

THE HOLY SPIRIT

by H.H. Snell

A collection of articles and writings by H.H. Snell from The Holy Spirit, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

8 Chapters

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The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit: No. 1

"Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?... thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts 5:3, 4.)

At a Bible-reading, some time ago, the question was asked, "Where is the Devil?" Someone immediately replied, "In hell;" and when another question was asked, "Where is the Holy Spirit?" the answer given was, "In heaven." Now it need scarcely be said that neither of these answers were correct. The fact is that persons, even Christians, are so accustomed to think and speak about spiritual things without considering what the real truth is as revealed by God in His word, that the most un-scriptural and extraordinary notions are widely circulated in Christendom which are not only wrong, but sometimes dead against the truth of God. As to Satan, he is not yet shut up, but he will be. Instead of being under confinement, he is "going to and fro in the earth;" he is not omnipresent, "but walking up and down in it." Peter says, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Yes, he is still "the accuser of our brethren," "which deceiveth the whole world," and "the wolf which catcheth.... and scattereth the sheep." And as to the Holy Spirit, though He be a divine Person and therefore everywhere present, yet nothing is more clearly revealed in scripture than that He came down and took up His abode in God's people on earth, on the day of Pentecost, to abide with us forever. And the more we search the scriptures on the subject, the more we shall be assured that the gift of the Holy Spirit consequent upon an accomplished redemption is the characteristic truth of Christianity.

Is it any wonder then that it should be so perverted and denied by our subtle adversary? Is it not most distressing to hear of some denying that He is God; of others praying that He may be sent down; others pleading for a greater measure of the Spirit, a fresh baptism, and a pentecostal blessing? All these points, and many more concerning the Godhead, personality, indwelling, and operations of the Holy Spirit we hope briefly to consider; but we are assured that most of the other errors arise from not knowing Him as a divine Person, co-equal with the Father and the Son.

In the text at the head of this paper He is distinctly and unmistakably called God, and a Person capable of being lied to. Hence He is sometimes called "the Spirit of God;" and the things of God knoweth no man but "the Spirit of God." He has then eternal attributes, for He is "the eternal Spirit." Before the earth and the heavens were formed, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the chaotic waters; and we are told that "by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens." (Job 26:13.) Who could be truthfully said to be "eternal" but "the high and holy one which inhabiteth eternity?

Is not eternal one of the attributes of Godhead? In truest harmony with His Godhead qualities, and coequal with, and acting together with the Father and the Son, He is called "the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father," and also "the Spirit of his Son." (John 15:26; Gal. 4:6.) Besides, the Spirit is so constantly called "Holy" which is a term emphatically applied to God. "I am holy."

Again, we read in Peter concerning the Old Testament scriptures that " holy men of God spake as they were moved "by the Holy Spirit" Paul also declared, " Well spake the Holy Spirit by Esaias the prophet," and yet we are told that it was " the Lord God of Israel" who " spake by the mouth of his holy prophets;" and Isaiah in this same scripture says it was the Lord (Adonahy, Lord in plurality of persons) who gave him the word to say. (2 Pet. 1; Acts 28:25; Luke 1:68; and Isa. 6:8, 9.) Is it possible to have clearer testimony to the Godhead of the Holy Spirit?

We read too of His omnipresence, " whither shall I go from thy Spirit; or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell (hades), behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:7-10.) His omnipresence is further shown by His dwelling in every child of God all over the earth, and giving to each, in every part of the globe, access unto the Father through the Son. " Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son unto your hearts, crying Abba Father." " For through him we both [believing Jews and Gentiles] have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Gal. 4:6; Eph. 2:18.)

His omniscience is also clearly set forth in scripture where we are told that " he searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10.) Who but a divine Person could search the deep things of God? Again, who would be competent to teach all things, unless he knew all things?

His omnipotence is constantly witnessed in raising sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, into spiritual life; as it will be by-and-by, when " he that raiseth up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8:2, 11.) Who but One who is Almighty could take of the things of Christ and show to every child of God, and help and minister the truth by every gifted servant of the Lord continually? Who but one of Godhead qualities could be said to abide with us forever to guide into all the truth, bring all things to our remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said? And of whom could it be said but of One acting in conjunction with the Father and the Son? " All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." (John 14; 16)

Sovereign actings are further characteristics of "the only wise God," who acts according to the good pleasure of His will. It was the Holy Spirit who said, " Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.... So they being sent forth by the Holy Spirit departed." Again, " They were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.... They assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not." And further in relation to certain spiritual gifts, they are distributed by the Spirit's sovereignty. To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit".... " But now hath God set the members everyone of them in the body as it hath pleased him." (See Acts 13:2, 3; 16:6, 7 Cor. 12:8-18.)

We trust that enough scripture testimony has been brought forward to show the Godhead of the Holy Spirit; so that we can easily understand why those who had connected themselves with God's assembly and had said what was false, were spoken of as having lied not to men but to God. Ere this the Holy Spirit had come down, and the assembly was the habitation of God through the Spirit.

H. H. S.

The Holy Spirit: No. 2

What an infinitely blessed work must Jesus have accomplished so that the Holy Spirit could come down from heaven, and act and dwell here, in a way He had never done before, as the other Comforter!

We are told that in order to His thus coming, Jesus must be first "glorified." Then those who believed on Him would receive the Holy Spirit; "for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." The coming of the Holy Spirit then is the witness of two things: first, of the eternal efficacy of the blood of His cross, and secondly, of the Son of man being glorified. As to the former, the Holy Spirit is a witness to us by the word of God saying "Their sins and iniquities I will remember no more;" and, concerning the latter, His presence here proves that He who is at the right hand of God received the promise of the Father, and shed it forth at the time appointed - Pentecost. It was then the Holy Spirit came. He was sent down from heaven. Christ having suffered for our sins, risen out of death and gone into heaven as Man, the Holy Spirit could come down and indwell those who had been washed from their sins in the Savior's blood. (John 7:39; Acts 2:33.)

Prior to this there were true believers who had been born again, had their sins forgiven, were children of God, to whom Jesus could say, " My Father and your Father, My God and your God," and they also had risen life breathed into them by the risen Savior; but they were not sealed, not anointed, not in liberty, and not members of the body of Christ. The contrast is strikingly seen between the state of these saints in the first of Acts, and their state a few days after in the second of Acts. What an amazing change the gift of the Holy Spirit produced! And when you consider who the Holy Spirit is, is it surprising that it should be so?

It is not only that the Son of God has come, but that the Holy Spirit has come. But when the Son came, He took flesh, and was found here in fashion as a man. Not so, however, the Holy Spirit. He did not take flesh; He is not seen and known as Jesus was, and this is why the unconverted know nothing of Him - " Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:17.) But the importance of the Holy Spirit being here, and given of God to all them that obey Him, can scarcely be over-estimated. This is why, after the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, you do not find in scripture such an idea as the Lords people praying for the Spirit. Such a thought as " Come Holy Spirit, Heavenly dove," has no place there; because He has come. Before He came it was right enough to pray for the Spirit, for our Lord had said, " how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ■■ (Luke 11:13); and He commanded His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they were " endued with power from on high;" they were to wait for the promise of the Father. That the Spirit when He came taught them to cry " Come, Lord Jesus," in the consciousness of having redemption in Christ and through His blood, and the earnest of the Spirit, is quite true; but for such to be praying for the Spirit, after He had come, would surely be subversive of the foundation principles of Christianity. Hence the uncertainty and confusion of

mind of many believers in our days.

But what was the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost? Was it the coming of a divine Person, or of an emanation from God, or of a measure of the Spirit, or of an influence, or what? Scripture, as we have seen, speaks of Him as a Person, having personal qualities and personal actings. Some of His sovereign actings we have already noticed. But though the Holy Spirit be a divine Person, yet He is not the Son, for the Son took flesh and died for us, and the Holy Spirit did neither. Nor is He the Father, for He was "the promise of the Father," and was sent by the Father, as Jesus said, "whom the Father will send in my name." And yet He is a Person.

The personal qualities and actings of the Holy Spirit are largely set forth in scripture. He is described as speaking, leading, guiding, teaching, bearing witness, showing, searching, interceding, appointing to office, abiding with us forever, and yet, as we have seen, this holy Person is divine. Hence, too, there is that on earth, which is God's habitation through the Spirit - "the house of God."

The gift of the Holy Spirit, then, is not merely an influence, though He does influence, not an emanation from God, though He was sent by the Father and the Son; for Jesus said, "whom the Father will send," and "whom I will send;" but He is a Person who carries out His will, "dividing to every man severally as he will," and though not the Father, nor the Son, yet One in the mysteriously divine essence of One God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It was He who spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began. It was He who "moved upon the face of the waters" before it was said; "Let there be light, and there was light." It was the same Spirit which strove with men before the flood. It was the same Spirit of God who filled and qualified Bezaleel with wisdom and understanding to make those things for the tabernacle which were types and shadows of Jesus. It was the same Spirit by which the holy scriptures were given by inspiration of God, so that the writers could say, "Thus saith the Lord/" "The word of the Lord came," "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue;" for holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. It was the same Holy Spirit who came upon Mary when it pleased God to send His Son into the world born of a woman. It was the same Spirit who spake of Christ by Mary, Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simeon, and Anna. It was the same Spirit which John saw descending like a dove and remaining on the sacred, spotless Person of Jesus when He was baptized. It is of Him, too, it is said, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." It was by the same eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God; and when He was raised from among the dead, we are told that He was "quickened by the Spirit." Again, we are told, that after His resurrection and going in and out among His disciples, it was through the Holy Spirit He gave commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen: and bade them wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, for they should be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. And when He, as Man, was glorified at the right hand of God, He received the Holy Spirit and gave to His waiting saints on earth. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33.) Then the Holy Spirit came, He was "sent down from heaven;" and, blessed be God, here He is still, and will abide with us forever.

It was not a measure of the Spirit, but the Person of the Holy Spirit. We read that " He giveth not the Spirit by measure." (John 3:34.) The idea is entirely subversive of the great truth of God the Holy Spirit being in us and with us. A moment's consideration of the thoughtful Christian is sufficient to make this clear. Then was the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for we read " By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." (1 Cor. 12:13.) It was the formation of " one body " on earth, of which Christ is the Head in heaven. Wondrous work! Who but a divine Person could be sufficient to unite all believers on earth to Christ the Head in heaven, and to one another in " one body "? It was done by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Precious mystery of divine grace, and power, and wisdom! If, then, it be so, that the Holy Spirit Himself is here, and in us, and we have seen that He giveth not the Spirit by measure, how could we ask for a further measure of the Spirit? Impossible that an intelligent God-fearing soul could do so! And if the scripture teaching of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the formation on earth of all believers into one body, how could we ask for a fresh baptism of the Spirit? Could the " one body" be formed by " one Spirit" over and over again? Far be the thought! Could we, then, we ask with all solemnity, be approaching God with reverence and godly fear to express such a desire? This was the Pentecostal blessing, and when the body was formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we know what wonderful power accompanied the gospel testimony, so that thousands were converted in one day.

Yes, the Holy Spirit is here on earth, and, blessed be God, those who have believed on the Son of God and received remission of sins, are indwelt by Him. We are sealed, anointed, have an unction of the Holy One, and the earnest of our inheritance, and all this until when? Let us not fail to mark " until the redemption of the purchased possession" - "until the day of redemption," when we shall bodily enter into heavenly glory. Yes, to abide with us forever, as Jesus said, " I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you." (John 14:16, 17.)

We must be careful not to confound the work of the Spirit in us when we were brought as sinners to a Savior - born anew - and received eternal life, with the gift of the Holy Spirit, the other Comforter to take up His abode in us. They are two distinct lines of scripture teaching. That a man must be born again to " see " or " enter into the kingdom of God," was clearly laid down by our Lord Himself. But when such have been born again, and have remission of sins, then the Holy Spirit is sent into our hearts. In Ephesians it is, " After that ye believed ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise;" and in Galatians it is said, " Because ye are sons [sons first] God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba Father." Thus we see the Spirit is given to believers, to children of God, not to sinners in their sins, but to those who have remission of sins - " to them that obey him."

The promise of the gift of the Spirit formed a prominent point in the preaching of the apostles. On the day of Pentecost, Peter's reply to those Jews who were awakened with a deep sense of their guilt was, " Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts h. 38.1 Again, at Caesarea? when Peter addressed quickened Gentiles who were told by an angel that they would hear words of Peter whereby they would be saved, we can understand that the moment God's way of peace was proclaimed they would receive it. And so it was. Looking with intense interest at the apostle for the

very words which would give them salvation, the moment he spoke of remission of sins the Holy Spirit was given to them, and they all spake with tongues, so that Peter's preaching was stopped. But it is important to see that in both these instances the gift of the Holy Spirit was connected with remission of sins; and Christ at the right hand of God, who had been crucified, was presented to the hearers as the Object of faith.

As has often been remarked, the twofold testimony of the Baptist was that Jesus was " the Lamb of God" and the One which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit." This John knew Him to be by the Spirit descending and remaining on him." The Son was thus declared to be so spotless and pure that the Father could seal Him as man; the Holy Spirit could remain on Him and anoint Him in virtue of His own intrinsic excellencies. Not so us. Before the Spirit could seal and anoint us, we needed to be washed from our sins in the blood of Christ. Now dwelling in us, He makes us know that we are children of God, that we are in Christ and Christ in us, and the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

H. H. S.

The Holy Spirit: No. 3

We have already briefly glanced at the Godhead, personality, indwelling, and some of the operations of the Holy Spirit. We shall now, as the Lord may enable us, look further into the scripture teaching of the dwelling of this divine Person in the believer, and also in the church on earth.

1. The Holy Spirit in the Believer, as we have seen, follows remission of sins; for though He may, and does, work in sinners to bring them to Jesus, for cleansing by His precious blood, yet, when one is born again, has received remission of sins, he is "clean every whit;" so that, because the vessel is cleansed in God's sight, the Holy Spirit can come, and be in us forever. Thus the believer is "sealed," marked by God as His; and has the "earnest" of the inheritance, the pledge of certainly having that eternal glory to which he is called. The Holy Spirit is therefore given to him until he is actually and bodily brought to God - "the day of redemption of the purchased possession." All of His grace, and therefore all will "be to the praise of his glory." (Eph. 1:13, 14.) By the same Spirit, too, he is "anointed," set apart and qualified for the service of God; and, as in the type of the consecration of the priests, the anointing with oil followed the sprinkling of the blood, so (as we have noticed before), in Acts 10, the gift of the Holy Spirit immediately followed remission of sins, and we know that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." It is then a point of all importance, that we should clearly understand that one aspect of the gift of the Holy Spirit is, that He is God's witness to the sin-cleansing virtues of the blood of Jesus. He is also God's gift to them that obey Him, God's seal to the eternal efficacy of the one offering which was once offered by His own Son, God's anointing for His service.

So clearly is His indwelling in the believer taught in scripture, that on one occasion the saints were asked, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God?" Had they realized this, they would not have used their bodies for unholy purposes. It is our persons that Christ redeemed; so that, though, as to our souls, "we have redemption" in Christ, and through His blood, we look for the Savior, who shall change our vile bodies; and we are told that our mortal bodies will yet be quickened by His Spirit which dwelleth in us. Not only is this truth eminently sanctifying, but also full of comfort, when thinking of our bodies of humiliation. The Holy Spirit, then, who, as to our souls, has already brought to us eternal life in Christ - "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" - has also taken up His abode in our bodies. Again, we find our hearts are spoken of as to where the Spirit has come to dwell in God's children. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. 4:6.) We might have thought, unless the word had been so very explicit, that the Spirit would have dwelt in the new nature. Not so; He forms the new nature, so that we are born again by the incorruptible seed, the word of God, and thus brought to the Son of God, who was crucified for sinners, that we might have eternal life in believing on Him, and thus be newly created in Christ Jesus; but, this being so, He comes and dwells in our "hearts," our "bodies," and strengthens the new nature, for the Holy Spirit is the power for all communion[^] service, and testimony. The apostle therefore prays that we may "be strengthened with might by his Spirit in "the inner man," and that we might be filled "with

all joy and peace in believing," and " abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit," (Eph. 3:16; Rom. 15:13.) How wonderful, then, is God's own testimony to the eternal efficacy of the one offering of the body of Christ, and how blessed the thought that this other Comforter is to abide with us forever!

Among His many blessed operations in us, we may notice that He is "the Spirit of adoption," so that we may have the feelings and activities within us of those who have been brought into the endearing relationship of children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. He thus bears witness with our spirit (or, new nature, if we may so speak) that we are the children of God; and He also cries within us, " Abba, Father." " Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." It is by the gift of the Spirit we know our relationship, and the blessed liberty of it, with the Father. " Beloved, now are we the children of God." We have not, then, received a servile spirit, giving us dread and a slavish fear, which hath torment; but the spirit of adoption which produces filial reverence and fear lest we grieve and dishonor Him; and a childlike confidence in Him who has, in such grace, brought us so near, so very near, to Himself in Christ, and through His precious blood. Neither have we received the spirit of the world, that we should be more successful worldlings, or be able to fight with their weapons, and excel in their doings. Far from it; it is God's Spirit, that we might have intelligence and power to act according to God - to be imitators of God as dear children. " Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."

Nor have we received the spirit of fear, to crush us under a sense of our own weakness and many infirmities, to cast us inward on our own barrenness and poverty, and thus fill us with fearful apprehensions and gloom. No, these things are not the fruit of the Spirit in us. Though He reproves sin, and at times may deal with us so as to bring us before God in humiliation and self-judgment, yet He points us to a triumphant Christ, a glorified Man, a coming Savior, Lord of all, as the One in whom all our resources are. Thus He draws out our hearts after Christ and His interests. He bids us to consider Him, lest we grow weary and faint, and to look off unto Him, lest we fail to run with patience the race that is set before us. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2 Tim. 1:7.) Is it not, then, clearly set forth that those who are taught and guided by the Holy Spirit will not have a servile state of heart, a spirit of bondage and dread? Neither will they be worldly-minded, nor will they be timid and fearful; but, while serving the Lord with all humility of mind, they will be of good courage, loving in their ways, obedient to the Fathers will, intelligent as to His mind, sound in doctrine, and will manifest a divine power with their service and testimony.

It is by the Holy Spirit having come, consequent upon the accomplished work of Jesus, that the deep things of God are now "revealed." Prophets had not the knowledge of these things, and they knew they had not; for we find one saying, "Bye hath not seen, neither ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him;" but an apostle could add the precious truth, " but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.....The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." So utterly dark is man naturally as to divine things, that nothing less than the revelation and power of the Spirit of God can enable him to receive them. " The natural man (educated, uneducated, moral or profane) 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." Nor are we competent to make the things of God known to others but by the Holy Spirit. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual," or communicating spiritual things by spiritual means. If, then, we can neither know, receive, nor communicate spiritual things but by the Holy Spirit, it is also equally clear that the Holy Spirit is given to us to fill us with such intelligence that "we might know the things which are freely given to us of God," be able to receive them, and give them out to others. (1 Cor. 2) Were these statements of scripture received into our hearts in simple faith, how entirely and habitually we should be cast upon the power and operations of the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit: No. 4

The Holy Spirit having taken up His abode in the believer, he is thus united to Christ, who is at the right hand of God. And what a wonderful thing for every child of God on earth now to know, that he is actually united to Christ in heaven, as a divinely-wrought fact! Present union with Christ! One spirit with the Lord, for we are told that "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." How amazing the grace of God, who beheld us in our vile and loathsome state as sinners of the Gentiles, and cleansed us, quickened us, and united us by His Holy Spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ! We have this marvelous union, not by faith, as is sometimes stated, though we are believers; nor even in life, though Christ is our life; but by the coming of the Holy Spirit into our hearts, in consequence of our being washed from our sins in the blood of Jesus. We surely do well to ponder carefully in God's presence this amazing truth; so true is it, that Jesus in the glory speaks of us as part of Himself - "Me" - and the Holy Spirit says that "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." It is the consciousness of the reality of this union that necessarily attracts us to the Lord, keeps us clinging to Him, to find our all in Him, and therefore detaches us from a thousand things which many esteem to be good, because they are unsuited to Him with whom we are forever joined by "one Spirit."

Has the Christian reader received this divine truth, that "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body"? - that you yourself are now so one with Christ, that if you are persecuted, lie could say to your persecutor, "Why persecutest thou me?" Have you, beloved reader, the consciousness in your own soul that because you have been washed from your sins in the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit has taken up His abode in your heart forever, and united you to Christ in heaven? It may be possible that you have never heard of this great truth before, or, even if you have known it, you may have little consciousness of its reality, because of your fleshly and worldly walk so grieving the Spirit; still, it is even then blessed to come before God in self-examination, self-judgment, and, it may be, self-loathing, and thus have soul-restoration; and, believing God's testimony, and walking in His presence, have the precious comfort, not only that "as Christ is, so are we in this world" (a most blessed truth), but that you are now on earth forever united to the Lord in heaven by His Spirit which He hath given us. That every Christian reader of these pages may have the certainty and unspeakable enjoyment of being one with the Lord Jesus, is our heart's desire and earnest prayer to the Father of mercies and God of all comfort! (1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 9:4.)

It is because we have the Spirit that we "know the things that are freely given to us of God" that we have to do with an ascended, glorified Savior, consciously stand in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and intelligently worship and give thanks. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." In this way the believer knows that he is not now in his sins, not in the flesh, not of the world, not under law, but justified from all things, has eternal life, is a child of God, has received the Holy Spirit, and is a member of the body of Christ, thus able to serve acceptably, and worship the Father in spirit and in truth. Thus the gift of the Holy Spirit to the believer is connected with knowledge, liberty, communion, enjoyment, worship, and power. The difference is strikingly seen in comparing the state of believers in the first chapter of the Acts with their state in the

second and fourth chapters.

Among other operations of the Holy Spirit, we may notice that He bears witness to the Son of God - " He shall testify of me." (John 15:26.) Thus the Holy Spirit brings before our souls the personal glory and perfections of the Son, His moral excellencies, His finished work on the cross, the various offices which He now sustains, and the ranges of glory yet to be revealed to His eternal praise and honor. He may direct our thoughts back to consider His eternal Sonship, and lead us to contemplate Him by whom the worlds were made. He may recall to our memories His God-glorifying work of redemption in the past, or direct the eye of our heart to Jesus at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honor, where we see Him for the present. Or, He may lead us to contemplate Him in the future, when He will come forth as the rightful Heir of all things to establish His kingdom in righteousness, wearing His many crowns. The Holy Spirit may testify of Him as the One in heaven, to whom angels, authorities, and powers are made subject; He may at one time lead our thoughts back to His perfections in this world as the rejected One, and then to Him as the reigning One, to whom every knee must bow. He may minister to us the marvelous relationship He holds as the Head of His body the church, the offices He sustains as our great High Priest, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, and our Advocate with the Father, and give us also to contemplate the time of blessing yet to come, when He shall be welcomed and honored on earth as King of Israel and Governor among the nations. At one time the Holy Spirit may give us to delight in Him as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; and at another to look forward to our reigning with Him, and to His executing the most solemn judgments on the living and on the dead. So that, whether the Holy Spirit occupy us with the past, present, or future, things heavenly or earthly, He is the Testifier of the Son, who is the central object of all God's counsels, grace, and glory! We may be certain, therefore, that no ministry can be characterized as of the Holy Spirit, if the Lord Jesus Christ be not the pre-eminent subject and object of its testimony. How blessed, then, it is to know this, and to experience in our souls this grand effect of the Spirit dwelling in us, that He testifies to us of the Son! In no other way can we account for that untold blessedness which we enjoy when our minds and hearts are taken up with Him, and when His perfectness, accomplished work, His offices and His fullness, are brought home to our hearts!

The Holy Spirit is also the Glorifier of the Son, as He said, "He shall glorify me." (John 16:14.) He presents Him as worthy of all praise. His excellencies make everything else seem poor. His worthiness will by-and-by call forth the praises of every creature in heaven, in earth, and under the earth. But even now, in this sin-blighted world, the Holy Spirit so reveals Him, that hearts are attuned to sing His praise. To many now on earth His name is above every name, and to their hearts He has the pre-eminence in all things, because the Holy Spirit has revealed to them something of His surpassing excellencies and worth. Yes, He is the Glorifier of the Son of God, the Spirit of truth, who guides into all the truth. He tells us of Him as God's only-begotten Son, as the Creator of the world, that Eternal Life which was with the Father, the Object of the worship of all the angels, the Light of men, the Savior of all that believe in His name, the One to whom all judgment is committed, at whose name every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. Thus is He ever to be adored and praised, for He is worthy.

The Holy Spirit does not speak from Himself, but " whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak.... He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine and shall show unto you." It is because

all that the Father hath the Son hath also, that the Holy Spirit reveals the most precious things of the Father and of the Son to us.

The Holy Spirit also reveals the truth to us as to coming events - " He will show you things to come." To shut out, therefore, from our minds the testimony of scripture as to prophetic events, would be to resist this blessed ministry of the Holy Spirit. And observe, that it is the Spirit who shows us the future. No power of the natural intellect, apart from divine teaching, is sufficient for this. One thing is certain - that the same Spirit which is given to us, and cries, Abba, Father, also says, Come, Lord Jesus. " The Spirit and the bride say, Come." It is, then, a most serious matter when souls, even if they do not oppose the doctrine of the Lord's coming as the believer's hope, yet, if they do not accept it as the divinely-given hope, they are clearly shown to be not in the mind of the Holy Spirit. (Rev. 22:17.)

We read, too, of " joy in the Holy Spirit;" for if He be here to testify of the Son, to glorify Him, and to show us things to come, He must surely be thus keeping our hearts near the never-failing springs of divine grace. We know that the Father Himself loves us - yea, that He loves us as He has loved His Son. Thus, being objects of divine favor, brought to Him in Christ, and through His precious blood, accepted in the Beloved, and His co-heirs, and all kept fresh in our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit, we know such a deep, calm joy, as makes us look for the coming of our Lord to introduce us into that fullness of joy which His presence only can give.

When we are enjoined to "be filled with the Spirit," it is clear that it is not having more of the Spirit given to us; for, as we have seen, God does not give the Spirit by measure, but He gives us the Holy Spirit Himself. We read, therefore, that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. As long as a Christian is encouraging fleshly and worldly lusts, he cannot be filled with the Spirit, for the Spirit is grieved; but when the believer is self-judged, and holds himself dead with Christ, instead of being occupied with self and worldly lusts, he becomes wholly occupied with Christ. Every faculty of his heart and mind is taken up with the Lord Jesus Christ; he is filled with the Spirit. The admonition of scripture, therefore, is, " Be not drunk with wane, wherein is excess" - fleshly lusts - " but be filled with the Spirit."

H. H. S.

The Holy Spirit: No. 5

We are familiar with the truth, that every believer on the Son of God has eternal life. It is a totally new life. By the actings of the word and Spirit on his heart and conscience, he has looked to the Son of man who was lifted up - the only-begotten Son whom God gave - and he has eternal life. He has life in the Spirit. It is not an improvement of the old nature, but a new nature; for "that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit;" but, because the believer is born of God, and therefore God's child, the Holy Spirit is sent into his heart to abide with him forever. Thus the believer is born of the Spirit first, and then indwelt by the Spirit; and it is important to distinguish between these two actings of the Holy Spirit.

It is because the child of God has the Spirit that he is enjoined to "walk in the Spirit," for then he will "not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." (John 3:5-16; Gal. 4:6; 5:16.) We have, then, another power in us and for us, which is entirely opposed to the flesh, and, walking in this power, fleshly lusts will not come out; but this scripture clearly shows that, though the believer is born again, he still has the flesh in him, and in its very nature it is opposed as much as ever to God.

Hence we read, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye should not do the things which ye desire." We have, then, as we have said, a new nature and a new power - the Holy Spirit - to walk in that path which is pleasing to God; when this is the case the Lord will occupy our hearts, we shall be seeking to act for His glory, we shall think of His interests, and the written word will instruct us. It is a path which is entirely beyond the wisdom of the natural man, because prompted and marked out by the Spirit of God. If one speaks of being 66 in the Spirit on the Lord's day," we understand that his thoughts and affections were flowing on in the current of the Spirit; and when we are enjoined to "walk in the Spirit," it calls upon us to hearken to the word of God, and obey it in all things, and at all costs. In this holy atmosphere fleshly lusts cannot intrude.

The child of God, then, is to give himself up to the leading of Another. It is characteristic of him that he does so; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.) A blind man is glad of someone who can see to take him by the hand, and lead him; for he is afraid to take a step, unless he is conscious that a competent person is guiding him. Another person, sensible of his thorough ignorance, looks out for someone to teach him, like the eunuch, to whom Philip said, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" He replied, a How can I, unless someone should guide me"? And so a Christian, who is sensible of his own helplessness and ignorance, looks for some One to lead and teach him, and for these things, among many others, the Holy Spirit has been given unto him. And one thing we may be sure of is, that He ministers Christ to our souls, and never leads us into a path of legality or fleshly confidence; for "if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under law." (Gal. 5:18.) It is both interesting and profitable to notice that it was to the Galatian believers, who had slipped away from the doctrines of grace, that an apostle was inspired to write so much about the actings of the Holy Spirit.

Here it may be well for the christian reader to pause, and ask the question, What do I know in my own soul about these things? Being conscious of the gift of the Holy Spirit, by whom the love of God has been shed abroad in my heart, do I know what it is to yield myself up to His leading and teaching, and to walk in that path which is according to His mind? We do well to see how much we have accepted of these marvelous teachings of scripture about the operations of the Spirit of God, and how far we have learned, by personal exercise in God's presence, their reality and power.

Few things can be more opposed to each other than "the fruit of the Spirit" and "the works of the flesh." The former are like the excellencies of Christ - love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance. A precious cluster of fruit. All were found perfect, and each in its season, in the Lord Jesus. Some of the works of the flesh are loathsome, others quiet in their activities, and even esteemed by some, such as emulations, and reveling, and such like. Others have a religious, or superstitious character, such as idolatry and witchcraft. Still, they are all so evil in God's sight, that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-23.)

"The comfort of the Holy Spirit" is most precious. The troubled and cast-down child of God has often known it in a very especial manner. The consciousness we have in passing through a scene where Jesus had "not where to lay his head," and was hated without a cause - a scene which yields nothing for our souls, and where everything is against us - of One pointing us to the glorified Son of man, bringing His sweet words, finished work, triumphant resurrection, and session at the right hand of God, to our souls, is very precious. To find, too, the same Spirit bringing home to our hearts, as we need, the various offices in which He is constantly occupied for us in heaven, as Shepherd, Overseer, Priest, Advocate, and Washer of our feet, is comforting indeed. And more than these things, He takes of the things of the Father and the Son, their intercourse about us, the Father giving us to the Son, and the Son so owning us as His as to lay down His life for us, and so keeping us, that we can never perish, and such like truths, are precious indeed.

"The communion of the Holy Spirit" is also most blessed, for not only does He give us to know our relationship with the Father and the Son, (wonderful to think of!) but He enables us to enjoy this precious fellowship.

We are more familiar with "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ," and with "the love of God," than with the precious reality of "the communion of the Holy Spirit." Why is this? Because we try to satisfy ourselves with as low a standard of Christianity as we can, provided evil do not break out in some open dishonor to the Lord. "The communion of the Holy Spirit" is a secret known only to the heart that enjoys it. Its effects, no doubt, are seen by others, but the sweet privilege itself is better tasted than described. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," saints of old were wont to say. They knew no other standard of Christianity than having thoughts, delights, and rest in common with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Marvelous blessedness! But how could the Holy Spirit who dwelleth in us give us a lower standard, or minister anything less in quality to those who are children of God? Impossible. In this way, we can, by the truth and Spirit, enter into the Father's counsels, ways, delight, and rest in His well-beloved Son, and in the Father's love and care of all His saints. We can also enter into the Son's love to the Father, and His love and care for every member of His body, and into the various offices which He sustains on our behalf. Surely we could not have anything higher, and the heart

may well ask, Will there ever be anything beyond this? Here, compassed with infirmity, our measure may be very small, but it is the same communion of the Holy Spirit which we shall throughout eternity enjoy. In our next we hope to consider what scripture teaches concerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the church. H. H. S.

The Holy Spirit: No. 6

The Dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

Whatever intercourse God was pleased to hold with Abraham and others, we never read of God dwelling among people till they had been under the shelter and blessing of the blood of the lamb. When the people of Israel had been redeemed out of Egypt, and the tabernacle was set up, with its altar and priesthood, then Jehovah said, " I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them." (Exod. 29:44-46.) Thus God took His place among His redeemed people.

Again we read, that when Solomon had built the temple, " the cloud filled the house of Jehovah; so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud, for the glory of Jehovah had filled the house of Jehovah. Then spake Solomon... I have surely built thee a house to dwell in, a settled place for thee to abide forever." (1 Kings 8:10-13.)

In the days of our Lord, He Himself was the temple. He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up... He spake of the temple of his body." (John 2:19, 21.) The Holy Spirit had come down in bodily shape as a dove, and abode upon Him, so that Jesus was then the temple of God.

But when Jesus was raised from the dead, He taught His disciples to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, by whom they would be baptized and receive power. Therefore, on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came down, as a rushing mighty wind, and filled the house where they were sitting, and filled ail the waiting believers. Then the believers were, and still are, God's dwelling place - His habitation. The appearance of cloven tongues like as of fire sitting upon each of them, plainly showed that the ministry of the word, with power, would be the special character of their testimony.

Two things, we find, then took place. The body was formed by all the believers being united to Christ and to one another, and thus became u members of his body," and u members one of another;" there was also then a vessel on earth set in responsibility to the Lord. Both the church, or assembly, looked at as the body of Christ, and the assembly looked at as in the place of corporate responsibility to the Lord - the house, were identical at first; but it soon became otherwise.

" The body " then is formed by the Holy Spirit, and composed only of true believers: " By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." It is the assembly in its true sense, that which Christ builds. We do not read in scripture of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the body, but dwelling in each individual child of God that forms the body, and energizing every activity of it, as well as dwelling in the church on earth.

But when sin came into the assembly, did the Holy Spirit leave it? Certainly not; instead of leaving it, He gave power to judge the evil and put it away. (Acts 5) And when men brought in, as at

Corinth, the greatest disorder, false people, and flagrant sins, both moral and doctrinal, did the Holy Spirit leave the assembly on earth? Certainly not. For in 1 Cor. 3 the Apostle says to these very people, when looking at the assembly on earth in the place of responsibility, " Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? " And then he solemnly adds, " If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." (Vers. 16, 17.) It is obvious that this responsible assembly on earth is a widely different aspect from "the assembly which is his body, the fullness of him which filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:23.)

We find then in scripture two aspects of the church: one as God's workmanship living members of Christ's body, always perfect before God, which no power of evil can sever or destroy; the other, the assembly in man's hands, into which he has brought wood, hay, and stubble, and much that denies. This is evidently the house, which is already being judged, for "judgment must first begin at the house of God; it is Christ's witness on earth, which has proved so unfaithful that He will spew it out of His mouth. There is an important and wide difference between "the body" and "the house" - " the habitation of God through the Spirit."

It is interesting to notice that while Peter speaks of " the house of God" as where judgment begins, he also speaks of the house in a good sense, as composed of living stones and built up " a spiritual house/■ a holy priesthood and a royal priesthood. Paul also, who is the only inspired writer on "the body," not only speaks of the temple in a bad sense, and capable of being defiled as we have seen, but he also uses the figure of a temple for the assembly in a good sense, as growing into an holy temple in the Lord. (1 Pet. 4:17; 2:5; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:21.) In this paper, however, we shall confine our remarks on the house as profession, or the assembly on earth in the aspect of what it is in man's hands; and "the body" as God's workmanship.

The house, as we have seen, good at first and identical with the body, is the habitation of God through the Spirit. It is not correct then to say that the Spirit is only with us when gathered together in the Lord's name, for He is always dwelling in the whole church; but it is quite true that the Lord, who loved us and gave Himself for us, is specially present when so gathered in His name. Neither is it scriptural to say that when thus gathered we wait on the Spirit; but it would be truer to say that we wait on the Lord who acts among us and in us by the Spirit. Of this we have examples in scripture. In the epistles to the seven churches in the Revelation, the Lord is the speaker, and the One who gave John authority to write to the different assemblies, and yet they were all enjoined to hearken to what the Spirit was saying to every one of the assemblies. Seven times it is said, " He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches' or assembles. Again, in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts, we find saints who were before the Lord, looking to Him, for we are told that they "ministered to the Lord and fasted/' and then and there " the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." May we not then, if waiting on the Lord, expect the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

Scripture speaks of each believer in the Lord Jesus Christ having the Holy Spirit, and a member of the body of Christ; but when we consider the indwelling of the Holy Spirit collectively, we have a sphere wider now than the " one body," for a state is contemplated where there are bad materials as well as good, such as wood, hay, and stubble, as well as gold, silver, and precious stones. It is that too which man is capable of defiling, and which is going to be judged - the house. We find these two aspects of the church constantly recognized in the epistles. 1. What it is in the Lord's

hands, what He has formed for His glory, called ' the church," or assembly, " which is His body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22.) Here there is no failure, and can be no separation, it is always intact before God, and by faith to us also. 2. What the church is in man's hands as God's laborers and workmen who have brought in bad materials, and much that is for the Lord's dishonor. This is what we understand by the house. Those who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit and thus united to Christ are in the "one body;" but those who are merely professors belong to the house. We are all in a the house," and are called, at the discovery of being associated with vessels to dishonor, not to leave the house (how can we till Christ comes?) but to purge ourselves from such vessels by separating from them.

It has been sometimes said, Can it be possible that the Holy Spirit dwells where there is evil? It is not an unreasonable question, and one which is easily answered. Going back to the time of God's dwelling among the people of Israel, did He leave them when evil came in? He might rebuke it, as He surely did, and execute discipline; but notwithstanding all this unbelief, their lustings, murmurings, and rebellions, the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day remained "with them throughout all the journey." We read, " Thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest, them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way wherein they should go. Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withholdest not Thy name from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness." (Exod. 40:38; Neh. 9:19-21.) Even after ten tribes had been given into their enemies' hands, and a handful of the two tribes who had been in captivity returned in Ezra's time, the word of the prophet Haggai to them was, " I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you, when ye came out of Egypt, so my Spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not." Again. Look at an individual believer; does the Spirit leave him who has, like the Galatians, got away from the ground of divine grace, and who is practically manifesting the works of the flesh? On the contrary, did not Paul appeal to their consciences by this very truth, saying, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ■■■ That the Spirit may be so grieved and quenched, that there may be little consciousness of His indwelling and power, no one doubts; but the clear teaching of scripture is that each believer is sealed with the holy Spirit of promise until he is brought home to glory. (See Eph. 1:14; 4:30.) Even when a believer sins, does the Holy Spirit leave him? Though we are enjoined not to sin, yet where is there an idea in scripture that the Holy Spirit leaves the believer because he sins? Are we not told that " If any man [child of God] sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"? And in connection with His gracious Advocacy, does not the Holy Spirit in the believer lead him to self-judgment, and confession of his sins? No doubt the Spirit of God is " holy," and cannot look on evil with any allowance, yet, as born of the Spirit, and cleansed and perfected forever by the one offering of the body of Christ, the child of God must ever be an object of His gracious ministry and care.

And if so with the individual believer, why should we expect Him to leave God's church on earth because of its evil associations and dishonor to the Lord? On the contrary, does He not rebuke the evil, enable the faithful soul to discern it, and to purge himself from vessels to dishonor by separating from them? All through the dark ages, His power was seen every now and then put forth. His habitation on earth is His habitation still. That the Holy Spirit remains among us is a most cheering and encouraging truth. Having been given consequent upon the accomplished work and

glorification of Jesus, He abides, and will do so until the members of the body are taken to glory at the coming of the Lord. Then that which remains behind will be judicially dealt with. H. H. S.

The Holy Spirit: No. 7

When believers are really gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, nothing is clearer to such than the presence and operations of the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, those who are conscious of the Lord's being in the midst and are occupied with Him, will prove the guidance and ministry of the Holy Spirit in various ways. It is truly a place of wonderful favor and blessing. And yet, if we quietly think the matter over, there can be but two kinds of activities on such occasions - man, and the Holy Spirit; so that all that is done at such meetings will be either in fleshly or spiritual energy. If the former, however attractive to the hearers, it will not profit, as our Savior said, "The flesh profiteth nothing." For all then that is God-glorifying and for real blessing to souls, we are cast entirely upon the Lord. Many, no doubt, will acknowledge the correctness of these principles; but we need grace, that grace which is always connected with thorough self-distrust, and looks to the Lord for every good thing, in order to know the power of the Holy Spirit.

To those who habitually in private life take the place of dependence on the Holy Spirit, it becomes simple enough to do so when gathered together in the Lord's name. If we cultivate the habit of reading the word when alone, in the consciousness of entire dependence on the Holy Spirit, to reveal and minister to us the deep things of God, if we are found, too, in our closets "praying in the Holy Spirit," we become so sensible of the blessedness of His help and guidance, that, when gathered together, His working and power are at once looked for. And it is a solemn question whether the chief reason why the forward actings of the flesh, or the more quiet movements of intellectualism, so show themselves at assembly meetings, instead of the holy activities of the Spirit, is not because He is not better known to souls, and more honored in private walk and ways.

However charitable we may be, it is impossible to accept everything that transpires at such meetings as being of the Holy Spirit. It ought to be so. It may be that sometimes in the same meeting there may be much that is of the Spirit, yet some things out of place, and so out of keeping with the line to which He is. then directing (not to speak of what may be manifestly unscriptural), as cannot commend itself to those who are spiritual. On the other hand, when we think that every child of God present is composed of that which is born of the flesh, as well as that which is born of the Spirit,, and that Satan, when we are unguarded, can act on the former, it is wonderful that God's care and goodness are so manifestly over us on such occasions. We believe that few things have dishonored the Lord, and brought the truth into disrepute, more than fleshly ways and utterances when gathered together in our Lord's name. We commend the subject for earnest prayer, and deep exercise of soul and self-judgment before the Lord to our beloved brethren in Christ. It may be that some who begun well have sunk down from the place of dependence and faith in the Lord to fleshly energy and unbelief; like the Galatian saints who begun in the Spirit, and sought to be made perfect in the flesh. While others who have received gifts from the ascended Lord have, through unwatchfulness, become drowsy and inactive, and thus left room for those who have not gift and but little power, to grieve and weary their hearers, if not to offend and scatter the saints. We trust that God's children everywhere will lay this matter to

heart; that, as every one of us has received grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, we may each so feel our responsibility to the Lord as to occupy the place in the body, and the measure which He has given for His glory, and godly edification. Surely the gifts have been given for building up the members of the body, and all that is done should be for profit to the hearers; and these points are never to be lost sight of. Even if a person could speak in the Spirit, he is not to do so, unless it would profit others; and the number who should speak at a meeting is limited to two or three. (1 Cor. 14)

We doubt not that a great deal of fleshly activity in the assembly, and of unbelief as to the operations of the Holy Spirit, is because His Godhead and personality have not been more distinctly held. When He is clearly known as indwelling the believer, and also having His abode in the church - the house - then His gracious working and power are constantly looked for. Such know that we cannot have a true heartfelt thought of Christ, not a glance of the eye of the heart to Him in the glory, not a grateful remembrance of His sufferings, death, and triumphs, but by the Holy Spirit. We have not a feeling of love to Him, not a lifting of our souls in worship to the Father, not a happy sense of being in His presence in virtue of the blood of Him who is now seated on His throne, not a desire for His coming - but by the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, it is not mere instruction, or reproof, that He ministers; it is not merely informing light, which the Holy Spirit gives, but " the light of life," thus drawing out our affections in adoring gratitude and praise. His ministry, too, will be always " meat in due season;" and " a word spoken in season how good is it! " So that we may expect when ministry is really in the energy of the Holy Spirit it will not only minister Christ to souls, and open up and enforce the divine authority of scripture, but it will commend itself to consciences as meeting the present need. We judge, therefore, that those who minister the word as guided by the Holy Spirit, will not merely give out what they know to be the truth, but what, after exercise before the Lord, they believe to be food for " the flock of God." It is one of the marks which our Lord has given of a " wise and faithful servant." The word abounds, too, with instruction as to the mind of the Spirit in the servants, such as " in honor preferring one another," " let each esteem other better than themselves, ' " submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Those, therefore, who have received gifts from the ascended Christ need a state of soul suited to His mind; then we are sure that lowliness, courteousness, and reverence will be manifested by them. We have sometimes thought that blessing has been hindered by a lack of these gracious ways. On the other hand, saints who hear need a moral fitness, a state of soul capable of receiving a divinely-given ministry; and when this is wanting, how can profit be expected? From all these considerations it is clear that though the Lord is in the midst of those gathered together to His name, and the Holy Spirit always in each believer, and in the house, we are set in the place of absolute dependence on the Lord, and as those who have died with Him and are alive in Him, are to honor the Holy Spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. It is surely a matter of all importance.

And further, it is well to perceive that the Holy Spirit by the scripture teaches that He has definiteness of purpose as to the object in gathering us together. Without referring to gospel preaching, and meetings for teaching, which obviously are not assembly meetings, we may observe that in chapter xi. of the first epistle to the Corinthians, the saints are looked at as gathered together for the definite purpose of eating the Lord's Supper. Full directions are found in scripture as to the Lord's mind about it. The one great object is to remember Him. " This do in

remembrance of me." In eating of the bread together and drinking of the cup, we show forth the Lord's death; and it is clearly His mind that we should be so occupied from time to time till He come again. " As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." If remembering the Lord and showing His death, then, do not characterize such a meeting of the saints, how can it be according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? Can He possibly act contrary to His own written directions?

Again. In the fifteenth chapter of Acts, the saints were gathered together before the Lord to judge a question of doctrine. They were manifestly led to it by the Holy Spirit thus to come together, with the apostles and elders, and consider the matter before the Lord; and we find this characterized the whole meeting. The simple object of that meeting was before them throughout. The subject was looked at in various ways, and different brethren expressed what they judged was the Lord's mind, but at the close they could say, " It seemeth good to the Holy Spirit and to us."

The same definiteness is observed in a meeting of an assembly for discipline. (1 Cor. 5:4, 5.)

If we look at meetings for prayer as recorded by the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles, we see what point and definiteness marked these meetings. In the fourth chapter the supplications were earnest, and presented to God with one accord. In the twelfth chapter they were gathered together praying. Prayer was the simple object of the meeting. We may be sure, therefore, there were not rambling and disconnected utterances about the truth, but that simple and definite prayer was presented to God. Few things are more unprofitable and painful to those who are simple in prayer than a string of pointless words, however orthodox, or a kind of lecture prayer, an aim at instructing those who kneel beside them, or an attempt at giving information to God, not to speak of the great irreverence of praying at others; but such proceedings never fail to carry with them the stamp of unreality. In these meetings for prayer recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, those who prayed were simply a mouth-piece for those assembled, and so expressed themselves that the others could heartily go with them; for, without this, how could there be "one accord"? The Holy Spirit tells us that they "lifted up their voice to God with one accord," and " prayed;" and again, that " many were gathered together praying," and that " prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God" for Peter; so that we may be sure, though there might be thanksgiving too, that prayer - earnest, united, prayer and supplication in the Spirit - characterized these meetings for prayer. We believe these points are of all-importance at this time, for in some places the meetings for prayer have been humiliating, rather than a solemn pouring out of heart to God in earnest request with reverence and godly fear. This may often account for the few that attend; for when souls are really gathered to wait on God in prayer, we can scarcely think of saints who would not make every effort to be present. The truth is, that if the Lord's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit are looked for, all will go on well; without this, nothing can.

When the Lord is given His rightful place in our midst, and the power of the Holy Spirit is therefore really known, we doubt not that souls will be filled with joy and peace in believing, and abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. There will be, too, a sense of what for the present suits Him who is the Holy and the True. Being ourselves free and happy in His presence there will surely be prayer for all saints; for how can we be really holding the Head without embracing every member of His body? How can we be diligently keeping the Spirit's unity unless our interests, affections, and prayers go out towards all saints?

And further. If we are in the enjoyment of the various relationships into which God, in the exceeding riches of His grace, has brought us, shall we not be in earnest prayer that others may be saved, that the word of the Lord may run, have free course, and be glorified? If we are rejoicing in the hope of our Lord's coming, can we fail to preach and pray that multitudes may take of the water of life freely to His eternal praise and glory? If we really honor the Holy Spirit, how can we be indifferent to the glad-tidings which He declares? Yea, rather, how can we fail to take the deepest interest in the gospel of the grace of God, which is now preached by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven? H. H. S.

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