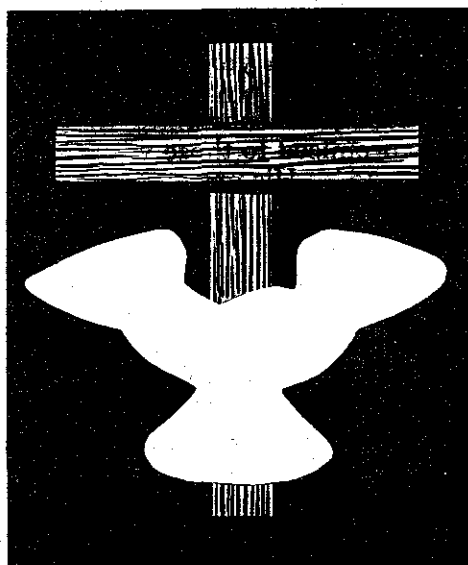


THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Ray Brubaker



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THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



Introduction

This booklet, I'm sure, will prove to be the most controversial we have ever published. And yet, more and more of God's people are open and receptive to Biblical truths relating to the Holy Spirit. All prejudice and traditional teaching must be put out of our minds if we are to accept the clear teachings of God's Word which commands us to be "filled with the Spirit."

I must admit I was taught and believed that at the time of conversion, one could experience all there was to receive in salvation. Yet my heart hungered for more of God's fulness. It was while reading "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" by R.A. Torrey, that I realized this was exactly what I needed. In a time of fasting and prayer, following a serious illness, the Lord both healed my body and gave me the ministry we have today. To Him belongs all of the glory.

While Moody and Torrey did not relate the baptism of the Holy Spirit to some charismatic experience, yet they taught that God's Spirit was given for anointing and service. It is this power that we believe is available to believers today for did not God promise in the last days to pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh. Believing we're living in the Endtime, why not open your heart to the Spirit's fulness and receive by faith what is rightfully yours, if you have not already done so.

God love you, and grant your request to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

--Ray Brubaker



OUTPOURING OF GOD'S SPIRIT

Norman Grubb, the noted Bible expositor, has expressed his conviction: "It seems to me that there are three conditions for Christ's Return: the going back of the Jews to Palestine in unbelief; world-wide evangelization; and the world-wide outpouring of the Spirit." Observes Grubb: "The first two are being completed before our eyes, and there are signs of the last" - that is, the world-wide outpouring of God's Spirit.

There is a world-wide moving of the Spirit of God today. Many are testifying to the enduement of power for witnessing upon receiving this glorious experience of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost.

J. Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, once made this prediction: "I am convinced," said this famous missionary, "that there will be a great spiritual awakening, which will usher in the Second Coming of the Lord."

Beloved, that's what we are seeing today. With godless Communism expanding on all fronts; witnessing the growing trend toward a world-church, a moving of man's making; is it too much to expect the real moving of God in a genuine outpouring of His Spirit?

After all, is this not what Joel prophesied? "And it shall come to pass in the last days," saith God, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh!"

Partially fulfilled at Pentecost, this prophecy is to have an even greater fulfilment.

As Dean Alford, the noted Scholar, writes concerning Joel's prophecy: "It is not the first coming of Christ, which interpretation would run counter to the whole tenor of the Apostle's application of the prophecy; but clearly His second coming."

Similarly Alexander Whyte, whom theology students regard as one of the truly eminent preachers of the last Century, has stated: "I may not live to see it, but the day will come - when there will be a great revival in the whole world."

Beloved, we are beginning to see the evidence of this in our day. God is moving across the world - in isolated areas, perhaps, - but wherever men's hearts are hungry for this outpouring of His Spirit.

D. M. Panton observes: "Throughout the Prophets, no prediction of the Spirit's action is more precise, more positive... than Joel's forecast of a double Pentecost, the Christian dispensation clasped at both ends, like a jewel, in a bracelet of miracle."

For what purpose is this outpouring? you might ask. It is simply to prepare the true Church of born-again believers for the soon coming of our blessed Lord. For God has ordained that His Son, coming from glory, would be received by a waiting bride decked in spotless array. As the Apostle Paul reveals, the purpose of God is that He might present unto Himself "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish." (Eph. 5:27)

As one author declares: "The holy Son of God cannot present unto Himself a trifling, indifferent, unsanctified body of nominal church members. His church must be made like unto Himself, the fairest and noblest expression of redeemed humanity that only His sufferings and death could ever produce."

Thus, one purpose of the Spirit's Outpouring is to prepare the true Church for the coming of Jesus; to empower believers and make them witnesses.

As one who hungered for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and received this blessing observes: (quote) "The Spirit of the Lord is sweeping over the land. Many ministers and lay people in a number of Communion are receiving this blessing. The hour is late, the coming of the Lord is fast approaching, the Church must be ready!"

It is impossible to fathom the finality of this promised pentecostal blessing seen falling - not as dew from heaven, nor mere dribblets, but in floods - an outpouring, not coming on isolated prophets, but in miraculous assemblies, and "upon all flesh" - those prepared to receive!

Evan Roberts, foremost figure in the Welsh Revival, likewise asserted: "The prophecy of Joel is to be fulfilled" and comments: "If that is so, all flesh must be prepared to receive. The past must be clear. Every sin must be confessed to God. Any wrong to man must be put right. Everything doubtful must be removed at once out of our lives. Obedience to the Spirit of God must be implicit and prompt. There must be public confession of Christ - Christ must be all-in-all."

How many today who are professing believers in the Lord Jesus Christ scoff at messages on holy living, scorning the call to repent of lust and impurity, hiding behind a false security that will find them left behind when our Lord returns to rapture His saints!

Ah, listen, beloved. We are living in a day of shallow profession with too little emphasis on repentance. Jesus stressed repentance, saying: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

We would also observe that too few messages are heard on Bible Holiness, and yet we read: "Follow peace and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Too many who call themselves believers continue to live in known sin and wilful disobedience, whereas, the Bible identifies a born-again person as one who does not practice sin, and promises: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Heb. 10:26-27)

Surely, we are saved by grace through faith..." But there is too little emphasis today on OBEDIENCE. The Bible says: "Christ is the author of ETERNAL salvation unto all them that OBEY Him." (Heb. 5:9) The Bible reminds us when Christ is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels - "in flaming fire he will take vengeance on them that know not God, and that OBEY NOT the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Gospel is to be obeyed as well as believed. For when one truly sees the Lord Jesus dying on the cross for his sin, and in his place, then there is in the heart of the genuine believer an abhorrence of sin, and a sincere desire to obey the Lord and walk in His ways.

If today you are living in known sin, and excusing yourself, calling it human weakness, pointing to others who are similarly guilty, or hiding behind a doctrine of false assurance, just remember the Bible tells us that when Jesus bled on the cross - He died to "redeem us from ALL iniquity." And in this day of compromise, and laxity, when we anticipate our Lord's return for His church at any moment, let us sound forth with renewed vigor GOD'S WORD which says: "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

It is only as we forsake sin that we can experience the Spirit's outpouring in our lives. The Scriptures encourage us to lay aside even the "besetting sins" as well as "weights" (that which we might not call sin, but which hinders us in our Christian life). Hypocrisy and pretense must go; false pride and false humility must be done with. Lust and impurity must cease to control us. Self must needs be crucified so that Christ can reign supreme, and the Spirit of God control us!

This, my friends, is what God has promised for the last days - the outpouring of His Spirit upon all flesh!

I'm wondering how many listening today are honest enough to admit that you are living a spiritually-defeated life? Your heart hungers for a closer walk with God. You thrill when you hear the deeper truths of God's Word.

Beloved, let me assure you there is more to salvation than receiving the forgiveness of sins! We are not in any way seeking to underestimate the decision that you may have made when you came to Christ seeking forgiveness, but simply emphasizing the fact that God has given of His Spirit to control and empower our lives once we have trusted Christ.

To some this is strange teaching, perhaps. Nevertheless, we would quote from notable men of the past who believed and taught the necessity of receiving the power of God's Holy Spirit for living a victorious life.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, who urged: "Let us not be satisfied with the sip that saves, but let us go on the baptism which buries the flesh and raises us in the likeness of the risen Lord; even that baptism into the Holy Ghost and into fire which makes us spiritual, and sets us all on flame with zeal for the glory of God."

D. L. Moody once said: "If a man is only converted, and we get him into the church, we think the work is done, and we let him go right off to sleep. Instead of urging him to seek the gift of the Holy Ghost, that he may be anointed for the work, we let him sleep and slumber." Moody insisted, "The Holy Ghost coming upon (men) them with power is distinct and separate from conversion."

We would yet quote from the noted Bible Scholar, A. J. Gordon, founder of Gordon College, who asserted: "It seems clear from the Scripture that it is still the duty and privilege of believers to receive the Holy Spirit by a conscious, definite act of appropriating faith, just as they received Christ."

In other words, these beloved servants whom God has given to instruct and teach us definitely believed that the Scriptures emphasized the necessity of receiving the Holy Ghost in a definite way just as in receiving Christ!

The Bible says: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you...If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how must more shall your Heavenly Father give the HOLY SPIRIT to them that ask Him?"

Have you ever asked the Holy Spirit to control your life? As you once asked Jesus to save you, now ask the Holy Spirit to fill your life with His presence and power!

Remember, however, the Holy Spirit will not fill a proud or disobedient life. The Bible again emphasizes that God gives the Holy Ghost to them that obey Him. (Acts 5:32)

It reminds me of what Moody once said: "We would not have to wait long for this enduement of the Spirit if we did not have to come to an end of ourselves. This is sometimes a long road. If God were to endue us with power while we are filled with conceit, we would become vain as peacocks."

Friend, today, do you want God's enduement of power promised for the last days? There is a price that must be paid, but how glorious is God's rich and wondrous presence and power promised to the believer who meets the conditions.

Even our blessed Lord knew of a time when the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove came, and from thence He went forth witnessing to the great power of God.

The secret of God's power in our Lord's life can become the secret to power in your life. For of Jesus we read: "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God...hath anointed thee." (Heb 1:9)

If we turn from all known sin, and "hunger and thirst after righteousness," we can be filled! - filled with the Spirit, which is God's command!

It may appear that God will have to allow certain judgments to befall a slumbering, lukewarm, and complacent Church, and bring Christians to their knees, to prepare them for our Lord's Return. Nevertheless, it is for us to make the necessary preparation - even as our Lord urged upon us: "BE YE READY!"



MICHAEL NATT



CONVERTED JEWS AND THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

NEWSWEEK magazine indicates that many young Jewish converts are being caught up in the charismatic movement. Notes NEWSWEEK: "The only kinds of Christianity that seem to appeal to young Jews are those messianic Jesus cults that offer ecstatic religious experiences and the promise that Christ is in fact about to reappear in the second coming."

Michael Natt of Minneapolis, Minnesota is typical of young Jews who have turned to Jesus and who testifies, "Now I can say that I am truly a completed Jew..."

In CAMPUS FELLOWSHIP magazine, Natt relates how he found the Messiah:

"I was born and raised Jewish, and as is customary, I received training in the customs of Judaism, some teaching in the Old Testament, and some basics in the Hebrew language as preparation for my bar-mitzvah at age 13. After my bar-mitzvah, however, I had no motivation to continue on in formal Jewish education, or even to attend synagogue except on high holy days, the New Year and the Day of Atonement, and that was upon my parents' requests. However, there was an undefinable hunger in my heart for God which I was aware of at times in my childhood. This hunger led me away from traditional Judaism and through various beliefs and experiences which left my soul bruised and broken and in need of a living Savior.

"In April, 1970, shortly after meeting a born-again Christian for the first time, I received Jesus as my personal Savior, and soon after, I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Prior to this I had been taught that Jesus was against the Jews, and that becoming a Christian meant renouncing Judaism, but now I can say that I am truly a completed Jew by belief in the shed blood of Jesus the Messiah, and I can daily experience a relationship with God and be transformed and used in God's service by the work of the Holy Spirit. Praise the Lord!"

Now some will question an experience such as Michael Natt and others testify to receiving, referred to as the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and we feel led to comment on this today.

Especially since the 144,000 remnant of Israel are said to be "sealed" Jews, are we impressed with the interest of Jewish converts in receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For it is the Holy Spirit who seals us.

We must confess there was a time we would have become aggravated over the suggestion that not all believers have this sealing of the Holy Spirit. Attending Bible School, we were told that the moment you placed simple faith in Christ you were immediately sealed unto the day of redemption. We have since found that this strong security position does not stand even the test of Scripture. For Paul relates concerning the Ephesians that it was "AFTER that ye believed ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." Eph. 1:13. So, the baptism of the Holy Spirit follows conversion. And it is this baptism that is so sadly needed by believers today.

Moody and Torrey both taught that after you were saved you could experience a baptism of the Holy Spirit and you could know you had it. Torrey's book on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a clear presentation of the carnal state of most believers today who hunger for spiritual power but do not know how to receive this baptism. Torrey says of those who take exception to such terms as "receiving," "baptism" or "filling" of the Spirit--"Why will they split hairs? Why don't they see that this is just the one thing that they themselves need?" Torrey proceeds to explain: "In regeneration there is an impartation of life, and the one who receives it is saved. In the baptism with the Holy Spirit there is an impartation of power, and the one who receives it is fitted for service."

Indeed, how sad that this truth is not taught in many of our Bible Schools and seminaries today. Rather it is explained away, considered unnecessary, or even an experience attributed by some to Satan which borders on blasphemy and the unpardonable sin.

While Moody and Torrey never related the experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit to "speaking in tongues," as long as the Bible does show a parallel between Pentecost and what we are witnessing today, we cannot help but believe that God is moving by His Spirit in manifestations that we cannot question. And when young Jews are caught up in this experience, testifying to a new life in Christ and a baptism of power by the Holy Spirit evidenced in gifts of the Spirit mentioned in Scripture, are we to deny the genuineness of their conversion?

In defining the baptism of the Holy Spirit we would conclude that it is an anointing of power for witness and ministry. "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me," said Jesus, and JERUSALEM is the first place mentioned where this witness is to be made. So seeing Jews in Israel testifying to their faith in Christ as Messiah amidst persecution from their families, friends and even the officials of the country would indicate their experience must be real and that they are witnessing in the power of God's Spirit. Praise God.

If only we would recognize that this is our need and seek God until He meets us in a definite way, the Lord will be more real to us than we ever knew it was possible to know Him.

As Jonathan Goforth testified: "Nothing can clothe with victorious might but the baptism of the Holy Ghost and with fire; and no one can possess such a baptism without knowing it!"

Have you been baptized with the Holy Spirit? Will you be among those who have oil in their vessels with their lamps at the appearing of Jesus Christ?

May God search our hearts today, and if there is a longing for the fulness of the Spirit, don't be satisfied until that need is met.

As Spurgeon put it: "Let us not be satisfied with the sip that saves, but let us go on to the baptism which buries the flesh and raises us in the likeness of the risen Lord; even that baptism into the Holy Ghost and into fire which makes us spiritual and sets us all on flame with zeal for the glory of God."

Did you hear it?

Is this what you want? It's yours by faith and upon meeting the conditions of obedience. For we read, "The Holy Ghost is given unto them that obey Him." Acts 5:32.

Andrew Murray once declared: "Brother, what we need is to pray in the name of Christ, to ask that we may receive that our joy may be full for the baptism of this Holy Ghost."

Even as we relate this message, we would hope that across this nation and around the world there will be those hungering for this baptism of the Holy Spirit. The word 'spirit' in the Greek is the word for 'breath' so as you breathe in the fresh air, pray to God that He would give you the inbreathing of His Spirit.

As in the days of Cornelius, the first Gentile to be saved, we read that while Peter was speaking, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

So we would hope that today there would be such a holy desire to know the Lord more intimately, and a greater love for His Word, which comes from receiving of this fulness of God's Spirit.

Particularly, in view of the coming of the Lord do we need all of God's power available to the believer today. While it is true that pastors, teachers and missionaries need this power for witnessing, yet all of us should be witnesses, and therefore all stand in need of this power.

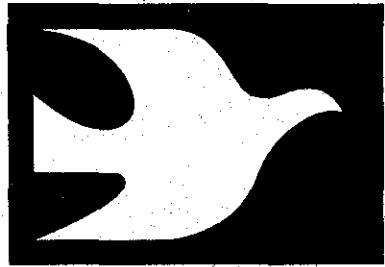
Paul, writing in I Cor. 1:7, implores believers, saying: "That ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

How plainly the Scriptures exhort us to accept all that God has for us today. So let us not close our minds and hearts to the truth, but in childlike faith receive of God's fulness that we might be more adequately prepared for the coming of our blessed Lord.

If you have never done so, today receive Christ as Saviour and Lord and you can know of God's Spirit anointing your life and keeping you ready for His coming.

For remember our Lord hath said, "Be ye ready also for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh!"

THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE!



What does it mean to be "Spirit-filled?"

Regardless of denomination, Christians across the country are hungering to know God more fully!" So declares a leading religious publication.

Today many are asking, What is the formulae for knowing God? How may I better understand Him?

The Word of God replies: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor. 2:14.

Today there are outstanding theologians who know about God. There are many Bible expositors who have been educated in our colleges and seminaries with all kinds of degrees. They can expound doctrine and theological concepts by teachings that they themselves have learned from books, but still many of these men do not know God. These students of the Word may be right in their theology but wrong in their practice. They may be giants who would die in defense of the truth but whose ministries are powerless. They believe in miracles but relegate them to the past. They deny that God is moving by His Spirit today.

How may I be filled with the Spirit? In Ephesians 5:18 we are commanded: "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

First of all, in order to be filled with the Spirit we must have a desire to be filled. We read: "Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6) (Luke 6:25)

Did you ever sit down to a chicken dinner or a steak dinner with peas, corn, greens, pie and ice cream? How do you suppose you would be filled with these? The first thing, of course, is to hunger and thirst. Suppose you had just come down with the flu and you didn't have an appetite. Could you hunger and thirst? Many today have a spiritual malady that prevents them from hungering and thirsting for God. They've been bitten by the flu bug of worldliness, pleasure-madness, cares of this life, and they have no spiritual appetite.

In the second place we are to tarry until we are filled. Jesus told His disciples, "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." (Luke 24:49) (See Acts 2:1-4)

Now, I know there are those who would emphasize that you need not tarry to be filled with the Holy Spirit." But that's like getting up from the table before you're full. I like to go away satisfied. And the Lord made to us a promise--in fact, He commanded us: "Be ye constantly filled with the Spirit (Greek)."

Have you ever seen a drunk man? How did he get that way? By simply sticking his tongue in a glass of wine? By taking a teaspoonful before going to bed? In Prov. 23:29-30 there are the evidences of those who show signs of drunkenness and the question is asked: "How did they get that way?" The reply comes back: "They that tarry long at the wine!"

I have passed some churches late at night and they're still going strong--they're tarrying at the wine. When the taverns and the churches both close at the same time, we'll see similar results.

The third suggestion is to be filled with the Word. The Scriptures say, "Be filled with the Spirit," but notice John 6:63 where Jesus says--"The words that I speak unto you they are SPIRIT." A lot of people pump up their emotions and go away with nothing. If we are to be filled with the Spirit, we must have the Word of God to dwell in us richly.

Suppose I sat down to your table to eat, but I just breathed hard, enjoying the aroma of that table. I would go away starved, wouldn't I? So it is that a person needs solid food. The WORD is meat and it is milk to all who would be filled.

Fourthly, we are told to pray. D.L. Moody was one of this world's greatest evangelists. He emphasized the in-filling of the Spirit. So did Dr. Torrey. One time these men were on their way to speak on this theme when a brother stopped them to say--"Tell the people not to pray for the Holy Ghost." Replied Torrey, "I am going to tell them just that! The Bible says: "ASK and ye shall receive," speaking of the Holy Spirit.

Fifthly, we need to follow the pattern of Pentecost if we are to be filled with the Spirit.

At Pentecost they were all "with one accord in one place." Before you can be filled with God's Spirit, you must be right with God and right with one another." Any doubtful hindrances must be removed. Any preconceived ideas must be done away. Any prejudices must be destroyed.

Sixthly, we must turn from all immorality. (Prov. 1:23) To desire the Holy Spirit is to also desire "holiness." The Bible says: "God hath not called us unto uncleanness but to holiness." Although it is the Holy Spirit who perfects holiness within us, even as it is Christ who bestows unto us righteousness, it is absolutely certain that we cannot have the fulness of the Spirit if we are given over to impure thoughts, immoral acts and deeds. We must part with all that is unclean, for God does not cast His pearls before swine.

The seventh requirement is obedience. Many receive the Holy Spirit in the act of baptism. Others have received while observing the Lord's Supper. Some, like myself, have received of the Spirit after anointing according to James 5.

It is to be recognized that in the lowly acts of obedience there God's Spirit dwells. Acts 5:32 tells us that the Holy Ghost is given to those that obey Him.

Eighth, believe God for this blessing. (Mark 11:24) The Scriptures would remind us that we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (Gal. 3:14) If we have obeyed God's conditions, we can simply believe and we will receive. The evidence is a minor consideration to the all-important act of believing.

As you received Christ and believed, He came into your heart when you asked Him, so receive the Holy Spirit and believe that He comes to dwell in your heart. The only reason He would not hear you is that your heart is not ready to receive. Otherwise, He will come in to dwell and sooner or later there will be a witness of the Spirit and you will know you have received. The very evidences in your life will betray the fact.

In the ninth place, begin thanking and praising God. Again notice our text and continue reading: "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 for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Murmuring, complaining, fault-finding, bitterness, jealousy--are all contrary to the working of the Holy Spirit. So away with them. Do not doubt God. Simply believe and praise Him. The more you show affection to the one you love, the more love is reciprocated. So God pours out of His Spirit to those in love with Him.

Finally, keep walking with God. Gal. 5:16, "This I say then, WALK IN THE SPIRIT, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." There is no experience that replaces a daily walk with God.

Begin witnessing for God. "Ye shall be witnesses after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." You can receive of the blessed Holy Spirit but have your usefulness wasted by not testifying and sharing the Gospel with others. Make it a point to begin witnessing. The Holy Spirit is likened to a well of water springing up, or to rivers of water wanting to overflow their banks. Don't allow the spring to run dry! Don't dam up the river! Let God have your life to live through you for His glory. AMEN.

BEHOLD, HE COMETH!

Witnessing Jews turning to Jesus and later receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as many testify to receiving, makes us wonder if this is not in itself another great sign of the near return of our Lord.

For those who reject any teaching of the baptism of the Holy Spirit along with the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit it would seem they are not much different from the modernists. The modernist rejects the deity of Christ, while these folk reject the workings of the Holy Spirit that are plainly taught in the Scriptures. And while they may profess that these manifestations were solely for the apostolic church, this simply limits the Holy Spirit to a past generation and does injustice to the teaching that God would again pour out of His Spirit in the last days. Therefore, if these are the last days as we believe they are, then we should expect similar manifestations as experienced in the days of the apostles, and not close our minds to the truth of God's Word as concerns spiritual gifts.

As the late Dr. A. W. Tozer noted: "For a generation certain evangelical teachers have told us that the gifts of the Spirit ceased at the death of the apostles or at the completion of the New Testament. This, of course, is a doctrine without a syllable of Biblical authority back of it. Its advocates must accept full responsibility for manipulating the Word of God."

Norman Grubb says concerning the moving of the Holy Spirit that we are witnessing today, "The exercise of the supernatural gifts has come to the fore in the last half-century and has spread worldwide through the church of Christ."

And Dr. William R. Newell once wrote: "We fully believe these gifts belong to the church throughout the dispensations-- (a) because of Scripture; (b) because of the history and teaching of these things; (c) personal experience and observation.



MISTAKEN IDEAS

CONCERNING THE MANIFESTATION

AND MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Dr. Edward Atkinson, a physician, relates that when he was a student in medical school, a far-out line of thinking was that some of our afflictions might be caused by the mysterious dark workings of the psyche. Today, he notes, the American Medical Association has officially gone past psychosomatic medicine to recognize that there is a relationship between our spiritual life and our health. And tomorrow? Well, who knows whether doctors will find it natural to consider certain malfunctions to be caused by the invasion of hostile forces from Satan's world; demons and evil spirits?

In an article written up in *GUIDEPOSTS* (Aug. 1972), Dr. Atkinson not only relates encounters with those afflicted with tormenting mental and physical problems that might be diagnosed as "demonic" but illustrates how many have responded immediately to the power of Jesus' name when these spirits have been cast out. People who have experienced uncontrollable evil urges, or have been bothered by spirits of fear, torment, resentment, lust.... have been delivered by taking authority over these spirits in the Name of Jesus.

Notes Dr. Atkinson concerning his study of Christ in the Gospels--"I was surprised to find that a third of Jesus' healing ministry dealt with evil spirits." And he adds: "His very first assignment to His disciples was to cast out demons." Then he asks: "Why was this work unheard of today?"

And, it's true! It would appear that the Church has failed in carrying out this responsibility entrusted to it.

For instance, in Matthew we read where our Lord went about all the cities and villages, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. And he used this opportunity to declare to His disciples: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

And then, immediately afterward, we see our Lord commissioning twelve of His disciples, giving them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

And we might ask, too, why is it when missionaries use this text, "The harvest is plenteous and the labourers are few" they do not tie it in with the context. For verses before and after, link this text to a deliverance ministry.

Reminds me of reading of a church in New York City where on the cornerstone of this old building were the words from Matthew 10:8, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Someone reading this verse on the cornerstone, inquired of the pastor, "Do you?" "Do we what?" he asked.

"Do you heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils? For if you don't, you shouldn't advertise!"

Well, in today's commentary we want to discuss at least three mistakes made concerning the ministry and manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. This is part of our series of messages on the Holy Spirit.

First, there is the mistake that the Holy Spirit is given simply to release within us some emotional ecstasy. Now it certainly can be understood that when we are released from doubts and fears and controlling lusts in our lives that the result is peace. How well I remember a young woman who was converted in one of our meetings who returned the next night to relate how before she was saved, she would toss in her bed throughout the night. You would have thought a tiger slept in that bed, she noted. But the night she was saved, she slept with hardly a move, awakening in the same position.

So there is joyous ecstasy which results from the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Incidentally, Jesus inferred that it was by the Spirit of God that demons were cast out of people, and that this was actually the coming of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 12:28); for when questioned concerning His ministry, He replies: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you."

Is some ecstatic, emotional experience the evidence of having the Holy Spirit?

We might refer to John the Baptist who is an example of one filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. (Luke 1:15) Yet, we never picture John as a leader of the Charismatic movement but as a stern, sober, yet fiery denouncer of sin, demanding repentance, downing the religionists as hypocrites, and damning the wicked unless they turned from their evil practices. "O generation of vipers," he shouted, "who hath warned you to flee the wrath to come."

The second mistake some make is in believing that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is for the purpose of performing miracles, signs and wonders. While it is true that in every great revival there is this moving of the Spirit in the performance of miracles, it is also true that miracles are wrought in response to faith. "Only believe," said Jesus, "all things are possible to them that believe."

Even before Pentecost there was the healing of the sick, cleansing of lepers, casting out of devils, and raising of the dead.

What difference did Pentecost make, then, in the lives of the Apostles? It was simply this--that the power of the Holy Spirit came upon them with such force that they were moved by God Himself to work miracles which were for the purpose of making Christ's presence among the people just as real as when He Himself walked the earth.

As we come to the close of this age, we are already seeing an increase in signs, wonders and miracles in various parts of the world. Does this mean that those performing these mighty works are all filled with the Holy Spirit?

Not necessarily. As we said, miracles are wrought in answer to faith which the Lord never condemned. Rather, he always encouraged faith. And we're told, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." Yet, faith to perform miracles may not necessarily be "saving faith." Here is where many are confused and some are deceived into believing that all that appears to be miraculous is of God. The greatest deceiver of all--the one we call the Antichrist--will perform such miracles that will almost deceive even the elect on earth at that time.

So while the power of the Holy Spirit is evidenced in signs, wonders and miracles, we must not equate such external evidences as being totally representative of the moving of God's Spirit. It may be, and again, it may be Satanic deception. Moses at God's command threw down his rod and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh's magicians threw down their rods and they, too, became serpents. What was the difference, you ask? Well, outwardly there was no difference except that Moses' rod swallowed up all the magicians' rods, proving that God is greater than Satan, but proving also the ability of Satan to counterfeit the work of God.

Now there are those who would be tempted to write off the Charismatic movement as the work of Satan. This is a rather dangerous position and we would point out that it is better not to express an opinion than to express a view bordering on committing the unpardonable sin which is the sin of attributing the works of God to the devil.

Hear me. We would repeat it is better not to judge what we are witnessing today, and label all miracle-manifestations including the so-called Pentecostal movement as being of Satan.

While admitting that there is much wildfire in some religious circles, there is underneath it all the genuine moving of God's Spirit in uniting as one those believers who have placed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are convinced that where we may be seeing counterfeit evidence of this moving of God's Spirit, there is also the sincere, genuine presence of the Lord in the midst of His people. For we believe these are the days prophesied by Joel wherein he declared God would pour out of His Spirit upon all flesh!

You may recall when our Lord was casting out devils, there was also one found doing the same, so that the disciples forbade him. But our Lord replied: "Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." (Mark 9:39)

So the Scriptural position is to say nothing about those who profess to minister in Christ's name, rather than to betray our ignorance by condemning what might be a true work of God and we be found sinning against the Holy Spirit.

However, we are reminded of the words of Jesus who warned: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then," says Jesus, "will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:22-23)

Think of it. Here are those working miracles in Christ's name but He does not know them, for they never have repented of their sin.

So here is proof that as we come closer to our Lord's return we will see an increase in the miraculous. "MANY" said Jesus, would profess to be preachers and miracle-workers, but they are not real. They are counterfeit. They do not deal with the cause of sin which is responsible for much of our ills today.

God is not only interested in healing us, He wants to deal with the sin problem that may be the basis of our sicknesses, or cast out those spirits of fear and oppression that may be molesting us.

Our pains may be fiery darts from the devil and immediately we suspect that we are victims of some horrible disease such as cancer. Or chest pains may cause us to fear a heart attack. While these symptoms may be true, I believe it is likewise true that our bodies are meant to be temples of the Holy Spirit and we have a right in the name of Jesus to rebuke Satan who is forced to cease his oppressions as we command him in Jesus' name. Luke, a physician, related that when Jesus was on earth He went about healing all that were oppressed of the devil.

Did you hear it?

Our Lord never prescribed the use of medicine in His healings, although Paul did admonish Timothy to use a little wine for his stomach's sake and his many infirmities. Our Lord's method of healing was to expose sickness and disease as the work of Satan and to defeat him by casting out evil spirits and by healing the sick.

While we believe there are beneficial remedies, and that doctors are useful and necessary, we do not fail to point out that as believers we have the right to rebuke Satan in the name of Jesus. And if we are not given over to the practice of sin and careless living that brings on much of our sickness, we should find our oppressions will cease when Satan is rebuked, for he is subject to the name of Jesus.

But make no mistake about it. If given to sin we are inviting troubles and afflictions. For instance, if smoking, we are inviting cancer. So, rebuking the devil is not enough. We must cease doing that which may be destroying our bodies which are meant to be the temples of the Holy Spirit.

Are you born again? John writes: "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." (1 John 5:18)

This verse tells us that if we belong to God, then the devil has no right to touch us. We will keep ourselves out of his control, and if he oppresses us, we have the right to demand he cease his oppressions. "Resist the devil", said James, "and he will flee from us." James 4:7.

We would like to suggest a third mistake made by some who suppose that "ecstatic speaking" or speaking in tongues is the sole evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

While we know the Bible teaches a relationship between speaking with tongues and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, we would point out simply that this is not the only Scriptural evidence mentioned which constitutes proof of our having received the Holy Spirit.

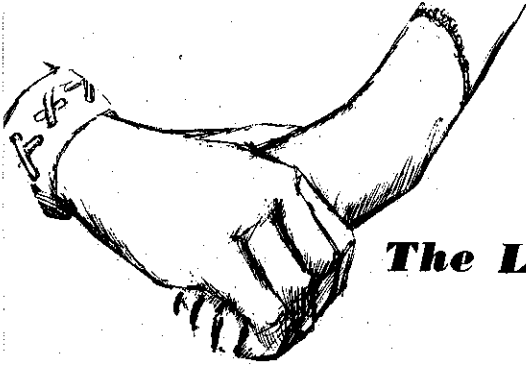
For instance, how many times do we read where it says, "They spake with tongues and prophesied."

So we see where "prophecy" or speaking under the anointing of God's Spirit is as much an evidence of the anointing of the Holy Spirit as is "speaking in tongues." And we might add that there are the fruits of the Spirit which might likewise evidence our being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The goal of many in seeking an experience with the Holy Spirit is to "speak in tongues." This seems to be an ultimate objective; whereas, we would quote 1 Cor. 14:5 where Paul declares: "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues." And Paul goes on to admonish: "Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy....He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church."

In conclusion we would be reminded of the parable of the ten virgins awaiting the coming bridegroom. Those that were ready represent those who had the oil of the Holy Spirit, while the foolish virgins speak of those who went on their merry way paying no attention to this message. God's command is that we be "filled with the Spirit." To refuse to obey this command is disobedience.

So we would declare: "Be filled with the Spirit"; and, be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."



The Laying On Of Hands

Body Energy Phenomena Are Studied

It seems the Russians claim to have discovered evidence of a strange mysterious force existing between a mother and her offspring.

Dr. William A. Tiller of Stanford relates a Russian study wherein newborn rabbits were taken under the sea in a submarine and killed one by one. The mother rabbit, left ashore, registered a characteristic response on a brain-wave recorder each time one of her offspring was killed.

Declares a LOS ANGELES TIMES reporter: "All over the world interest appears to be rising in phenomena that challenge credibility."

Among the strange and unusual phenomena being studied is that exhibited by those who lay hands upon the sick who then experience a cure. Several American doctors are studying what is believed to be an electrical force that can be transmitted from one person to another, with healing effect.

Of course, their explanation is that energy powers exist within the human body which can be transmitted from those possessing this healing ability something like the recharging of a dead battery.

Those who study their Bible know that this is nothing new. In fact, at least three Scriptures verify this concerning Jesus.

For instance, Luke 6:19 tells us: "And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all."

Did you hear it?

Now the word for "virtue" used here is the Greek word "dunamis" which means "power, energy, force."

Again you'll recall the woman who had a physical infirmity, who spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any. But as Jesus came along, she pressed her way in until she could at least touch the hem of His garment and she was made completely whole. Our Lord calls out: "Who touched me?"

The disciples, noting the crowd pressing in upon Him, replied: "Master, dost thou ask, Who touched me?"

Jesus replied: "Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me."

And then this little woman appeared and let it be known that she had touched Him and was made whole.

Jesus replies: "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

So the discovery that energy forces are present within the human body is nothing new. However, one must be tuned in to this source of power to have this power.

In Acts 1:8, our Lord testified to His disciples, saying: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The same word translated "power" here is the word for "virtue" that flowed from Jesus when He touched them, and they were made whole.

Now, it is evident that in New Testament times, following Pentecost, that the Holy Spirit was given as a result of laying on of hands. For you'll remember reading of Simon who, when he saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, offered them money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

But Peter replies: "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Acts 8:18-20.

Today we might ask--What about the laying on of hands? Is it Scriptural? Is it for today? Is it only a symbolism, or is the Holy Spirit given as a result of following this Scriptural order?

Of one thing we can be sure--God has a Scriptural order related in Hebrews, Chapter 6, and the laying on of hands is included as listed among the principles of the doctrine of Christ.

Incidentally, if you want to know what are the principles of the doctrine of Christ, they are given as follows: Repentance, Faith, Baptisms (plural), laying on of hands, Resurrection and Judgment.

Chrysostom, commenting on these six foundation principles of the Gospel, declares: "All these are fundamental articles; that is, that we ought to repent from dead works, to be baptized into the faith of Christ, and be made worthy of the gift of the Spirit, Who is given by imposition of hands, and we are to be taught the mysteries of the resurrection and eternal judgment."

Now the laying on of hands was primarily for the purpose of receiving the Holy Spirit.

For instance, in Acts, Chapter 8, we read: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

Again in Acts, Chapter 19, we read of Paul's coming to Ephesus, and saying: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" These were disciples of John who knew only of the baptism of repentance. So Paul preached unto them Jesus, and they were then baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Then when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

You might ask--Why dwell on this subject?

I'll tell you, my friends, there is every evidence to indicate that our Lord is returning soon. And if we understand the parable of the ten virgins correctly, only half of those who awaited their Lord's coming were prepared to meet Him. Those who were ready for Christ's coming were likened unto those virgins which had oil in their vessels with their lamps. The oil represents the Holy Spirit's presence and power, while the lamp speaks of a person's testimony.

The foolish virgins had lamps but took no oil with them. Lamps speak of profession. In other words, they called themselves Christians, but really gave no more evidence to indicate that they were truly Christians. They lacked the oil of the Holy Spirit.

Today we would urge you to search your heart, and then seek all that God has for you. If you have truly repented of sin to trust the Saviour, you can by faith receive of the Spirit's fulness in your life. To some, God has given the gift of laying on of hands that from them may flow forth the Spirit's power. But God is waiting to give of His fulness to all who are ready to receive.

God's promise is--If we hunger and thirst after righteousness we shall be filled. So desire all of God's fulness, then open your heart by faith to receive, and the reality of the Spirit of God shall be yours to fill your life and prepare you for the soon coming of our Blessed Lord.

For, remember He hath said, "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."