

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit is the third Person of the Godhead, of one substance with the Father, fully God, co-equal to and co-eternal with the Father and Son, who proceeds from both the Father and the Son. He is the Evangelist of the Trinity, as Dr. John Gerstner put it. The Father decreed salvation, the Son purchased salvation and the Spirit applies salvation today.

That having been said, when a believer in Chile or another in Uganda, or a Christian in China or one in Manitoba affirms “I believe in the Holy Spirit,” I suspect the content of that belief varies substantially one from the other. Some of us expect much from the Spirit and others of us little or nothing. Some of us believe much less and others much more about the Spirit. What do you mean when you say, “I believe in the Holy Spirit”?

After the first century, the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been the century of the Holy Spirit. Around 1900 the Pentecostal movement was born (the so-called First Wave), then around 1950 the Charismatic movement (the Second Wave) was birthed in almost all denominations<sup>i</sup>. The Vineyard Church is termed the “Third Wave,” beginning in the 1970s. The Pentecostal/ Charismatics have gone from zero percent of the total Christian population in 1900 to 28% in 2000 and are projected to be 32% by 2025<sup>ii</sup>, and have been in the global vanguard of Christian missions and evangelism. This resurgence and focus upon the work of the Spirit has by its very power and profile caused deep division in Christendom, including those focusing upon the Spirit. Is sanctification instantaneous? Must all believers speak in tongues? Do individuals have the gift of healing today? What exactly is the baptism in the Holy Spirit? Do all of the 20 or so gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the NT still operate today? Should signs and wonders accompany evangelism? Anyone teaching on the Spirit today walks onto a theological mine field.

The author does not speak in tongues, or advocate that a Christian speak in tongues, or indeed that a Christian have any one particular gift. So far as he knows, he does not have any of the gifts listed at 1 Cor. 12:8-10. This basic outline attempts a moderate position and is the result of Bible study, not generated from or for a particular theological camp. I’ve read every scriptural reference to the Holy Spirit and categorized perhaps the majority of them. There is no desire to generate controversy, but to provide Scripture which will hopefully promote better understanding of the Spirit.

These views do not necessarily represent anyone else affiliated in any way with Reconciliation Ministries Network.

### I. Who is He?

- A. He is the third Person of the Trinity (cf. Matt. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:4-5; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:2; 4:14; Gen. 1:2,26; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 3:14).
  1. He is One (Eph. 4:4)
  2. He has personality. He intercedes for believers (Rom. 8:26), has a mind (Rom. 8:27), can grieve (Eph. 4:30), can speak (Rev. 2:7; 14:13) and be resisted (Acts 7:51).
  3. He is God.
    - a. He is equated with God in Acts 5:3-4.

- b. He is equated with Jesus Christ in 2 Cor. 3:17-18.
  - c. He is eternal (Heb. (9:14). He was active in the Old Testament and is today.
  - d. He is the truth (1 John 5:7; cf. John 14:6, of Jesus).
  - e. He is not an impersonal force (Above and Heb. 6:4-5).
  - f. Therefore, He is not an “it.”
- B. Some names of the Spirit
- 1. “Helper” (John 14:16); “the Holy Spirit” (Luke 11:13); “the Spirit of Jesus” (Acts 16:7); “The Spirit of God” (Rom. 8:9); “the Spirit of Truth” (John 14:17); “the Spirit of glory” (1 Pet. 4:14)
- C. The Father sent the Spirit into the world through the Son (proceeding from the Father through the Son)
- 1. Luke 11:13; John 14:16,26; 15:26; Acts 1:4; 15:8; 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 1:22; Gal. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 John 3:24
- D. The Father sent the Spirit into the world in the name of and through Jesus Christ
- 1. John 14:26 “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name...” (Verses are quoted in the NIV, unless otherwise noted).
  - 2. John 15:26 “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.” (cf. John 14:16; 20:22; Acts 2:33; Titus 3:5).

II. His ministry in the New Testament is better appreciated by considering His ministry before this covenant.

- A. The Spirit was present in God’s creation of the Earth (Gen. 1:2).
- 1. He gave great creative ability to the artisan Bezaliel (Ex. 31:3).
  - 2. We see the creative work of the Spirit more clearly in the New Testament (NT), where the Spirit gives life (John 6:63) and resurrection life (Rom. 8:11).
- B. He came upon or indwelled men.
- 1. Prophets--Moses, Num. 11:17; Amasi, 1 Chron. 12:18; Jahaziel, 2 Chron. 20:14; Zechariah, 2 Chron. 24:20.
  - 2. Judges—Gideon, Judges 6:34; Jephthah, Judges 11:29; Sampson at four distinct times--Judges 13:25; 14:6,19; 15:14.
  - 3. Kings—Saul, 1 Sam. 11:6; David, 2 Sam. 23:2.
  - 4. Other leaders—Joshua, Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; the 70 Elders, Num. 11:25.
- C. However, the indwelling differed from that of the New Testament.
- 1. He could leave a person, as He did from Saul (1 Sam. 16:14).
  - 2. He did not indwell all the Israelites, but did guide them (Is. 63:11).
  - 3. Only Jews received the Spirit.
  - 4. Indwelling a woman was extremely rare. Deborah and Anna were prophetesses (Judges 4:4; Luke 2:36), and were so indwelled.
  - 5. He was specifically upon the Messiah, Jesus Christ (Is. 11:2; 42:1).
- D. Joel promised, by the Spirit “ ‘And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on **all people**. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams,

your young men will see visions. <sup>29</sup> Even on my servants, **both men and women**, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.” (Joel 2:28-29). There was hope.

### III. The Messiah Came

- A. As Jesus was fulfilling righteousness by being baptized, the Spirit of God came upon Him in the form of a dove (Matt. 3:15-16). Immediately afterward, “Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit**, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert...” Luke 4:1.
- B. “Immediately the Spirit impelled Him *to go* out into the wilderness.” (Mark 1:12 NASB). Jesus entered into spiritual warfare with Satan as soon as the Spirit filled Him.
- C. After this, Jesus “in the power of the Spirit” (NIV, NASB) came into Gentile Galilee, where He preached His first message, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,..”<sup>NIV</sup> Luke 4:18
- D. The Spirit was given “**without limit**” (John 3:34) to Christ (while the text does not specify that the limitlessness of the Spirit was to Christ alone, the context favors this interpretation, cf. 3:35, per W. Hendriksen, *The Gospel of John*, p. 150 & Robertson’s Word Pictures).
  - 1. “how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth **with the Holy Spirit and power**, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.” **Acts 10:38**
- E. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples after returning to the Father (John 15:26; 16:7).
- F. Jesus “through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God” (Heb. 9:14).
- G. After Jesus rose from the dead, by the power of the Spirit (Rom. 8:11), and before taking His exalted place of reward at the right hand of the Father (Phil. 2:9; Heb. 1:3), He appeared to His disciples and in some mysterious way gave a portion of the Spirit to them until the outpouring would occur at Pentecost (John 20:22). Possibly this was done to give the disciples the comfort of the “Comforter” (John 14:26, KJV).
- H. Even as He prepared to arise to heaven, He commanded the disciples (by the Spirit) not to leave Jerusalem until they had received the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2,4). The enabling of the Spirit for ministry was and is absolutely critical. Not even the enthusiasm of seeing the resurrected Christ was sufficient. They must have God *within* them. They were not to work *for* God, but *by* God’s Spirit. The lost aren’t usually won by the flesh (John 1:13). “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63).
- I. At the right hand of God, Jesus received the Spirit, to give Him to men and women under the New Covenant (Acts 2:33).

### IV. Pentecost

- A. After millennia, the “last days” had come (Acts 2:17; 2,000 years ago—John even

called it, about 95AD, “the last hour,” 1 John 2:18). Joel’s prophecy must inexorably be fulfilled. The day of Pentecost had arrived, over forty days after the resurrection (Acts. 1:3). About 120 men and women gathered to pray (Acts 1:14-15). A mighty “wind” (akin to the Hebrew word for breath or spirit-- ‘*Xmr*) filled the “upper room.” “They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.” (Acts 2:3). This was the fulfillment of the baptism of *fire* predicted by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11). They spoke with languages previously unknown to the speaker, but understandable to native speakers of the language (Acts. 2:4, 11), and witnessed to God. While Joel did not specifically mention the coming of tongues, the link with the coming of the Spirit was crucial to skeptical Jewish Christians as a proof of the coming of the Spirit to the Gentiles, some of whom later spoke in tongues (Acts 10:44-47; Acts 11:17-18).

- B. Peter plainly stated that the phenomena were in fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy, since he quoted Joel as an explanation (Acts 17:16-21). So we are in the last days, and the Spirit has indeed come upon “all flesh,” which later Scripture interprets to mean upon believers (1 Cor. 2:14).
- C. In these days after the New Covenant made in the blood of Christ (1 Cor. 11:25), that covenant is mediated by the Spirit. The Law “killed” because it showed us how sinful we really were as a people (2 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 3:22; Rom. 11:32). However, “the Spirit gives life” (John 6:63) and we’re *born* of the Spirit (John 3:5). Instead of having to live up to the letter of the Law, we now walk in the Spirit, “...and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (2 Corinthians 3:17). Is there liberty in our church, home and life--or legalism?

#### V. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Unbeliever

- A. The Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is used by the Spirit and can penetrate into a person’s deepest being (Heb. 4:12) and is “able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” (2 Tim. 3:15). In particular, prophecy speaks of Christ—“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (Rev. 19:10c). This truth is plainly illustrated by 1 Peter 1:11, where the prophets were “trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow” (cf. Matt. 22:42; Mark 12:36). Every prophecy given was by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21), and it was prophecy which, of course, spoke of Christ’s coming.
  - 1. In New Testament times the apostles (or those writing with apostolic authority, as Mark) provided the canon of the New Testament authenticity. The apostolic office itself is a gift of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). The Spirit was the agency by which the apostles would remember the words of Christ (John 14:26—cf. *A general introduction to the Bible*, N. Geisler and W. Nix. 1968, p. 88ff.)
  - 2. The world of God is the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17).
- B. The Spirit’s major ministry is to witness of Christ.
  - 1. This is clear at John 15:26: “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send

to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.”

2. The Spirit convicts of the sin of unbelief in Christ, the righteousness of Christ, and the coming judgment (due to Christ’s defeat of Satan), leading a person to repentance (John 16:8). In my experience if a person is not convicted of personal sin, s/he will not make a genuine profession of faith in Christ. If a person makes a profession apart from the conviction of the Spirit and true repentance, this may well need to be exposed as counterfeit before genuine salvation comes.
  3. Nothing is plainer than “no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:3).
  4. Missionaries are sent by the Spirit (Acts 13:2) and evangelists, pastors, teachers and prophets are all gifted as such by the Spirit (Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 1:12).
  5. The Spirit, indeed, glorifies Christ (John 16:14). This self-effacing nature of the Spirit probably accounts for the harshest penalty to those who knowingly blaspheme the Spirit (Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:29; Luke 12:10). However, if anyone is troubled at that prospect, that person is sensitive enough to the Spirit, in all likelihood, not to have so maligned the Spirit.
- C. Before someone is actually born of the Spirit, the things of the Spirit are “are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14; John 14:17).
- D. In summary, without being dogmatic about an unalterable order, salvation proceeds in this way:<sup>1</sup>
1. Predestination means that God “chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.” (Eph. 1:4). Then He gives the gifts of repentance (Acts 11:17) and faith (Acts 18:27; Eph. 2:8-9) and draws those being saved to Himself (John 6:44). He then gives the gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23). This is not the same as “fore-knowledge” which means that God simply knows who will be saved, but who does not predetermine the outcome.
  2. The Spirit uses the Word of God (1 Pet. 1:23) and convicts of sin (John 16:8), leading to repentance (Acts 2:37; 17:30). The Spirit gives life (John 6:63). Baptism normally follows, to fulfill God’s requirement (Acts 2:38). The Spirit enters at the point of regeneration to permanently indwell the believer (Titus 3:5; Acts 19:5-6; Rom. 8:9; 11:29). The Spirit then works to sanctify the Christian, transforming so that the believer increasingly displays the character of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18).

## VI. The Ministry of the Spirit to the Believer

- A. Once born of the Spirit, the believer is “baptized with the Spirit” (Acts 1:5; 11:16). This was spoken with reference to Pentecost, when the church was born. However this baptism does not necessitate that all speak in tongues, as did the 120 at Pentecost, since very explicitly all do **not** speak in tongues in the church (1 Cor. 12:30). That Cornelius was so baptized and spoke in tongues is explained by

the need for some unique, objective and observable proof that the Spirit had indeed come upon Gentiles (Acts 11:15-17). More clear for the nature of this baptism is 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."

B. The Spirit indwells the believer.

1. Jesus promised the Spirit (John 14:17), and the Spirit was regarded as having come, but with this ethical component: "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16). When the Spirit indwells the Christian, His desire is to make a temple of God—"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own" (1 Corinthians 6:19).
  - a. Would we smoke, do drugs or commit fornication inside a church building, which is not even a dwelling of God? "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body." (1 Cor. 6:18).
2. The Spirit's indwelling assures us of our salvation (1 John 4:13; Rom. 8:16).
3. The method by which the Spirit indwells us seems to have been at first by God's simple gift (Matt. 12:18). Later God used prayer and the laying on of hands by Peter and John to give the gift of the Spirit to Samaritan Christians (Acts 8:15-18). This was the clear and obvious fulfillment that Christ would build His church upon Peter (Matt. 16:18). Peter gained the first converts among the Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41), and it was the conversion of Cornelius and his family (Acts 10) that convinced the Jewish Christian leaders at Jerusalem that God had opened salvation (and the church) to the Gentiles (Acts 11:15-18).
  - a. Philip had led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ before the church was founded (Acts 8:36,38), but the eunuch was probably already a Jewish God-fearer, and in any event was unavailable for examination, heading home as he was when regenerated.
  - b. If Peter was the foundation of the church as God's instrument to include both Jews and Gentiles, nothing is said of apostolic succession, whereby Peter would transfer the "keys" of the kingdom to anyone else (Matt. 16:19). In fact, the same authority to bind and loose was given practically verbatim (in the Greek) to the 12 apostles (Matt. 18:18).
  - c. In the epistles the way Christians received the Spirit was by faith, as it is today (Gal. 3:2, 14). "He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit." Galatians 3:14. Of course, God is the ultimate giver, regardless of how the Spirit is mediated (Rom. 5:5).

C. Marvelous and diverse are the many ministries of the Spirit to the Christian. On

the one hand are gifts which sanctify and purify the new believer, and on the other are gifts which enable to live a life of power, while being led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14).

1. Sanctification

- a. This ministry is cited often in the epistles: “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18). See also Rom. 2:29; 14:17; 15:16; 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Thess. 4:7-8; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:22.
- b. As the Spirit transforms us into Christ’s image, He puts to death the “misdeeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13). The Spirit can stop any sin, as habitual or deep-seated as it may be. What willpower cannot accomplish, the Spirit can. We must want the Spirit to burn away our impurities, just as He came at Pentecost as flames, and invite Him to have complete control of that process. If the Spirit simply lives in us (has His home in us), the Spirit will control us, not the “sinful nature” (Rom. 8:9). If the flesh controls a Christian, it’s abnormal. The Christian is fighting God and His will.
- c. The Spirit-controlled mind is “life and peace” (Rom. 8:6).
- d. He produces joy (Rom 14:17; Gal. 5:22; 1 Thess. 1:6). “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Rom. 14:17). The normal Christian life is a righteous, peaceful and joyful existence.
- e. He produces love, as a channel of God’s love: “God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.” (Rom. 5:5; cf. Rom. 15:30; Gal. 5:22; Col. 1:18).
- f. The Spirit produces hope: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Rom. 15:13.
- g. He assists us to worship (Phil. 3:3).

2. Walking in the Spirit

- a. The Spirit, as we have seen, is crucial to being born again. This is “beginning in the Spirit,” But Christians are not to live in their own strength. “Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?” Gal. 3:3.
- b. First we must be “filled with the Spirit,” which is actually commanded by God (Eph. 5:18). Jesus was so filled, as His life demonstrated. Peter was filled with the Spirit at least twice (Acts 4:8, 31). The Apostles were filled with the Spirit at least twice (Acts 4:31; 13:52; Paul—Acts 13:9), which gave them needed boldness to witness to Christ. Peter was emboldened by the Spirit (Acts 4:8, 20), as was Stephen (Acts 6:5, 10; 7:55). Are you filled with the Spirit?
  1. The Spirit can be grieved by “bitterness, rage and anger,

brawling and slander, along with every form of malice” (Eph. 4:31), as well as by rebellion (Is. 63:10—which turned God into the enemy of His people).

(2. The flame of the Spirit’s baptism can be quenched under the New Covenant, but not removed: “for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.” Rom. 11:29. Quenching (NAS) the flame of the Spirit refers to an attitude which despises prophetic utterances (1 Thess. 5:19-20). Do we despise all such prophecy today? That such prophecies are not on the level of the canon of Scripture is clear. At least eleven Old Testament prophets spoke, but their words were not included in the Bible (e.g. Ahijah, Iddo, Jehu, Elijah, Elisha, Shemiah, Azariah, Hanani, Jahaziel, Oded and Huldah—Irving Jensen. 1978. *Jensen’s survey of the Old Testament*. Moody Press. Pp. 188-189). Likewise the words of the Antiochan prophets are not recorded in the New Testament (Acts 13:1). So in both Testaments, many prophecies were not included in the canon.

(3 There seem to operate two different levels of prophetic authority<sup>2</sup>. In the Old Testament two tests applied to validate true prophets: (1 they did not lead people to follow other gods (Dt. 13:2) (2 what they predicted, happened (Dt. 18:19). Otherwise whatever they said was to be obeyed. In the NT church, whatever was supposed to be a prophetic message was to be evaluated by other prophets--“The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets” (1 Corinthians 14:32, cf. vs. 29-31). Past prophetic authority (prophetic office) was insufficient for prophecies to be accepted as authoritative. Further, the words of the prophets mentioned in 1 Cor. 14:32 were not accorded canonical authority, even if accepted as from God. Some charismatics argue that a person might have a prophetic “influence” and that we not hold a “prophet” to 100 percent accuracy. However, God is never wrong. If a person claims to speak from God, it must be correct, for God is not wrong. If *any* prophecy is wrong, do not listen to the “prophet” again. Otherwise we are reducing “prophets” to the level of psychic predictors still in business with less than perfect accuracy. Many like to claim the title of “prophet” today, reason enough to be dubious of their “prophecies.”

c. We are commanded to “walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16 [per ipatew--walk, go or move about; live, conduct oneself—Barclay-Neuman]; Gal. 5:25, [stoicew ꞑ. dat. *to be in line with, walk by rule or principle—Liddell-Scott*]; Rom. 8:4 (per ipatew present active—who continue to walk). We live in the Spirit, conform to the Spirit and keep living by the Spirit.



- (1 Jesus was led “by the Spirit” in His wilderness temptation (Luke 4:1). Paul was “compelled” by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem.
- d. The Spirit will lead us as we walk. In difficulty He’ll supply words (Matt. 10:19, 20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12). He may lead us to someone unsaved, as He did Philip (Acts 8:29, 35) and Peter (Acts 11:12). He may direct us on a particular mission (Acts 13:2), as with Saul and Barnabus. The Spirit told Paul where to witness and where **not** to witness (Acts 16:6-7). This leading is proof of our adoption as sons of God (Rom. 8:14).
3. The Spirit gives power for ministry, as He gave to Paul (Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5). Even the apostles, to whom Jesus had given a measure of the Holy Spirit after He arose (John 20:22), were commanded not to leave Jerusalem until they had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, referring to the power they would receive when the Holy Spirit came upon them (Acts 1:4), and fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). If anyone did not need extra resources for ministry, it would have been the apostles, who were both witnesses of Jesus’ earthly ministry and of His resurrection. They were to go into the entire world (Matt. 28:18-20), but they must wait for power. They were to put on the spirit as they would put on clothes (Luke 24:49) [similar to Paul’s armor of God, Eph. 6:10-20].
- a. Does our life demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit? Do we boldly witness (Acts 1:8; Acts 4:31 “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”) As John Gerstner notes, the Spirit is the Evangelist of the Trinity. The Father decreed salvation, Jesus purchased salvation and the Spirit applies salvation<sup>3</sup>. When insulted “the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.” (1 Pet. 4:13).
- b. Does the Holy Spirit give us supernatural ability to work hard? Does God’s power and conviction accompany our teaching or preaching (1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5)?
- c. Do we do much good for people (Acts 10:38)?
- d. Do we have much power and strength in our inner being (Eph. 3:16)?
- e. The Spirit teaches us “the deep things of God” (1 Cor. 2:10). This is similar to the anointing spoken of in 1 John 2:20, 27 by which we understand spiritual matters. The spiritual gifts of wisdom and knowledge go beyond that anointing (1 Cor. 12:8).
- f. The Spirit gives us the adequacy needed to serve God—it doesn’t come from within (2 Cor. 3:5-6).
4. The Spirit helps Christians
- a. He strengthens and encourages us (Acts 9:31).
- b. His presence is our pledge or down payment of our salvation

- (Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Ga. 5:5; 6:8). He is our seal of salvation (Eph. 4:30). He was the agent by whom God raised Christ (1 Pet. 3:18), and of our own (Rom. 8:11).
- c. He works circumstances out for our good (Phil. 1:19).
  - d. The Spirit helps us in prayer. He intercedes for believers before God, even with groaning (Rom. 8:26). Because He intercedes according to God's will, God grants those prayers (1 John 5:14-15). We are to "pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." (Eph. 6:18).
    1. This isn't necessarily praying in tongues (1 Cor. 14:2, 4), because clearly all do not have the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:30). What then does it mean to pray in the spirit? At the least this means to be led by the Spirit in what we pray to God. We let the Spirit prompt our praying, although there is nothing wrong with having a list of petitions. It means that we're a vehicle of communication between the third and first persons of the trinity.
  - e. The Spirit will give visions in the "last days," (Acts 2:17), which are now. Particularly in developing nations, many have testified to becoming Christians through a vision or dream. God gave visions to Ezekiel (Ezek. 8:3; 11:1; 43:5) and to John (Rev. 1:11; 4:2; 17:3) and to Peter (Acts 10:10-11).
  - f. On rare occasions, the Spirit physically transported those He indwelt, as He carried Ezekiel (Ezek. 3:14-15) and Philip (Acts 8:39-40).
  - g. The ministry of angels and the Spirit are intertwined at times in directing believers, as in the case of Philip (Acts 8:26, 29) and Peter (Acts 10:19, 22).
- D. The Spirit ministers in and through the Church.
1. He sometimes speaks directly to specific churches (Acts 13:2; Rev. ch. 2-3). He seems to appoint certain persons to the office of overseer (alternately translated "bishop") in churches (Acts 20:28).
  2. His desire is for unity within the Church (Eph. 4:3; Phil. 2:1-2) and those who disrupt it are without the Spirit (Jude 1:19). Division in the church indicates that members are not walking by the Spirit.
- E. Every true Christian has at least one spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:7), both to equip believers for service in the world and to build up the church (Eph. 4:12). This gift cannot be lost, although we'll be responsible for being a good steward of that gift (Rom. 11:29).
1. Much controversy exists as to what spiritual gifts continue to operate today.
    - a. The gift of apostle (1 Cor. 12:28) is an example. The twelve apostles selected by Jesus to serve with Him and who were later eyewitnesses of His resurrection, were foundational to the church (Eph. 2:20, cf. Acts 1:21-22). Most believe that this gift does not currently operate today, since the church's foundation has already

- been laid. In a broader sense, however, there were other apostles besides the twelve. Barnabas was (Acts 14:14), as were Andronicus and Junias (Rom. 16:7). However, just as there were false apostles in biblical times (Rev. 2:2), there are many today. An apostle is one “sent.” The Latin equivalent is the root of the word “missionary.” In the broad sense of “missionary,” there are “apostles” sent by God today, but not within the narrow definition of the foundational twelve, and certainly without their authority.
- b. Others believe that the gift of miracles is dead (1 Cor. 12:28) since miracles were used as signs to authenticate the apostles (2 Cor. 12:12; Acts 4:30; 14:3; Rom. 15:19). But Philip (not specified as an apostle) also had authenticating miracles (Acts 8:6). A major difficulty to this view is that the gifts of apostle and miracles are listed as separate gifts in 1 Cor. 12:29.
  - c. Some believe that the gift of speaking in tongues has ceased, due to 1 Cor. 13:8, which predicts the time when the gift of tongues will cease. They believe this time has come, since “perfection” in the form of the Bible (or some other perfection) has come (1 Cor. 13:10). If this were true, then the gift of knowledge would also have to be dead. Further, the gift of prophecy would have to be dead as well, despite the fact that, by a literal interpretation of Revelation, two “witnesses” or prophets are yet to appear (Rev. 11:3). Far more clear is the injunction to the church given by Paul in 1 Cor. 14:39: “Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.”
  - d. “Different kinds” of tongues are mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:10. First are known languages, referred to at Acts 2:4-11. Each of the Jews present from the diaspora could hear the message preached in his own native language (Acts 2:1-11). Second are tongues unknown to any human, except by the spiritual gift of interpretation (1 Cor. 12:10). “(A)nyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.” (1 Cor. 14:2). This and interpreting tongues are the least gifts of the Spirit, as indicated by their concluding position in the list at 1 Cor. 12:30, probably because they serve primarily the one speaking in tongues.
2. Depending upon whether or not the gift of pastor/teacher is reckoned as one or two gifts, there are 19 or 20 gifts of the Spirit listed in the NT. They are apostle, prophet, teacher, evangelist, worker of miracles, pastor, teacher, mercy, exhortation (encouraging), giving, leadership, administration, wisdom, healing, service (helps), distinguishing of spirits, knowledge, faith, tongues and interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:28-30; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:7-13). Of more importance than which gift we receive is using that gift (Rom. 12:6ff.). God sovereignly bestows each gift (1 Cor. 12:11), but there are passages indicating that He will respond to requests for additional gifts (1 Cor. 14:1, 12-13, 39). It’s quite possible

that God grants spiritual gifts unnamed in the New Testament. God filled Bezalel with the Spirit and with artistic craftsmanship (Ex. 31:3).

3. As Christians become aware of their gift(s), they will better know for what responsibilities and opportunities they are best equipped, and which work to avoid. If they tackle work matching gifting, supernatural power will accompany them, and the church will be edified.

The Holy Spirit does not seek to be glorified, but rather to glorify Christ, as He has been doing for thousands of years. The Spirit provides power to witness boldly to Christ, the power to be holy for God and the power to serve victoriously. The Spirit empowered the apostle Paul's ministry (1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5). The same Spirit desires to empower us to glorify Christ today.

<sup>1</sup>The classic passage on the order of salvation (*ordo salutis*) is Romans 8:28-30 in which the "order" is:

- Foreknowledge of God (v. 29)
- Predestination by God (Eph. 1:4)--fore-knowledge differing from a predetermination
- Calling of God through messengers
- Justification by God--I Cor. 6:11--"But you were washed, you were sanctified [made holy], you were justified [made righteous before God] in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."
- Glorified by God—this has primary reference, it seems, to our resurrected state, spoken of as "already"—an eschatological statement of the "already/not yet" (S.B. Fergusson).

<sup>2</sup> Schreiner, Thomas R. 1991. The valuable ministries of women in the context of male leadership: A survey of Old and New Testament examples and teaching. In *Recovering biblical manhood & womanhood: A response to evangelical feminism*, Ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem, 217. Wheaton: Crossway Books.

<sup>3</sup>Gerstner, John H. n.d. *The Holy Spirit*, Handout Theology Series, # 35. Ligonier Ministries. Video.

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<sup>i</sup> "Pentecostals, Charismatics, and the Third Wave," Michael R. Ramos. [www.leaderu.com/isot/docs/3wave.html](http://www.leaderu.com/isot/docs/3wave.html), accessed 11/24/04; *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*. 1974. sv "Pentecostal Churches," pp. 763-764.

<sup>ii</sup> *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2000. Barrett, Kurian, Johnson

Jim Sutherland, Ph.D.  
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