

(Mark 1:23-26), but He dwells in the heart of the Christian just as Christ does; that is, through faith. For it is written, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith..." (Ephesians 3:17; cf. Romans 8:9-10). Again, Paul testified to the saints in Colosse of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1: 27). He also spoke to the wayward Galatians of his travail "in birth again until Christ is formed in you" (Gal. 4:19).

The word of God is the instrument of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) to operate on the mind of man. For faith comes through hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17). It is the word, which is "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1: 16), and the medium for man's sanctification, as it is written, even of the apostles, "sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth" (John 17:17).

As noted earlier Philip, Stephen and the other five brothers who were chosen to care for widow's tables in Jerusalem were "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom" prior to the apostles laying hands on them (Acts 6:3-6). How was this possible? It was possible because they had accepted the word of faith and were continuing to be obedient to it (cf. Acts 2:38-42). That is, they were keeping the command which was later recorded in the letter to the Ephesians: "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). This latter text implicitly teaches that the children of God in general were and are filled with the Spirit in a manner that is not miraculous. In deed, the Christian is expected to so learn Christ through the word that he will be so filled (See again Gal. 4:19). Paul in his letter to the Colossians shows in practical terms how this is accomplished; "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col.3: 16). As was noted the Holy Spirit does not literally or actually dwell in the body of the Christian, but He dwells by means of His thoughts, His concepts, His wisdom, which rules the mind and life of the saint by means of His word.

Whenever the indwelling of the Spirit of God in a Christian (Rom. 8:11) is explained to a new convert or anyone else for that matter, it should

not be so complicated as to render the matter unintelligible or impractical to him or her. The scriptures maintain that God (2 Cor. 6:16), Christ (2 Cor. 13:5) and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:11) live in His people. Yet, the crux of the matter boils down to this practical question, how does the Godhead *work* in those who have been sanctified? Now the scriptures plainly say that He *does so work*, as Paul said to the saints in Philippi, "for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

Is it by an illumination on the subconscious that comes directly from the Spirit? Is it an inner feeling that is better felt than told? Or is it by an internal nudge through some unknown Divine operation? It is not! Because we are plainly told that the man of God is made "complete" or perfect through the scriptures and that they "thoroughly" equip him "for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Again we are told, that God by "His divine power has given to us *all things* that pertain to life and godliness through the *knowledge* of Him who called us to glory and virtue (2 Peter 1:3). Seven times in the book of Revelation the Lord Jesus says one should use his ears to hear the Holy Spirit (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22; cf., 13:9). And the scriptures are very clear as to the manner in which God works in His children, As it is written, "the word of God, which also effectively *works* in you who believe" (I Thess. 2:13). The Greek word in this reference for "works" comes from the same word from which we get the word "energy." In other words God energizes in His people by means of His divine word. The "living and powerful" (Heb. 4: 12) word of God in a believing active Christian is like uranium energizing in a nuclear reactor.

To repeat, it is not a literal indwelling, nor is it an actual indwelling in conjunction with the word, but it is by means of the word, which, as noted, is the instrument of the Spirit's operation on the mind of man. The understanding and acceptance of this fact brings an overwhelming reality to the mind of the obedient believer that the Holy Spirit so rules his life, through the all powerful word that he (the believer) "may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Eph. 3:19).

As the scriptures speak of "our common salvation" (Jude 3), even so this indwelling of the Holy Spirit, through faith, (to repeat) is not miraculous. It is the ordinary and common gift of God to all, who through faith keep His word, even as Peter testified of "the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32). Again Peter said to the mass of people on Pentecost, "Repent, and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Observe in this text the receipt of the gift of the Holy Spirit was contingent upon the hearers obeying the primary steps of faith, which was not the case with the apostles (Acts 2:1-4), nor the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-48). Thus the Holy Spirit today lives in the obedient child of God *by means of the word* of faith which has been preached to us (I Peter 1:22-25). Do you desire (cf. Luke 11:13) the Holy Spirit to work in your life, then read His word, believe it, obey it and keep on obeying it. To use a term from Isaiah be "willing and obedient" (Isa. 1:19), then the Spirit by means of His word will live in you and effectively work in you (I Thess. 2:13). It will be like a fire in your bones, as it is written, "is not My word like a fire? Says the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?" (Jer. 23:29; cf. 20:9).

\*The Greek text has "*dia tes pisteos*," "through the faith." All scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Copyright 1982, by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Nashville, TN, USA.

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## LOCAL CONTACT

# ***THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT***

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## **THE HOLY SPIRIT UNDER CHRIST'S RULE HAS BEEN GIVEN IN THREE WAYS:**

### **THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Just ten days after His ascension back to heaven, Jesus, on Pentecost (A. D. 30), from the right hand of the Father's throne, personally sent down the Holy Spirit on the twelve, as Peter affirmed that day, "He (Jesus) poured out this which you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). This was not to make them His apostles, for He had done that already (Luke 6:13). It was in order for the Holy Spirit to teach them, "all things" of God; to bring to their "remembrance all things," which Christ had said to them (John 14:26); to "guide them into all truth" (John 16:13); and to provide them "power" (Acts 1:8). Through which power, they were to do many "signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit" to confirm the word of God (Hebrews 2:3-4, cf. Mark 16:17-20). This was the baptism of the twelve in the Holy Spirit, which Christ had promised to them (Acts 1:4-5). Not all the 120 spoken of in Acts 1:15 were baptized in the Holy Spirit, but only the apostles, as the reading of Acts 1:26, 2:1, 2:14, 37, 42, 43 shows. When the twelve received the power from on high they did not string together a babel of non-sense or spout a few Hebrew words in vain repetition as those who claim the power of Pentecost do today. The apostles spoke real tongues, or languages, of real people, even as those who heard that day affirmed, "we hear, each in our own language in which we were born" (Acts 2:8).

## THE HOLY SPIRIT BY THE APOSTLES' HANDS

According to the inspired record, baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred only one other time and that was about ten years later on the first Gentile converts in the house of Cornelius at Caesarea (Acts 10:44-48). It was not to make them apostles, nor did they receive this special gift in order to guide them into all truth. That, as noted, had been promised to the apostles; but these Gentiles did have in a miraculous manner "the gift of the Holy Spirit ... poured out on (them) also" (Acts 10:45), directly from the hand of Christ Jesus. This was done in order to prove to the Jews that the Gentiles, as well as they, were to have the gospel.

Later the believing Jews at Jerusalem called upon Peter to give an account of his conduct in Caesarea. As the record shows (Acts 11:1-18) he gave an orderly and detailed description of the events, which had lead up to his decision to command baptism in water for the Gentiles at Cornelius' house (See Acts 10:47-48). Not only this, but Peter did not indicate in any way that such a miraculous gift, of the Holy Spirit directly from Jesus, was a common occurrence. In fact he did the opposite for he had to go all the way back to Pentecost, approximately ten years before, to find a like example. He said, "the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). He didn't say, as on us "last night," "last week," "last month" or "last year" as many claim today.

On the day of Pentecost there had been two baptisms: (1) Holy Spirit baptism on the twelve (Acts 2:1-8), and (2) the baptism of about 3000 (2:38-41) in water. This latter baptism was according to the authority of Christ, as given in the great commission, even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 8:36-38). Again there were two baptisms at Cornelius' house according to Acts 10:47: Holy Spirit baptism and water baptism. Yet, twenty years after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Caesarea, around A.D. 60, Paul affirmed by the Spirit Himself that there was "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5). Holy Spirit baptism had ceased to be given by that date and it does not occur today. There is now one baptism (that commanded in the great commission), not two.

The church at its beginning had only the Old Testament scriptures (cf. Acts 17:11). When a congregation was begun it had no written account of Christ's life, the Acts or any of the twenty-one letters, which are in our New Testament. Therefore, Jesus at the beginning, in a miraculous way, set certain positions among the disciples to provide for the young churches until they could have the faith and the knowledge of Him in unified form. As it is written, "He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors (elders), and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephesians 4:11-14). Later some of these, such as evangelists (2 Timothy 4:1-5), elders (pastors) (1 Titus 1:5-9), and teachers (2 Timothy 2:2) were set in the churches by means of the word. Yet, as noted, at the first, such positions in the early church were done in a miraculous manner by the Lord, until the knowledge of Jesus, and the faith in unified form, could be given. The Savior also arranged for the Holy Spirit to distribute certain miraculous gifts among the disciples, as it is written, "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:4).

There were nine of these gifts: (1) wisdom, (2) knowledge, (3) faith, (4) healings, (5) miracles, (6) prophecy, (7) discerning of Spirits, (8) various kinds of tongues or languages, and (9) the interpretation of such tongues (1 Corinthians 12:7-10). These were distributed among the disciples in the first century by the Holy Spirit, not directly, but through the apostles, for the record says, "Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given..." (Acts 8:18). Simon had seen Philip, the evangelist, perform miracles, wonders

and signs (Acts 8:5-8); but he had not seen him impart what Peter called, "the gift of God" (Acts 8:20), which produced such miraculous powers among the first century Christians. Philip was able to perform miracles himself because the apostles had earlier laid their hands on him (Acts 6:5-6), but he could not pass that power to others as the apostles did.

The statement by Luke, at the time of the apostles' arrival among the Samaritan disciples concerning their receipt of the Holy Spirit: "For as yet He had fallen on none of them" (Acts 8:16), shows they had received no miraculous manifestation of the Spirit prior to the apostles' arrival. We must note, Philip and the other six brothers chosen with him to serve widow's tables in Jerusalem were men filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3,5) before the apostles laid hands on them, but it was not a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit. The miraculous manifestation of the Spirit came on the seven after the apostles had laid their hands on them (Acts 6:6-8, cf. 1 Corinthians 12:7).

The sending of two apostles, Peter and John, to impart such spiritual gifts among the disciples at Samaria after Philip had converted them, illustrates the apostolic practice of providing rapid leadership for the new congregations. Paul's inquiry about certain disciples receiving the Holy Spirit at Ephesus, their "re"-baptism for the right purpose, and his subsequent imparting of the Holy Spirit to them (Acts 19:1-6), confirms this practice of the apostles among the first century churches. These were temporary gifts until the perfect gift: God's completed revelation to man, could be given, that is, the unified form "of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God."

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth about A.D.57 speaking of this complete or perfect gift: "whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which (not He who) is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away" (1 Corinthians

13:8-10). Daniel, in speaking of the seventy weeks determined on the Jews, said one thing the Messiah (Jesus) would do, was, "to seal up vision and prophecy" (Daniel 9:24). This He did with the death of John (c. A. D. 98) and those upon whom the apostles had laid hands. Zechariah had also foretold that God would "cause the prophets and the unclean spirits to depart from the land" (Zechariah 13:2). This took place with the close of the apostolic age. Today there are no prophets of God (See Zechariah 13:3). The masses don't have to depend on a part of God's word in this man and a part in that. Today all men may have God's complete (perfect) revelation, the Holy Bible.

Since the apostles were distributors of these nine miraculous gifts when they died and those on whom they had laid hands died also, the age of miracles closed. We walk by faith, hearing the word of God and believing the signs that have been written (John 20:30-31). We are not a wicked and adulterous generation that keeps on demanding signs (Matthew 12:38-39) after God has confirmed His word and closed vision and prophecy.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH FAITH

The apostle Paul affirmed that "we are all sons of God through \*faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:26-27); and it is through this same faith, which we make our own by obedience, that we receive the promise of the Spirit. As it is written, "that the blessings of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through \*faith" (Galatians 3:14). Again as the same apostle speaking of Jesus to the Ephesians said, "in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13). Again the apostle to the Gentiles told the Corinthians, God "has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a deposit" (2 Cor. 1:22). The Holy Spirit does not literally dwell in the Christian as demons used to invade the bodies of certain individuals