

# The Spirit of Truth

by Samuel Chadwick

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*The Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of Truth, is essential for understanding and receiving the revelation of God, guiding us into all truth and interpreting the Word of God.*

**Scripture:** John 16:13, Romans 8:27, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:14, Ephesians 4:23

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Biblical Interpretation"

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## Description

Samuel Chadwick preaches about the importance of the Spirit of Truth in revealing divine truths through revelation and inspiration. He emphasizes that God has spoken through His Spirit to guide humanity, especially in times of sin and darkness. Chadwick highlights the role of the Spirit in the interpretation of the Bible, stating that the Scriptures are the record of God's revelation through the Spirit. He discusses the necessity of the Spirit's illumination for understanding the deep truths of God and the renewal of the mind to receive spiritual discernment and transformation.

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## Transcript

Our Lord spake of Himself as the Truth, and of the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Truth. The revelation, inspiration, and interpretation of truth are in a special and unique sense the work of the Divine Spirit. God has spoken through His Spirit. It is reasonable to expect that He would. He had made man for fellowship. and it is incredible that God should expect fellowship without mutual speech, especially when the need of revelation became manifest. Had there been no sin man would have still needed a guide to things beyond himself. Someone must have told him of things above and beyond himself, for there are many things that cannot be found by searching. By faith we know these things, but there is no sure basis for faith without revelation. Still more is revelation necessary when sin darkens the understanding. Love could not be silent in the presence of such need and peril. God has spoken He has revealed His mind, declared His will, and set forth His way to Truth, and Life, and Power. By the Spirit of Truth God spake through the Prophets, and by Him has come the inspired and infallible revelation of God.

### The Spirit of Revelation

By Revelation is understood those truths made known by supernatural means, because they lie beyond the power of man to discover. Inspiration is concerned with the means and processes by which these truths are made known. Revelation comes by the inspiration of the Spirit of Truth. It is in this way we know anything authentic about creation and the events that happened before man was there to see. The records of these things must be either guesses or revealed truths. The same applies to all that we know of

God in His nature and attributes, and still more of His redeeming purpose of love and grace. Many by searching cannot find God, but it has pleased God to make Himself known to the children of men. We know God by revelation, and in the knowledge of Him is the life which is life indeed. To revelation we owe also the knowledge of the final issues of the Kingdom of Grace. The ascended glory and the triumphant Return of our glorious Lord are of such a character that no human mind could have conceived them. The sum of the Divine Revelation is in Jesus Christ the Son of God. Revealed truth is truth "as truth is in Jesus." He is the Eternal Word of God; the oracle of God in human flesh. He is emphatically the truth: the embodiment of Truth, the Word of Truth, and the sum of Truth. The Eternal Word and the Eternal Truth are one. The Incarnate Word is the sum and substance of Truth. In Christ is God's final revelation of Truth, but in the Spirit of Truth is its unfolding, interpretation, and realization. It was the Spirit that made known the Revelation, directed its development, and watched over its integrity.

The Bible is the record of the Revelation of God through the Spirit. The Prophets of the Old Testament claimed to be the spokesmen of God on the ground that they had received a revelation from God. They are God's messengers, for they have heard His voice. They gave account of the way the Word of the Lord came to them, and their claim to speak for Him is that they have received His Word. The same authority is claimed in the New Testament. The Gospel came to the apostles by Revelation. Our Lord despaired of making them understand the Gospel of His Cross, but He assured them that the Spirit of Truth would reveal it to them; and He did. Pentecost was the crowning day of Revelation.

#### The Spirit and Inspiration

It was in this way the Revelation came from God, and that is how the Scriptures came to be written. The Revelation was before the record, and it was the Revelation that created the necessity for the Scripture. They are the work of the Spirit. Whatever may be the true theory of inspiration, the Scriptures claim a special influence of the Spirit, by which they possess a Divine quality and a final authority. They are inspired and infallible, and therefore the Divine Rule of Faith and Conduct. There was given to inspired speakers and writers of the Divine Revelation a special and unique influence by which they were able faithfully to make known the truth revealed.

The Bible never defines inspiration. It insists upon the fact, but it never attempts to explain the theory. That is left to the theologians, and the theory must be deduced from the facts, and it must take account of all the facts. For all practical purposes, the assurance that it is an energy of the Spirit of Truth, sufficient to secure accurate and adequate expression, satisfies all reasonable demands. The fault of most discussions on inspiration is that they have overlooked some important facts and factors. Some have claimed for the Bible more than the Bible claimed for itself, and others have ignored some of its demands. Both would have escaped their pitfalls if they had taken pains to know the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and understand the relation of the Spirit of Truth to the Word of God.

Modern methods have specialized in the Scriptures, and in nothing has the change wrought been so drastic and, for the time being, disastrous. It is claimed that the orthodox and traditional views have been demolished for ever, and that never again will the Bible be regarded as a Divine and infallible Book. Great sport has been made of the superstitious reverence of the devout who accepted all its parts as equally inspired and of equal value. The so-called traditional view has been ignorantly or willfully misrepresented, or flippantly caricatured. It is difficult to be patient with the spacious shallowness and colossal vanity that masquerade under the claims of modernity and scientific criticism, but it will be plain in the end that they have helped to a better understanding of the Truth. They have taught us much of the human and historical

side of inspiration. The Spirit works by human cooperation. He spake by the Prophets. No prophecy came -- as Weymouth translates it, -- of the Prophets' own prompting. Holy men of God spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost. He moved; they spake. There was no suspension of personal powers, personal consciousness, personal gifts. Inspiration intensified personality. but it neither changed nor confused it. The message was spoken by many voices, and when it came to be written, the writing of the Divine Word was by a man's hand." A careful study of St. Luke 1:14; I Peter 1:11, 12, II Peter 1:21, and Hebrews 1:1 would safeguard our thinking against many errors. There are diversities of inspiration, but one Spirit, and He is the Spirit of Truth. There are sixty-six books in the Bible, but it is one Book. There are many writers, but only one Author. The unity of the progressive Word is the miracle of the Spirit in revealed truth.

### The Spirit and Interpretation

Before man can see he must have sight and light. Eyes cannot see in the dark, and light shows nothing to the blind. So with regard to truth there must be the seeing eye and the illuminating light The Word is Truth, but it is the Spirit of Truth that makes it the Living Word. Inspiration ceased within a hundred years. The best writings of the second century reveal a transition that is an abrupt and abysmal gulf. Creative inspiration gave place to imitative devotion. The Holy Spirit was still in the Church, but He no longer inspired new revelations. "Since the New Testament times the Holy Spirit has illumined truth, but has not revealed anything new."

All agree that we must have an interpreter. The Sacerdotalist holds that the Church is the custodian and interpreter of the Scriptures. He argues that the living voice is more than the written Word. That depends on whose voice it is. We do need an interpreter, an infallible teacher, a trustworthy guide, and the interpreter of the inspired Word is the Spirit of Truth. The mere grammarian cannot find it. The controversialist cannot explain it. The critic knows not its secret. The carnal mind cannot perceive it. The natural man cannot possess it. The twice-born see. The anointed know. The Spirit that revealed illumines, and He that inspired interprets.

The Spirit of Truth honors the Word of Truth. He consents to be tried by the Word of God. Illuminations that come from Him are in harmony with the Word. He guides into all truth. The Sons of God are led of the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot receive Him, but they know Him. In the world the Spirit of Truth convicts, challenges, condemns; to the Spirit-filled He illumines, interprets, and transforms.

Had a Scriptural view of the Person and Work of the Holy Ghost been more powerfully prevalent in the Church, not merely in her formularies, but in reality and life, there would never have been so much occasion given to represent the teaching of the Church on the inspiration of Scripture as "mechanical" and "converting men into automata"; and the whole question would not have assumed such a scholastic and metaphysical form. For then the living testimony and the written testimony would appear both as supernatural and Spirit-breathed. The more the supremacy of the Holy Ghost -- Divine, loving, and present -- is acknowledged, the more the Bible is fixed in the heart and conscience. But if the "Book is viewed as the relic and substitute of a now absent and inactive Spirit, Bibliolatry and Bible-rejection are the necessary results." Without the Spirit of Truth even the Word of Truth is a dead letter. It is the Spirit that quickens, illumines, and interprets the Word.

### The Spirit and Illumination

Jesus said: "Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak; and He shall declare

unto you the things that are to come. And He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you" (St. John 16:13, 14).

Divine truth is not of grammar, of learning, or of logic, but of the Holy Spirit of God. He is given to reveal "the deep things."

"The Spirit searcheth the deep things of God." There is no adjective in the Greek. It is not "deep things," but "deeps." There are fringes of the Divine Glory such as Moses and the Prophets saw, and they are glorious and wonderful, but there are depths, abysses, like those of the heavens and the sea. Deep beyond deep, fathoms unfathomable, and these the Spirit of God searches and reveals. He does not search to discover. In Romans 8:27 and in Revelation 2:23 God and Christ are said to "search." It implies thoroughness, and not quest. The Spirit is ever active in fathoming the depths of God. His omniscience is ever exploring and revealing the depths of God. Romans 11:33 unites the ideas of depth and unsearchableness.

The point of the argument is that the deeps in God cannot be known by any other means than the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Just as the deep things in a man are known only to the spirit of a man, so the deeps of God are known only to and by the Spirit of God. Our wisdom cannot discover Him. The princes and rulers of the world's intellect and intelligence cannot know Him. The well is deep, and they have nothing wherewith to draw. The deep things are not discovered; they are received. They are not achieved; they are believed. They are not taught; they are revealed. The Spirit is the Spirit of God, and by Him we know the things of God.

The Spirit is given to glorify Christ No man can know Jesus without the distinct revelation of the Spirit. The deeps of Christ cannot be explored by human wisdom. His life in Nazareth may be reconstructed by novelists, dramatized by genius, and immortalized by art; but the Christ is not in them. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (I Cor. 12:3). The same is true of His teaching. Grammar cannot discover its truth, and the letter killeth. It is also true of His word. The Cross must always be an enigma, a stupidity, and anathema to the wisdom of this world. It belongs to the deeps known only to the Spirit and to those enlightened and instructed of Him. The depths of Christ are unsearchable. The love of Christ passeth knowledge. The grace of Christ is immeasurable. The glory of Christ is unfathomable. There are deeps beyond deep, heights beyond height. Deep calls unto deep, and glory unto glory. To the natural man they are without meaning; to the taught of the Spirit they are eternally sure. We know Him, and we know that we know Him because we have an anointing of the Holy One that takes of the things that are His and reveals them unto us.

#### The Renewal of the Mind

"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned." Part of the ministry of the Spirit of Truth, therefore, is the preparation and renewal of the mind of man, for receiving the deep things of God. But Who is sufficient to describe the transformation wrought by the Spirit in the consenting mind? The ancient Messianic prophecy finds fulfillment in the simplest believer.

"The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord."

But the Spirit's operation upon the mind does not end with the bestowal of understanding. The Gift of the Spirit brings a sound mind as well as a new Spirit. Both need to be renewed for the reception of Truth as it is in Jesus (Eph. 4:23). The mind must be renewed, for through the renewed mind comes the transformed life and the proving of the will of God (Rom. 12:1, 2). Dedication of the body as a living sacrifice must be sustained by the constant renewal of the mind. The Spirit of God dwells in the spirit of man to guide the mind into all truth. He interprets the mind of Christ, for He takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us. It is in this way the Spirit interpreted all things to our Lot. The Spirit worked through His mind. So the prophecy goes on:

"And He shall be quick of understanding, and His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord; and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears: but with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth."

And so the Christ is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

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