. 2). He probably felt comfortable in the fact that he was a child of God because he was a descendant of Abraham. Jesus immediately told him he had to be born again (v. 3). Nicodemus immediately thought physical birth. Christ answered, “No” by stating the new birth (v. 3) was by water and the Spirit (v. 5). The water is water baptism (Acts 2:38; 22:16). The “Spirit” is the Holy Spirit of God.

Nicodemus, in one respect, was not far from the truth in thinking about a second physical birth. That is, we have the characteristics of our parents. Therefore, if we come to God, obey God, submit to God, live our life pleasing to God, we will become similar to God. I am convinced this is the meaning because of Jesus’ statement in John 3:6, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” If we fully follow God, we will be approved of God. 2 Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2) PETER WROTE ABOUT BEING BORN OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. “Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible,

through the word of God which lives and abides forever” (1 Pet. 1:22-23). Peter here gives us more very valuable information about being born of the Holy Spirit of God.

Most folks today think they can define obedience their way, do what pleases them and call that their “new birth.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Added to the wrong thinking of these folks is that they hear this false teaching from so many pulpits.

The only way we can please God and be separated from our sins is to obey God’s truth. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek” (Rom. 1:16). Notice Peter said this necessary obedience to the truth is “through the Spirit” (1 Pet. 1:22). It is the Spirit that gives us God’s inspired word (2 Tim. 2:16-17; Jude 3). Peter, in 1 Peter 1:23, speaks again of this new birth. It is “incorruptible through the word of God which lives and abides forever.” A conversion and obedience based on anything less than or more than the pure word of God is not acceptable to God; it is not true conversion, nor is it the obedience the New Testament repeatedly demands. “Whosoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds” (2 Jn. 9-11).

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BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

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In any study of the Holy Spirit, the question inevitably arises concerning the meaning of Jesus' warning against blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mt. 12:31-32; Mk. 3:28-29; Lk. 12:10). It obviously was a serious matter, for Jesus said such a sin "will not be forgiven men," prompting some to label it "The Unpardonable Sin." What exactly is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

1) **CONTEXT.** Consideration should first be given to the Scriptural context. The occasion was Jesus' healing of a blind and mute man who was demon-possessed (Mt. 12:22). When the amazed multitudes began to think that Jesus could be the Son of David, the Pharisees immediately accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of "Beelzebub, the ruler of demons" [Satan] (vv. 23-24). Jesus exposed the utter foolishness of such a charge: "And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?" (v. 26). Jesus went on to explain that "if I cast out demons by *the Spirit of God*, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you" (v. 28).

It was soon after this statement that Jesus warned, "the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men" and "whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come" (vv. 31-32). What occurred here should help us understand the nature of "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit."

2) **REJECTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS WORK.** The Pharisees had blasphemed Jesus and the Holy Spirit by saying, "[Jesus] has an unclean spirit" (Mk. 3:30). They dismissed the miraculous power of God as Satanic! It was one thing to be angry at Jesus, but they were reject-

ing the very "finger of God," the Spirit (Lk. 11:20; Jn. 10:37-38).

The miracles, wonders, and signs done by Jesus were a sign to the Jews of His divinity and anointing with the Holy Spirit by the Father (Lk. 4:18; Acts 10:38). Jesus also said that the Holy Spirit would come to "convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn. 16:8-11). To reject the Holy Spirit's work in either circumstance is to reject the only avenue by which man can be saved. One is left without divine forgiveness when he has blasphemed and rejected the Spirit of God.

3) **REJECTING THE WAY OF SALVATION = NO HOPE OF FORGIVENESS.** The Bible speaks of a sin "leading to death" and a sin "not leading to death" (1 Jn. 5:16-17). What is the difference? Is not the wages of sin death (Rom. 6:23)? The difference is the attitude in the heart of the sinner. We are taught that if we turn a sinner from the error of his way we "will save a soul from death" (Jas. 5:19-20). All sin will condemn if not repented of and forgiven. The sin that will not be forgiven is the sin that is not repented of. He who blasphemes the Spirit rejects the need to repent, thereby denying the only means of forgiveness possible.

This also explains why it is "impossible...if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance" (Heb. 6:4-6). Such ones have rejected the Spirit's message that they once believed and "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" (Heb. 10:26). This is a dangerous attitude we must be careful to avoid.

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THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

John Isaac Edwards

To deny the Holy Spirit exists within the child of God as an activating force is to deny what the Spirit of God revealed about Himself. Paul told Timothy, “That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by *the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*” (2 Tim. 1:14). The question is: How does the Holy Spirit dwell in us?

1) **THE FATHER DWELLETH IN US.** John affirmed, “No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit” (1 Jn. 4:12-13).

From the declaration and deposition of John, we collect and conclude the following: (1) The Father dwelleth in us (so said the apostle). (2) The indwelling of the Father is conditional (*If* we love one another). (3) The indwelling of the Father is evidential. That is, something external furnishes proof of the indwelling of the Father (we know that he dwelleth in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit - not the Holy Spirit, but His spirit or disposition of love). *Question:* Does the Father indwell the Christian independent of His love? *Answer:* No, the Father dwells in us as His love dwells in us.

2) **THE SON DWELLETH IN US.** Paul’s petition for the Ephesians was, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...” (Eph. 3:17). This statement avows two things: (1) The Son dwelleth in us. (2) The indwelling of the Son is by faith (*by* suggests agency, instrumentality and medium - *faith* is the agent, instrument and medium). *Question:* Does the Son indwell the Christian independent of faith? *Answer:* No, the Son dwells in us as faith dwells in us.

3) **THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLETH IN US.** What is true of the indwelling Father and the indwelling Son is true of the indwelling Spirit. In **Ephesians 5:18-20**, Paul said, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting...” Now consider **Colossians 3:16-18**, a parallel passage: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord...giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit...” This equation expresses the indwelling of the Spirit through the influence of the word of Christ. You show me a teaching, admonishing, thanks-giving, submitting Christian and I will show you a Holy Spirit-filled Christian!

Whatever one affirms with respect to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit must be consistent with the indwelling of the Father and the indwelling of the Son, and everything else the Bible teaches.

“How Readest Thou?”

Test Your Bible Knowledge

Where is the passage found that says, “Birds of a feather flock together”?

Answer: There is no such passage found in the Bible.

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