

Doctrine of the Holy Spirit His Person and Work

Part 2

The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

1. There is a teaching that the Christian should not be taught to “*set upon various works to the end that they may receive the baptism with the Spirit.*” Dispensational author C. I. Scofield was of this persuasion. “*They are directed to pray, to empty themselves, to cleanse themselves, to die to self and the world*” he says in his book Plain Papers on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit—as if these spiritual preparations were harmful to receiving the anointing of the Spirit or counterproductive in the desire to be filled.
2. No doubt one fear of directing Christians towards various works “*to the end*” of receiving the anointing of the Spirit is to avoid legalism. This is a legitimate concern and can lead to some excessive demands such as teaching husbands and wives to “die” to each other and suppressing natural affection or branding it as idolatry. There is the danger of encouraging Christians to engage in acts of asceticism in order to merit the merits of Christ or to be worthy of His gifts.
3. These fears can be alleviated by remembering the coming of the Holy Spirit in power and anointing is a gift of the resurrected Savior and is limited to those who want something more. It is possible for a Christian to be comfortable and go to heaven with the special anointing of God on their lives. Multitudes are not even aware there is a Holy Ghost. In Acts 19:1-2 we read “*it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.*”
4. A second concern of not wanting to direct Christians to pray, empty themselves, cleanse themselves and die to self in order to be filled with the Holy Ghost is creating a special class of the spiritual elite. Again, this concern has some merit for pride can puff up. The apostle John spoke against the “*pride of life*” (1 John 2:16). However, as A. W. Tozer pointed out, sometimes Christians would quietly come to him and say in essence, “*Well, it happened. I closed with the Lord and He closed with me. The Holy Ghost came down and filled my soul.*” Either that happens or it does not happen.

There are certainly enough people in church history that have been filled with a special anointing by God with the Holy Spirit. Listen to R. A. Torrey speak on Why God Used D. L. Moody.

“[One reason] why God used D. L. Moody was that he had a very definite endowment with power from on High, a very clear and definite baptism with the Holy Ghost. Moody knew he had “the baptism with the Holy Ghost”; he had no doubt about it. In his early days he was a great hustler; he had a tremendous desire to do something, but he had no real power. He worked very largely in the energy of the flesh.”

But there were two humble Free Methodist women who used to come over to his meetings in the Y.M.C.A. One was "Auntie Cook" and the other, Mrs. Snow. (I think her name was not Snow at that time.) These two women would come to Mr. Moody at the close of his meetings and say: "We are praying for you." Finally, Mr. Moody became somewhat nettled and said to them one night: "Why are you praying for me? Why don't you pray for the unsaved?" They replied: "We are praying that you may get the power." Mr. Moody did not know what that meant, but he got to thinking about it, and then went to these women and said: "I wish you would tell me what you mean"; and they told him about the definite baptism with the Holy Ghost. Then he asked that he might pray with them and not they merely pray for him.

Auntie Cook once told me of the intense fervor with which Mr. Moody prayed on that occasion. She told me in words that I scarcely dare repeat, though I have never forgotten them. And he not only prayed with them, but he also prayed alone.

Not long after, one day on his way to England, he was walking up Wall Street in New York; (Mr. Moody very seldom told this and I almost hesitate to tell it) and in the midst of the bustle and hurry of that city his prayer was answered; the power of God fell upon him as he walked up the street and he had to hurry off to the house of a friend and ask that he might have a room by himself, and in that room he stayed alone for hours; and the Holy Ghost came upon him, filling his soul with such joy that at last he had to ask God to withhold His hand, lest he die on the spot from very joy. He went out from that place with the power of the Holy Ghost upon him, and when he got to London (partly through the prayers of a bedridden saint in Mr. Lessey's church), the power of God wrought through him mightily in North London, and hundreds were added to the churches; and that was what led to his being invited over to the wonderful campaign that followed in later years."

If there is such a thing as an anointment from on high then I want that, and so do you.

5. A third reason for not wanting to direct Christians to pray, empty themselves, cleanse themselves and die to self in order to be filled with the Holy Ghost is a commitment to a theology point of view. The problem with theology is that sometimes it comes into direct conflict with the simplicity of the *Scriptures* and the experience of the heart.

Those who believe that all Christians should speak in tongues in order to be Spirit filled have no biblical basis for that belief. Those who embrace infant baptism cannot point to a plain teaching in the Bible in support of that position.

In like manner those who believe in the rapture cannot find any clear and simple verse to appeal to. In like manner the theology that teaches all Christians are filled with the Spirit at the moment of salvation and there is nothing more to long for or seek after do so because of a theological bias while ignoring such passages as Luke 24:49 and Acts 1: 5.

- *Luke 24:49 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.*
- *Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*

6. Some specific dispensational teachings about the Person and work of the Holy Spirit are too extreme to be ignored lest believers be discouraged from seeking to be filled with a special anointing.
- *Teaching.* The Old Testament saint had no way revealed of how to receive the Holy Spirit. The teaching is that the Holy Spirit did not indwell the Old Testament believers but merely came upon some for special reasons.

Response. Preliminary propositions.

Proposition one. Since the Fall of mankind, human beings have been saved by grace through faith, upon the basis of the shed blood of Christ.

Proposition two. The benefits of Christ's redemption can be applied before that redemption is accomplished.

Proposition three. Just because something is not clearly revealed does not mean it is non-existent.

Proposition four. The Holy Spirit is that Person of the Trinity who implements the purposes of God in every age.

With these propositions in mind the following arguments are set forth.

First, the *New Testament* states that the unregenerate man perceives the things of God as foolishness and does not receive them (1 Corinthians 2:14a); whereas the *Old Testament* believer is said

to delight in the Law of the Lord (Psalm 1:2) and to meditate in it day and night,

to hide God's Word in his heart (Psalm 119:11),

to love God's Law (Psalm 119:97),

to take God's testimonies as an heritage forever (Psalm 119:111),

to rejoice in God's Word (Psalm 119:162),

and to eat God's words (Jeremiah 15:16).

Second, the *New Testament* states that the unregenerate man's understanding is darkened and characterized by ignorance, and that he cannot know the things of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:14b); whereas the *Old Testament* believer is said

to have light and understanding through the entrance of God's words (Psalm 119:130),

to be enlightened and made wise by the testimony of the Lord (Psalm 19:7-8),

and to understand all things (Proverbs 28:5).

Third, the *New Testament* states that the unregenerate man is an enemy of God (Rom 5:10) and at enmity with God (Rom 8:7a); whereas the *Old Testament* believer is spoken of as

loving the Lord (Psalm 116:1),

blessing the Lord and praising Him (Psalm 34:1),

magnifying and exalting the Lord (Psalm 34:3).

And Abraham is called the friend of God (Isa 41:8; Jas 2:23).

Fourth, the *New Testament* states that the unregenerate man is not subject to the Law of God, and is not able to be (Rom 8:7); whereas the *Old Testament* believer is spoken of as

keeping God's Law, seeking His precepts, inclining his heart to perform God's statutes (Psalm 119:44-45),

loving God's commandments above gold (Psalm 119:127),

and esteeming His precepts to be right (Psalm 119:112-13).

Fifth, the *New Testament* states that the unregenerate man cannot please God (Rom 8:8); whereas the *Old Testament* believer is spoken of as

pleasing the Lord (Proverbs 16:7).

and though faith pleasing God (Hebrews 11:5-8,20-23,31-33).

Note. There are at least seven *Old Testament* references that could be cited as support for *Old Testament* indwelling, they are not conclusive.

Genesis 41:38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

Numbers 27:18 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him;

Isaiah 63:11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?

Ezekiel 11:19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:

Ezekiel 36:26-27 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Haggai 2:5 According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.

If the *Old Testament* believers were regenerated and if they lived the ethics of righteousness they could not have been born again or ethical apart from the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit.

- *Teaching.* Even a sincere believer had no assurance that the Spirit might not forsake him. Psalm 51:1 is often quoted as proof.

Psalms 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Response. Any professing believer acting in such a horrific manner as David did should look to the root of righteousness and be concerned whether or not they have been born again. A spiritual fear does not mean that the fear would be realized, but it is right to fear God. *Matthew 10:28 “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

7. The filling of the Holy Spirit is a distinct command in Ephesians 5:18.

Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.

8. The process of being filled with the Holy Spirit is not to grieve Him.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

The Holy Spirit is grieved through bitterness, wrath, anger, clamoring and evil speaking. Therefore the believer must “*Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you*” (NIV Ephesians. 4:31-32).

9. Other sins that grieve the work of the Holy Spirit are listed in Galatians.

Galatians 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

10. In addition to not grieving the Spirit, the Christian is to take care not to quench the Holy Spirit. The Spirit comes to the heart with fiery energy but it is possible to drown out this work of grace by resisting His activity in the soul. When we oppose His will, when we refuse to be useful in His service, when there is no liberty for the ministry of the various spiritual gifts, we quench Him.
11. In a positive manner three conditions must be met to be filled with the Spirit provided the Spirit is not grieved, quenched, lied to or blasphemed.
- First, there must be a yielded body.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

- Second, there must be faith that the risen and glorified Christ is able and willing to bestow the fullness of the Spirit so that believers may drink fully and freely of Him and have spiritual power for soul winning.

John 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Acts 1: 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

- Third, there must be prayer. “Father, I do believe thou hast received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost and thou has said, “*If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink; and so I long to drink. Thank you for giving me permission to drink. I am so thirst.*”

“Hover o’er me, Holy Spirit,
Bathe my trembling heart and brow;
Fill me with Thy hallowed presence,
Come, O come and fill me now.

Fill me now, fill me now,
Jesus, come and fill me now;
Fill me with Thy hallowed presence,
Come, O come, and fill me now.

Thou canst fill me, gracious Spirit,
Though I cannot tell Thee how;
But I need Thee, greatly need Thee,
Come, O come and fill me now.

I am weakness, full of weakness,
At Thy sacred feet I bow;
Blest, divine, eternal Spirit,
Fill with power and fill me now.

Cleanse and comfort, bless and save me,
Bathe, O bathe my heart and brow;
Thou art comforting and saving,
Thou art sweetly filling now.”

Elwood H. Stokes