

The Sovereign Grace Messenger

A Publication of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship

**“THE LORD HATH PREPARED HIS THRONE IN THE HEAVENS;
AND HIS KINGDOM RULETH OVER ALL.”**

Psalm 103:19

Issue 21

Summer 2008

Information on the September meeting of The Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship, page 24

The Law of a Sound Mind

Peter Masters

In these pages* we have referred to a fundamental law of the Christian faith, that our rational minds must always be in control of our thoughts and actions, and that our minds must be wholly subservient to the Word of God as the exclusive source of authoritative teaching from God. The Charismatic revolution has utterly flouted this law, which we call *the law of a sound mind*, a term taken from Paul's words in **2 Timothy 1:7**—“*For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a SOUND MIND.*”

Charismatics claim that by maintaining rational control over our minds and actions we are opposing and quenching the work of the Holy Spirit. They say that believers *must* be prepared to surrender rational control in order that they may be open to direct divine activity in both worship and Christian service. John Wimber observes with concern that “Fear of losing control is threatening to most Western Christians.” He insists that we must overcome our fears, because rational control must be forfeited for tongues-speaking to occur; for soaring ecstatic sensations to be felt in worship; for messages from God to be received directly into the mind, and for miraculous events to happen, such as healings.

If divine healing is to take place, then gifted healers must launch away from

sober, rational control so as to be open to “words” from God, or “TV” pictures in the mind, guiding them to diagnose disorders, and telling them what God intends to do for each sufferer. Increasing numbers of healers are practicing the technique of putting sick people into trance states, which knock out their power of rational control. The sufferer as well as the healer must surrender the rational faculty in order to obtain a blessing, supposedly from God.

“The incontrovertible fact is that the Bible teems with passages that state categorically that our duty is to maintain firm control of the mind in all our worship and other spiritual activities.”

Most Charismatic healing meetings now begin with strenuous efforts to help people to surrender their rational control and behave in a completely uninhibited way. The goal is that worshipers should be “open” to accept anything that happens, no matter how strange, inexplicable or bizarre it may be. Loud, rhythmic music forms the basis of worship, and all present are urged

to join in with arm-waving, body-swaying, foot-tapping, and even dancing and leaping in the air. Rational control must at all costs be swept away because nothing which occurs must be impeded, tested, or evaluated by the intelligent mind, versed in the Word of God.

By discarding the *law of a sound mind* (the protection provided by the reasoning faculty) Charismatics have rendered themselves highly gullible in the face of false teaching, exaggeration, and lies. They have become notably vulnerable to religious charlatans and rogues, as the 1987 crisis in American religious television (which is predominantly Charismatic) has demonstrated. Emotionalism is rampant among them, and because all are free to do whatever seems right in their own eyes, serious spiritual lawlessness is widespread. These things are the inevitable result of laying aside the objective standard of God's Word, the faculty of judgment, and the power of self-control, all of which are brought into play by the *sound mind*.

It is obvious that if traditional evangelical teaching is Biblical in its insistence that the rational faculty must be kept “switched on” throughout our waking day, then the entire Charismatic scene is gravely out of order and opposed to the declared will of God. Can the traditional standard be proved from the Scripture? The incontrovertible fact is that the Bible teems with passages that state categorically that our duty is

*From *The Healing Epidemic*, a book written by Dr. Peter Masters and published in England in 1988. Used by permission.

to maintain firm control of the mind in all our worship and other spiritual activities. So numerous and so emphatic are the commands to this effect that it is almost unbelievable that mature Christians still fall for the Charismatic line that rational control is an impediment to the Spirit-filled life. We shall review a large number of “unassailable” texts asserting the *law of a sound mind*, and then consider some of the reasons why the maintaining of a safe, rational mind is so strongly and constantly commanded in the Bible.



Dr. Peter Masters serves as pastor of the historic Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England where Charles Spurgeon served over a century ago.

Safe-minded Words

The first group of texts to be considered contains the Greek word *sophron*, which in the AV [King James Version] is usually translated *sober*, sometimes *temperate*, and once *discreet*. The Greek word comes from *sozo* (to save) and *phren* (the mind) and literally means *safe in mind*. Therefore, to be *sober* (as used in the AV) generally means to be safe-minded, self-controlled, rational, and sensible. It will be seen that Paul’s use of this word condemns the main plank of Charismatic thinking—that rational control must often be abandoned to get spiritual blessing.

In **1 Timothy 3:2** Paul states that elders must be men who at all times keep the rational faculty alert and in control. He says, “*A bishop then must be . . . Sober [safe in mind; self-controlled], of good behavior [orderly].*” The safe-mindedness required of the elder is underlined by the Greek word for *orderly*, or well-ordered. William Hendriksen shows that the impact of these words is that elders must always be “moderate, well-balanced, calm, careful, steady, and sane.” Does this leave scope for them to voluntarily renounce rational control? Of course not! The NIV [New International Version] translates the elder’s required qualifications as “*temperate, self-controlled, respectable,*” and the NASB [New American Standard

Bible] adds “*prudent.*” The elder is to be a sagacious person, astute in mind, good at thinking, and endowed with discernment and mental penetration.

In **Titus 1:8** Paul repeats the qualifications of elders, again using the Greek word *safe-minded*. (The AV translates it “*sober*”; the NIV, “*self-controlled*”; the NASB, “*sensible.*”) In **Titus 2:2** Paul extends this standard to all older men, commanding that they should be *sober* or *safeminded*. Lest we should think that this safe-mindedness is only for office bearers and elderly men, Paul proceeds to command that the same applies to older women, and “*that they may teach the young women to be sober*” (**Titus 2:4**). Young women also must be taught to be safe in mind (“*discreet*” in the AV), maintaining self-control both mentally and emotionally.

In **Titus 2:6** Paul extends the standard still further, saying to Titus, “*Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded.*” Other translators say *self-controlled, sensible, prudent*. (The precise Greek word here is *sophroneo*, to be in one’s right mind; to be rational and safe in mind.) How can one possibly square this command with voluntary surrender of the control of speech, or the abandonment of oneself to trance states or self-induced “trips” of emotional ecstasy?

“The Spirit will certainly lift us up to heights of spiritual love and worship, but we must never renounce our self-control. It is as image-bearers that we must worship God!”

Precisely the same word is used by Peter in his command and instruction about true prayer: “*Be, therefore, sober [safe-minded, rational], and watch unto prayer*” (**1 Peter 4:7**). The NIV translates it, “*Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.*” Does this sound like a license to pray in tongues, or to pray in response to wild visions and strange messages, which are supposedly flashed into the mind? Prayer, according to Scripture, is an activity of a controlled, rational mind crying out to God in faith for blessing.

Another form of the *safe-minded* term

appears in **Titus 2:12**: “*Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.*” Here, *soberly* or *safe-mindedly* (Greek: *sophronos*) indicates self-restraint. The rational faculty is to maintain control over all our passions, thoughts, and desires. God calls to worship him a ransomed people who come into his presence with full control of their faculties and feelings. The Spirit will certainly lift us up to heights of spiritual love and worship, but we must never renounce our self-control. It is as image-bearers that we must worship God!

Other translations render *soberly* in this text by the following alternative terms: *sensibly; in a self-controlled way; with self-mastery*. The *sophron* family of words all contain the same elements *safe* (or controlled, or restrained) *in mind*. Thus every one of the quoted verses testifies powerfully to the central place of the ever-conscious, active, rational faculty in the life of the believer.

Self-control Words

Another highly important Greek word-group confirms the crucial importance of the believer maintaining conscious rational control of all his thoughts, words, and deeds. This group consists of a verb, noun, and adjective drawn from the word *kratos*, which means *strength, power, or dominion*. All these words indicate self-control. The verb *enkrateuo* is used by Paul in **1 Corinthians 9:25** when he speaks of the rigid self-control which is essential in the Christian life: “*And every man that strives for the mastery is temperate [self-controlled] in all things.*” The NASB says “*exercises self-control in all things.*” The athlete provides a perfect picture of the Christian. He never surrenders his rational self-control to impulses of diet or leisure, nor does he abandon his thought-out program. The noun form of this word occurs in two key passages about sanctification. In **Galatians 5:23** this quality of rational strength or self-control is listed as part of the fruit of the Spirit: *temperance*. (Modern versions mostly say “*self-control.*”)

In **2 Peter 1:5-6** self-control appears in the well-known chain for godly living. Peter says, “*Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance [self-control]; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness.*” Once again it is

Inside This Issue:

The Law of a Sound Mind Peter Masters	1
A High Pneumatology: Leaning on The Holy Spirit in 2 Timothy 1 Michael A.G. Haykin	6
The Baptism of The Holy Spirit: What Is It? Tom Henry	10
Editorial: Cancer and Comfort Ron Staley	13
The Holy Spirit in Missions and Evangelism T..... J.....	14
World Missions: News & Updates	16
The Old Covenant and the New Birth Holmes Moore	18
Being Filled with The Spirit Warren M. Burrell	20
Living Under the Influence Don Johnson	22

A special “thank you” to my wife, Carolyn, who insisted the work of this issue proceed and was a huge help in spite of our pressing trial (see Editorial, p.13), and to Pastor Larry Dean and his wife Greta for their assistance.
- Ron Staley, editor, SGM

All articles reflect the opinions of the author, submitter and/or editor. The views of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship are not being officially represented herein.

Comments or suggestions may be made to the Editor at the below address:

The Sovereign Grace Messenger
c/o Ron Staley, editor
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Phone: (804) 321-2110
Email: ronstaley1@verizon.net

Some objects and pictures in this publication are from:
“Print Perfect Clip Art Deluxe,”
under the brand name of “Cosmi.”

affirmed that believers must always be in control of their faculties. Firm rational control must never be “switched off” or bypassed, for it is essential in the walk of holiness. The self-control adjective occurs in **Titus 1:8-9**. We have already noted that the overseer must be *sober* or *safeminded*, but Paul also says that he must be “*temperate* [self-controlled]; *holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*” He does not go into trances, nor does he expect direct communication from God by way of “words of wisdom” or “knowledge.” He keeps control of his reasoning, rational mind and he holds firmly to the Word of God, which the apostolic generation has passed down to him. He does not add to it; he simply teaches it. Thus by sound doctrine he exhorts those who contradict it. What an indictment these words are of those who have introduced extreme and wild doctrines, which they claim have been given to them by visions, dreams, and trances while their rational functions were suspended. The Greek verb *phroneo* (to think) is another word that indicates the controlling role of our affairs. It “implies moral interest or reflection, not mere unreasoning opinion” (Vine). It speaks of the *directed* mind, rather than the mind as passive receptacle for information and impressions. The *phroneo* verb is used frequently by Paul, as he commands us to apply our active, careful, controlling minds to spiritual objectives. Restricting ourselves to just one example, we choose **Colossians 3:2**: “*Set your affection [phroneo: mind] on things above, not on earth.*” The NIV and NASB both have *mind* (instead of *affection*), and the MLB [Modern Language Bible] captures the sense with “*apply your minds*” — apply being the operative word. The minds of believers must be ever active in evaluating and discerning the influences which constantly bombard them, and also in determining and directing all their words and actions. The rule of the New Testament is not a discarded or a dormant mind, but a sanctified, active, safe mind.

The Alert-minded Word

Another word which teaches the primacy of the rational mind is *nepho*, usually translated *sober* in the AV. It literally means free from the influence of alcohol, but in the New Testament it is plainly meant metaphorically, indicating that the mind must be clear and alert so that we can detect temptation or false teaching. Paul says in **1 Thessalonians 5:6**: “*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober [alert].*” Everyone agrees that this is a metaphorical use of *sober*, and that Paul here exhorts us to be vigilant, and fully in control of our rational faculty.

In **1 Peter 1:13** the word is used in the same way, and also in **1 Peter 5:8-9**: “*Be sober [alert], be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith.*” The frequently repeated standard of the Bible is: Never, ever, switch off the rational, thinking, discerning mind.

Thinking, Discerning, and Directing Words

Yet another Greek word for the mind or understanding is *dianoia*, which quite specifically refers to the mind. The word strictly means *a reflection* or *a thinking through*. This term – *the thinking mind* — appears twice in Peter’s epistles. In **1 Peter 1:13-14** we read: “*Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind [thinking mind]...as obedient children.*” In **2 Peter 3:1-2** we read: “*This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds [thinking minds] by way of remembrance: that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Savior.*” Peter does not tell us that we shall have visions or “words of knowledge” coming into our minds, but our spiritual progress will depend on our thoughtful study of the inspired words of the prophets and apostles of the Lord. The principle is clear — God speaks as the Bible is channeled through our rational minds. The mind remains on duty in our communion

with the Lord also, for John declares “*And we know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding [thinking mind], that we may know him that is true*” (1 John 5:20).

Luke records how the Lord instructed the disciples before he ascended into Heaven: “*Then opened he their understanding [nous — mind], that they might understand the Scriptures*” (Luke 24:45). This was to be the pattern for all communications of divine Truth once the New Testament was complete. This word for mind (*nous*) is described by Vine as denoting “the seat of reflective consciousness, comprising the faculties of perception and understanding, and those of feeling, judging, and determining.” Paul says, “*I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding [nous] also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also*” (1 Corinthians 14:15).

We learn from this that the conscious, rational faculty is vital because the spirit (that is, the spiritual life) in a believer functions and expresses itself through this faculty. If the rational mind is switched off, it is not the spirit of a person, which expresses itself, but merely the emotions.

The Greek word *logizomai* means to reckon, to estimate, count up, or assess. In 1 Corinthians 13:11 Paul says, “*When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought [reckoned] as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*” To the adult Christian, the rational faculty assesses and evaluates all things all the time, in the light of the Bible alone. We are disobedient to the Lord if we allow ourselves to become mesmerized by the atmosphere worked up in Charismatic meetings (usually by emotional and musical means), with the result that we cease to reckon or assess, and simply float along with the tide of un-Biblical ideas and assertions. The Greek word *sunieimi* means to bring together. It is used metaphorically in the New Testament to describe the process of spiritual comprehension. If people grasp and perceive the meaning of a parable then this verb is used. For example, in Matthew 13:51 Jesus asks the disciples, “*Have you understood [sunieimi, comprehended] all these things?*”

Paul reminds Timothy that it is by studying inspired words (like Paul’s own) that he will get this quality of comprehension in

all the things he needs to know. 2 Timothy 2:7 reads, “*Consider what I say and the Lord give you understanding [comprehension] in all things.*” Timothy is not promised any way of getting divine knowledge other than by applying his mind to the inspired writings, which are good for all things. In Colossians 2:2 Paul indicates that assurance flows out of deep comprehension of the Word. Charismatics seek assurance from signs and wonders, and from strange experiences, but Paul says, “*That their hearts might be comforted...unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding [comprehension].*” In Colossians 1:9-10 he prays that God’s people “*might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding [comprehension]...increasing in the knowledge of God.*”

“By abandoning the Scriptures, weighed and tested by the enlightened and rational mind, as their sole authority, Charismatic healers have placed themselves at the mercy of a host of other influences, ranging from pure human imagination to demonic suggestion.”

Always in Control

The New Testament is so full of exhortations to sound-mindedness that it is simply impossible to do justice to them in a limited space. We may think of Romans 12:2—“*And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*” The intelligent, safe, sound mind both evaluates and appreciates all the spiritual things, which God has for the believer.

In Philippians 4:7-9 the believers’ minds are garrisoned by God so long as they keep

them alert and ready to test all things. So Paul commands, “*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which you have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*”

The role of the ever-awake rational faculty is yet again asserted by Paul in 2 Corinthians 10:5, a verse which utterly condemns the uninhibited abandonment of the controlled mind which is so typical of Charismatic experimentation: “*Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*”

The standard has always been the same for true believers, as we see from David’s words in Psalm 32:9: “*Be not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near you.*” Here the word *understanding* means “to distinguish or discern mentally; to think skillfully; to be prudent and wise.”

Truly God has not given us the spirit (that is, disposition or attitude) of timidity, “*but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*” (2 Timothy 1:7). In this text the Greek for *sound mind* (*sophronismos*) means a self-controlled or disciplined mind. All three dispositions are vital and precious to us as believers — the *power* to draw near to God and accomplish great things in his name; the capacity for *love*, and the *safe-mindedness*, which controls and regulates all our thoughts and actions. The disposition and attitude which has produced today’s Charismatic healing methods is a disposition of spiritual abandon and adventure, which is utterly contrary to the spirit of a sound mind commanded in the Bible. By abandoning the Scriptures, weighed and tested by the enlightened and rational mind, as their sole authority, Charismatic healers have placed themselves at the mercy of a host of other influences, ranging from pure human imagination to demonic suggestion.

Made in the Image of God

The first Biblical reason for insisting on the sanctity of rational control is that the

reasoning mind is the faculty above all others that marks out human beings as those who are made in the image of God. Our status as image-bearers is revealed in **Genesis 1:26**: “*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over...all the earth.*” The gift of reason is our highest and noblest faculty — the ability to think, discern, and weigh things in a sensible, logical, organized, and rational manner. Clearly, when man was first created he was a more glorious image-bearer than now. We have certainly lost the original innocence and unique spiritual compatibility with the Lord. In the Garden of Eden our first parents could hear God’s voice audibly, and talk with him as we now speak to one another. But though the image has become gravely tarnished by the Fall, yet the human race continues to reflect the Creator in possessing moral awareness, an eternal soul, and a rational, reasoning faculty.

The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever, and we are to glorify him as *image-bearers*, not as brute beasts. God does not summon the animal kingdom to call upon his name, to appreciate his attributes, and to serve him with all their hearts and minds. He calls only image-bearers to this privileged and glorious work. He calls those who possess a thinking, rational faculty to use it to frame sincere expressions of gratitude, love, and praise...

The Mind Is the Organ of Obedience

The vital importance of the rational mind is also obvious from the fact that it is the organ with which we hear, understand, and obey God’s will as revealed in the Bible. When the mind is renewed and illuminated by the Holy Spirit at conversion, we are enabled to receive by faith God’s Word and to understand it. Then, says Berkhof, “By the application of sanctified human reason to the study of God’s Word man can, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, gain an ever increasing knowledge of God.”

The Bible alone is God’s Word; it is a completed revelation, and it is completely sufficient for all our spiritual needs. God gave all the Truth to the generation of the apostles (**John 14:26; 16:13-15**). The completed Bible provides totally for the Lord’s people, so that there is no doctrine or command that we need to receive which is not already in the Scriptures (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**).

This Bible must be diligently studied by our reasoning minds, because this is the *only* way that Christ will speak to us *authoritatively* until he shall come again. It is true that there are a number of incidental subordinate ways by which God touches the hearts of his people, but *authoritative* guidance and teaching come only from his Word. As we have pointed out elsewhere, the Holy Spirit often prods our consciences and jogs our memories, moving us to acknowledge our sin, or to carry out a neglected duty. In his graciousness he will help us think clearly and Biblically through difficult situations, but he will never give us revelations that bypass the process of studying his Word...

Maturity Must Be Our Goal

The ultimate goal of our Christian life is conformity to Christ. In **Ephesians 4:13** Paul expresses this goal thus: “*Till we all come to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*” We seek to deepen our character, grow in grace, increase in love and knowledge, and also in discernment and judgment. We are absolutely obligated to progress from spiritual childhood to spiritual maturity. Yet it must be said that the Charismatic ideal is an abandonment of maturity and a reverting to childishness. The rhythmic pattern of music and dancing; the hand clapping, the jolly informality, the uninhibited antics of some, together with the very low demands made on the *mind*, are all features of conduct which delight the very young and tend to embarrass the mature person.

Mature people are uncomfortable not because they are unwilling to let the Holy Spirit have sway in their lives (as the Charismatics claim), but because they sense that this manner of proceeding is in the reverse direction from that of spiritual maturity.

As we seek to draw closer to Christ, and to be like him, we must ask, Was Christ abandoned in his behavior? Did he encourage people to dance and jump and roll over on the ground (as some healers do today) before he healed them? Did he engage in uninhibited physical activities in his prayers to the Father? Did he put believers into trances or encourage them to shout out suddenly, shriek, or cackle alarmingly? We are to imitate our Lord. We are on a journey to Christian maturity. We are commanded to exercise our adult

minds and not to behave like children, who use their minds sometimes, and sometimes not. Our actions are always to be controlled, sincere, sensible, and worthy of our Master.

Children love to pretend and play-act. They love stories and surprises. They are gullible, open, believing, and easily led astray. Our duty on the pathway of Christian maturity is clear from Paul’s words: “*When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things*” (**1 Corinthians 13:11**). How many believers allow themselves to be drawn into Charismatic thinking through hearing stories of how people have supposedly been restored by a “gifted” healer, but they do not ask—What saith Scripture? Sadly, this reflects the difference between a child and an adult. The little child is amazed at what the conjurer can do, whereas the adult perceives that things are not always what they seem, and applies certain laws to the situation.

We hear even of ministers who have been drawn into Charismatic pastors’ fraternals and conferences where they have thrown off the mantle of maturity to experiment with the claim that uninhibited behavior releases the blessing of the Spirit. It is the ultimate tragedy when worked-up emotional sensations have to take the place of genuine power and blessing from God. The road to Heaven has always led upwards, not downwards, and this goes for maturity of behavior, rational control, and discernment as well as for all the other objectives of the Christian life. Paul underlines the issue with the words: “*Brethren, be not children in understanding...but in understanding be men*” (**1 Corinthians 14:20**).

By abandoning the duty of spiritual maturity and the law of a sound mind, Charismatic teachers have plunged thousands of believers into the very quagmire of childish, superstitious religion which true Christianity rescues us from. With supposed healings as its principal “selling point,” Charismania reverses the process of maturity, turning people into mere children—“*tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive*” (**Ephesians 4:14**).



A HIGH PNEUMATOLOGY: LEANING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT IN 2 TIMOTHY 1

Michael A.G. Haykin



Dr. Michael Haykin is Professor of Church History and Biblical Spirituality, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, & Research Professor of Irish Baptist College, Constituent College of Queen's University Belfast, N. Ireland.

One of the ever-recurring features of human history is war. Often fed by human love of empire and desire for domination, or ethnic pride and hatred of other peoples, men go into battle to kill or be killed. Wives are widowed, young women lose their sweethearts, children their fathers, parents their sons, sisters their brothers. Yet terrible as war is, I do not believe that the Bible teaches pacifism.

When John the Baptist, for instance, was asked by some soldiers what kind of lives they should live that befit those who were repentant of their sin, John told them: “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages (**Luke 3:14**).” Nothing is said about their leaving the army. And Paul, when dealing with the realities of political life in **Romans 13**, declared that the state has the right to exercise capital punishment (**Romans 13:1-4**). From this text, Christian theologians from Augustine onwards have argued that this implies that the use of violence by the state in self-defense is not at all illegitimate and that there is such a thing as a “just war.”

And obviously in the Old Testament, war is recognized as part of the reality of living in that unique situation when God was in covenant with a nation, namely the people of Israel. For example, in **Deuteronomy 20**, God laid down rules on how his ancient

covenant people were to conduct themselves in war. Heading the list was the command that, when they went into battle, they were to trust unconditionally in the Lord and his mighty power:

*“When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people and shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, for the Lord your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory (**Deuteronomy 20:1-4**).”*

Now, in the era of the new covenant, God’s people are also engaged in a war, but this war is not one that involves earthly weapons and the battles of earthly armies, the conquest of nations and the killing of human beings. As the Lord Jesus told the Roman governor Pilate, whose rule in Judaea was supported by the military might of the Roman Imperium:

*“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world (**John 18:36**).”*

Or as Paul put it: “*though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh (**2 Corinthians 10:3**)*.” And similar to the warfare of the Old Testament, the warfare in which the church is engaged also has its rules, of which the first is identical to that which we have read in **Deuteronomy**: trust wholeheartedly in the Lord and his almighty power. Now, one place that such wholehearted trust is inculcated is in the first chapter of **2 Timothy**.

The Historical Context of 2 Timothy

2 Timothy, as Gordon Fee states, is “a kind of last will and testament, a passing on of the mantle” from Paul to Timothy. Paul has been arrested, probably in Asia

Minor. Timothy is still in Asia Minor, in the city of Ephesus (**2 Timothy 1:16-18;4:19**). Certain Christian leaders in the Roman province of Asia, whom Paul names—Phygelus and Hermogenes—and whom he expected to have helped him, deserted him (**2 Timothy 1:15**) and now he is in prison in Rome (**2 Timothy 1:16-17;2:9**). He has undergone a kind of preliminary trial to determine if there is enough evidence to take him to a full trial (**2 Timothy 4:16**). This first trial may well have been presided over by Ophonius Tigellinus (d.69), the notorious and vicious head of the Praetorian Guard. Paul refers to his coming through this first trial as having been “*rescued from the lion’s mouth (**2 Timothy 4:17**)*.” At this defense, though, Paul expected to have been supported by some of the believers in Rome, but they too apparently failed him (**2 Timothy 4:16**. Are these brothers and sister Paul names in **2 Timothy 4:21**?).

Although he has survived this first trial, Paul is quite certain of what will be the final outcome of the trial process: his condemnation and death (**2 Timothy 4:6-8**). He thus urges Timothy to come as fast as he can to Rome, which means sailing from Ephesus before the winter storms make navigating the Mediterranean dangerous, something Paul the seasoned traveler of the Mediterranean knows all too well.¹ But in case Timothy does not reach Rome in time before Paul’s execution, Paul uses the written word in place of the spoken word to urge Timothy to guard the gospel from theological error, to stay true to what he has been taught and to be faithful in preaching the Word (**2 Timothy 1:14; 3:14-15; 4:2**).

The latter admonitions are also necessary because Paul is deeply concerned about a problem in the church at Ephesus that is as equally serious a problem as persecution by the Roman state. There are leaders in the house churches of Ephesus who have fallen into grave error. In a departure from his normal method of dealing with theological errorists, Paul names two of these leaders: Hymenaeus and Philetus (**2 Timothy 2:17**. See also **1 Timothy 1:18-20**). The teaching of these men was not at all promoting the spiritual health of the believers in Ephesus. On the contrary, Paul could

only liken their teaching to “gangrene” for it had a dangerous tendency to spread falsehood to believers just as gangrene infects and eats up neighbouring tissue.²

What were they teaching? Paul mentions only one specific: the denial of the bodily resurrection.³ Hymenaeus and Philetus probably shared a common Greek conviction that only the soul was of true value and the body was to be shed at death like a useless shell.⁴ If so, their teaching seems to have anticipated the errors of the Gnostic of the second century who despised the body and refused to believe it could be included in redemption.⁵

In John Owen’s final letter before his death on August 24, 1683, he told a close friend, Charles Fleetwood, “I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm,” a reference to the persecution that Dissenters like him were experiencing at the time from the English state.⁶ Given what we have just seen with regard to the historical context of **2 Timothy**, Paul could well have said the same thing to Timothy. Paul and the church in Ephesus were facing enemies from without the church and enemies from within. The situation clearly called for courage, stalwart leadership and a wise head.

A High Pneumatology

It is no surprise, therefore, to find the Apostle emphasizing right at the beginning of **2 Timothy**, in what we designate as chapter 1, that the only way in which Timothy can hope to stand firm is through the power of the Holy Spirit. For Paul, ultimately only the Spirit of God can make a person adequate for all the challenges of the Christian life, especially those of leadership in the Church.⁷

The structure of the first eighteen verses of the letter clearly highlights this emphasis that Paul wishes to make with regard to the Holy Spirit. In common with his normal pattern at the outset of a letter, Paul has a greeting (**2 Timothy 1:1-2**) followed by a thanksgiving (**2 Timothy 1:3-5**). In this case, the thanksgiving leads directly into an admonition to Timothy to use his Spirit-endowed gift or gifts and not give way to fear (**2 Timothy 1:6-7**). Closing the passage is a second admonition about the indwelling Spirit: Timothy is to guard the faith “*by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us (2 Timothy 1:14)*.” Also tying together the passage is the word “*ashamed*” (*epaischynomai*): Timothy is to rely on the Spirit’s power so that he will

not be ashamed of the gospel—by implication, Paul is doing so and so is not ashamed—Onesiphorus, again by implication, is held up as an example of one who also relied on the Spirit’s power and so was not ashamed (**2 Timothy 1:8,12,16**).

“For Paul, ultimately only the Spirit of God can make a person adequate for all the challenges of the Christian life, especially those of leadership in the Church.”

In **2 Timothy 1:6** Paul begins from the basic fact that Timothy is a genuine believer. As such, Paul can assume he has at least one gift of the Spirit for service in the Body of Christ.⁸ Although the Apostle does not name Timothy’s gift explicitly, it clearly had to do with preaching and leadership in the local church, otherwise Paul’s later admonitions to Timothy to teach those in error with gentleness and to preach the Word make no sense.⁹ Paul specifically urges Timothy to “*fan into flame*” his spiritual gift. The verb “*fan into flame*” Paul uses here does not imply that Timothy has so neglected his gift that it has to be fanned into flame from dying embers. Rather, Paul is likening Timothy’s gift to a fire which needs constant stirring to be kept at full flame. Paul is concerned that given the dangers of persecution and heresy Timothy may give way to timidity and not be as zealous in the exercise of his spiritual gift as he could be.

Paul can exhort Timothy to employ his gifts because, as he now goes on to state in **verse 7**, the source of these gifts is not Timothy’s own inner resources but the Holy Spirit, whom God has given—“*a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control*.” The word translated “*fear*” here, or “*timidity*” as some translations have it,¹⁰ actually has the connotation of “*cowardice*” and was often used in battle accounts. In the words of Gordon Fee, it describes “*the terror that overtakes the fearful in extreme difficulties*.”¹¹ In other words, Paul is reminding Timothy that the One who has gifted him for ministry, namely the Spirit, is not One who will lead

him to neglect his gift and run away from his responsibilities.

The Holy Spirit whom God has given to his children is characterized by three traits. First, he is a Spirit of power, one who fills believers with power to live for God and His glory, no matter the circumstances. This empowering comes not from the believer’s own resources, but lies in the inexhaustible strength of the divine Holy Spirit. The Scriptures frequently mention the Spirit as a Spirit of empowerment (**Zechariah 4:6-9; Acts 10:38; Philippians 1:19; Ephesians 3:16**). In **Acts 6**, for instance, Stephen is described as a man “*full of grace and power*,” whose words, when he bore witness to Christ, were irresistible because of “*the wisdom and the Spirit*” with which he spoke (**Acts 6:8,10**). Again, in **1 Thessalonians 1:4-5**, Paul is confident that the Thessalonian believers are enrolled among God’s chosen people, because when he was preaching the gospel to them he was conscious that the Spirit was driving home the truth of his words to them and bringing them under divine conviction. The Spirit’s power quickened the Apostle’s words and applied them to hearts of his audience. Similarly in **Romans 15:19**, Paul defines his ministry as one which does not deal with mere form and ritual, but results in powerful Spirit-wrought conversions.¹² These three texts reveal the biblical emphasis that genuine ministry is accomplished not by human strength, but through the powerful, empowering work of the Spirit. So it is no surprise that when Paul comes to exhort Timothy to fulfill his ministry he stresses the urgent need for Timothy to find his source of strength in the Spirit of God.

Then, the Spirit is a Spirit of love, One who promotes “*self-sacrificing, affectionate service*” to others.¹³ Again, this connection between the Spirit and love is characteristically Pauline. One need only think of **Galatians 5:22** where Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit, the solid evidence of the Spirit’s indwelling presence, and love heads the list and, from one perspective, defines all of the other characteristics. It will take love to truly deal with those who are promoting error. Look at the way Paul spells this out in **2 Timothy 2:24-26**. The Christian leader—“*the Lord’s servant*”—must be able to engage those in error with both firmness—he is to teach and correct—but it must be done with kindness, patience, and gentleness. He also needs to pray for the opponents of the truth that God might give them an opportunity to repent and embrace the truth.

Finally, Paul states that the Spirit is a Spirit of “*self-control*.” The Greek word at this point—*sōphronismos*—has taken some commentators by surprise, for it is a term that is regularly used by Hellenistic manuals of moral behavior and the word itself occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, although various cognate words do appear in the Pastoral Epistles.¹⁴ However, the surrounding context is extremely Pauline in emphasis: none of the terms listed in **verse 7** are regarded as the result of mere human effort, but all are the fruit of the Spirit. Here, in this third trait Paul is emphasizing that the Spirit is One who enables the believer to make sober judgments and to keep his head in fearful situations—both of which were especially appropriate for Timothy given his situation.

What we have here then is a deep appreciation of the believer’s and the church’s vital need for the Spirit to fulfill the task of ministry. Without his power, love, and self-control, all is vain. Like Timothy, believers in every age must trust in the Spirit’s power as they seek to live lives that glorify God. In other words, Paul is arguing in a fashion similar to what was said in **Deuteronomy 20**: in the context of spiritual warfare, the believer’s trust must be in the Lord the Holy Spirit. If this is so, what we have here then is evidence of a high pneumatology, in which the Spirit is implicitly lauded as God, for the believer’s hope and confidence is never directed to any but God alone.

The Spirit of the Crucified and Risen Lord

In view of the spiritual resources that the Spirit has given Timothy, Paul now urges his dear friend “*not [to] be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God (2 Timothy 1:8)*.” The key word here is “*power*.” Paul has just told Timothy that he can have confidence in using his gift for God since the One indwelling him, Who is the source of this gift, is a Spirit of power. Trust in the Spirit’s power to face the problems of persecution and heresy. Now, Paul calls upon Timothy to be loyal to both the Lord Jesus and to himself, the Lord’s prisoner. It is an appeal, which, if Timothy responds positively, will inevitably involve him in humiliation and suffering. But this humiliation and suffering can be borne if Timothy relies on “*the power of God*,” that

is the power which God gives through his Spirit.

It is absolutely vital to note that here we have a paradox that Paul enunciates in greater detail elsewhere in his letters: namely, that the Spirit’s power does not eliminate suffering and weakness—rather it manifests itself *in* weakness. Without agreeing with all that James D.G. Dunn has written, surely he is right when he states that, for Paul.¹⁵

“Weakness does not hinder or prevent the manifestation of power; on the contrary it is the necessary presupposition of power, the place wherein and the means whereby divine power is revealed...power does not drive out weakness; on the contrary, it only comes to its full strength in and through weakness.”

**“Since the Spirit
indwelling believers is
the Spirit of the
crucified Christ, the
same pattern can be seen
to be at work in
believers: the power of
the Spirit displayed in
the midst of human
weakness.”**

Verses 9-10 then provide a further reflection on the power of God. Timothy can wholly rely on the Spirit’s power, for it was that power which was at work in the crucified Christ, “*rendering death ineffectual*”¹⁶ and revealing life and immortality. Implicit in the statements of these two verses is the paradox just noted: God’s most powerful work, the salvific work of the cross, was accomplished through the utter frailty of his Son. Paul puts it this way in **2 Corinthians 13:4**, Christ “*was crucified in weakness*.” Yet, in the midst of the Son’s weakness, the Holy Spirit was powerfully at work, so that Paul can also say in **1 Corinthians 1:23-24** that Christ crucified is for “*those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, ...the power of God*.” Suffering and weakness by no

means imply the absence of God’s Spirit. On the contrary, they are *the medium* in which the Spirit delights to work. Since the Spirit indwelling believers is the Spirit of the crucified Christ, the same pattern can be seen to be at work in believers: the power of the Spirit displayed in the midst of human weakness.

Onesiphorus, a Spirit-filled Man

Paul has urged Timothy not to be ashamed of the gospel and states that he himself, solely because of grace and the Spirit’s power (**2 Timothy 1:9**), is not ashamed (**2 Timothy 1:12**). And to further encourage Timothy to trust in the Spirit’s power he gives the example of Onesiphorus. Unlike Phygelus and Hermogenes, elders probably in the churches of Asia, who were ashamed to be associated with Paul the “*criminal (2 Timothy 1:15;2:9)*”, Onesiphorus “*was not ashamed of [Paul’s] chains*.” Unlike his earlier imprisonment in Rome, when he lived under house arrest in a locale known to many (**Acts 28:30**), Paul appears to have been imprisoned in a cell not easily found, for Onesiphorus had to expend much energy in the search for the whereabouts of the Apostle (**2 Timothy 1:17**). And when he found Paul, he was not content with a single visit. But again and again he visited Paul, risking arrest and imprisonment with the Christian leader. But Onesiphorus was “*not ashamed (2 Timothy 1:16)*.” Why? From the verses that precede—which we have already looked at—one can only conclude that Onesiphorus’ courage was because of the power of the indwelling Spirit. Onesiphorus stands as a model of the Spirit-filled, Spirit-empowered man.

Notice further that Paul is not ashamed to own that Onesiphorus refreshed him. At a basic level, such refreshment would have involved food and other means of practical help.¹⁷ But at a deeper level it would have entailed the Spirit-given joys of Christian fellowship. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) has rightly noted in his spiritual classic *Life Together*: “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.”¹⁸ In fact, as has been noted above, a key reason for the writing of **2 Timothy** was Paul’s desire to have Timothy come to Rome to see him before he leaves this world. Twice near the end of the letter he reiterates this desire: “*Do your best to come to me soon*”—“*Do your best to come before winter (2 Timothy 4:9,21)*.”

Did Timothy go? Did he heed Paul's admonition and overcome any fears of associating with Paul by the Spirit's power? We do not know the answer for sure, but there is a tantalizing verse at the close of the Book of Hebrews, where the anonymous author tells his readers that "our brother Timothy has been released (Hebrews 13:23)." It appears quite likely that Timothy, empowered by the Spirit, did indeed go to Rome, and there experienced imprisonment for the sake of the gospel. And so he showed himself a true disciple of the Lord Jesus and his friend and mentor, Paul.

¹2 Timothy 4:9, 21. For one of Paul's voyages on the Mediterranean that involved a shipwreck, see Acts 27-28. In 2 Corinthians 11:25-26 Paul mentions being in danger while on the sea and specifically being shipwrecked three times, on one occasion spending "a night and a day" adrift at sea.

²J.N.D. Kelly, *A Commentary on The Pastoral Epistles: Timothy I & II, and Titus* (1960 ed.; repr. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987), 184; Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 2006), 525.

³2 Timothy 2:17-18. For other probable reflections on these false teachers, see: 2 Timothy 2:14 and 16, which mentions quarreling about words and "irreverent babble" and 2 Timothy 2:23, which refers to "foolish, ignorant controversies. 2 Timothy 3:1-9 may also refer to these men. On the "irreverent babble," see also 1 Timothy 6:20-21.

⁴For a different theological reconstruction of the error in view here, see Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 526-529.

⁵Another element of the errors at Ephesus, the rejection of marriage (1 Timothy 4:1-3), also anticipates second-century Gnosticism.

⁶*The Correspondence of John Owen*, ed. Peter Toon (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1970), 174.

⁷For Paul's teaching on the Holy Spirit, see Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Massachusetts, 1994).

⁸See Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 12.

⁹See, for example, Paul's words in 2 Timothy 2:24-26; 4:1-2. Towner argues that the "gift of God" in view here is the Spirit himself. See Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 457-460.

¹⁰The KJV and ESV have "fear," while the NIV and NASB have "timidity."

¹¹*1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 177.

¹²Clark Pinnock, "The Concept of Spirit in the Epistles of Paul" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Manchester, 1963), 126. Unlike Clark Pinnock's more recent work, this thesis is an admirable exploration of Pauline pneumatology. See also 1 Corinthians 4:20.

¹³Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 160.

¹⁴See Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 160.

¹⁵*Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1975), 329.

¹⁶Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 180.

¹⁷Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 483.

¹⁸*Life Together*, trans. John W. Doberstein (1954 ed.; repr. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, n.d.), 19.



Sovereign Grace Bible Conference Grace Baptist Church, West Milton, PA



Invitation:

Grace Baptist Church of West Milton, Pennsylvania, and Pastor David King invite you to attend the annual Fall Conference. The dates are October 20-24, 2008. There will be morning and evening sessions and an afternoon meal at a local restaurant, provided by the Church. Eight different speakers are on the schedule this year.

For further information, contact Pastor King
Phone: (570) 742-8915, Fax: (570) 742-0770



Reading Resource Recommendations



Historical (Baptist): Particular Baptist Press, 2766 W. Farm Rd, Springfield, MO 65810. Phone: (417) 883-0342

Significant Reprints: Sprinkle Publications, 934 Chicago Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802. Phone: (540) 434-8840

General (including resources for home-schoolers): www.graceandtruthbooks.com

FUNDING OF *THE SOVEREIGN GRACE MESSENGER*

The Sovereign Grace Messenger is funded completely by contribution. It is our desire to distribute it to as many people as possible, with the fervent hope that it will be spiritually enriching to all who receive it. We make no subscription charge for the *Messenger* and there are no paid advertisements. We only ask that its contents be read. No one receives any monetary benefit from its publication. All who labor toward its publishing and all who write articles printed in it do so without any compensation, so that no individual involved benefits personally from it. The formatting is done completely by those involved in its editing, so as to keep the costs to a minimum. The only costs involved are those of its printing, and whatever mailing supplies and postage are necessary.

It is our desire to publish *The Sovereign Grace Messenger* three times yearly. This depends upon sufficient funds being received by contribution to the Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship (SGBF) general fund and those specially designated for the *Messenger*.

We thank those churches and individuals who give to the support of this endeavor. Our God has enabled this work to proceed by providing the laborers, writers, and contributors who support this work.

If God so enables and you feel led to give to this outreach, please send all contributions to:

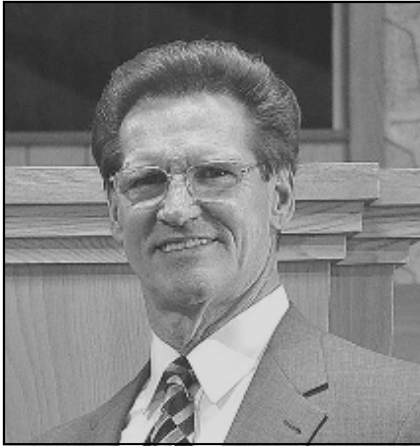
SGBF
c/o New Hope Baptist Church
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Checks may be made payable to "Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship", or simply "SGBF". All contributions are tax deductible.

The Baptism of The Holy Spirit: What Is It?

Tom Henry

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I...He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." (Matthew 3:11) "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts 1:5)



Tom Henry is Assistant Pastor of Bible Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri. In addition to his pulpit and other ministries, he is a conference speaker and serves as the current Vice-Chairman of the SGBF.

Prevailing Confusion of Opinion

With respect to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, there is nothing about which there is more confusion than the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The confusion has its rise in many factors. A great many Christians see it as a second work of grace, something that is evidenced by an ecstatic experience, which involves speaking in an unknown tongue. Those who hold this view seem to regulate the baptism of the Holy Spirit to the realm of **experience** altogether. They wait before God, asking for this experience.

These also link the baptism of the Holy Spirit to certain temporary spiritual gifts and the exercise of them. They often will confuse the baptism of the Spirit with the filling of the Spirit. They take the Scriptural exhortation to be filled with the Spirit as an exhortation to be baptized with the Spirit. In fact, there is no such exhortation to be found in Scripture. Such false notions can be easily refuted, if we simply allow the Scriptures to speak. However, that is not to imply that all difficulties related to this subject are so simply and easily removed.

We implore the help of the Holy Spirit Himself, whose very sending was, at least in part, to give understanding of our Lord's

teachings (**John 14:26**), and to guide us into all truth (**John 16:2**). May He be pleased to give us guidance and understanding as we look into this doctrine that pertains to Himself and His work.

The Person and Work of The Holy Spirit as Seen in the Old Testament

Although the Holy Spirit had not yet been given in His full administrative authority and work, not many students of Scripture will deny His presence and operation during Old Testament times. Those who do, take in an absolute sense the words of John when he said, *"The Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified."* (**John 7:39**) In the words of Arthur Pink, "It seems passing strange that with an Old Testament in their hands some men should place the construction they do on those words." For that matter, what about the witness of the New Testament itself? With the confidence of B.B. Warfield, "We are sure with the surety of divine revelation that the Spirit of God of the Old Testament is the personal Holy Spirit of the New." The writers of the New Testament repeatedly identify their Holy Spirit with the Spirit of God in the Old Testament. They testified that He was the giver of those Scriptures (**I Pet. 1:21**); the guide whom they had resisted (**Acts 7:51**); the Spirit in whom Christ preached to the antediluvians through Noah (**I Pet. 3:8**); the Author of faith both now and then (**II Cor. 4:13**); the One who gave Israel its ritual service (**Heb. 9:8**); the Spirit that spoke through the prophets (**Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 28:25; Heb. 3:7; 10:15**).

Even though the *"ministration of the Spirit"* (**II Cor. 3:8**) was not yet fully known, there can be no doubt that the saints of all ages were quickened and indwelt by Him. God's people have ever been recipients of His sanctifying and comforting work (**Num. 27:18; Neh. 9:30; II Cor. 4:13**).

Spirit Baptism Foreshadowed Under the Old Covenant

We are prone to think of the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a strictly New Testament

doctrine. This is due to the fact that this particular terminology is exclusively New Testament. In all, there are eleven places where we find these specific terms used with reference to spiritual baptism (**Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 13:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16; Rom. 6:1-4; I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:12**). The three references that are prior to Pentecost are prophetic, and the remaining eight speak of spiritual baptism as an existing reality.

There are no Old Testament texts where these terms are so used. For this reason, many will conclude that there is nothing related to Spirit baptism under the old economy. However, that conclusion is no more valid than is the assumption that the absence of the terms regeneration and new birth mean that Old Testament saints were not born again.

Foreshadowed in certain individuals.

Although we are not authorized to call it Spirit baptism, there was a certain "outpouring" of the Spirit upon particular individuals by which they were endued with special powers and abilities. What is expressly said of Othniel (**Jud. 3:10**), Gideon (**Jud. 6:34**), and Elisha (**II Kings 2:9**) we believe was undoubtedly the experience of many others among the great prophets, kings, and other leaders in Israel. None of these are said to have been *"baptized in the Spirit,"* but the manifestations indicate that they received something that was tantamount to it (**Zech. 4:6**). Jesus said, *"Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost...ye shall receive power"* (**Acts 1:5, 8**). What was it that gave these individuals such extraordinary power, if not the Spirit of God that came upon them?

Foreshadowed in certain symbols and procedures.

Paul tells us how the people were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea (**I Cor. 10:2**). The one is symbolic of Spirit baptism (from above), and the other of water baptism. Then in the ceremonial anointing of Aaron the high priest we see the holy oil (symbolic of the Holy Spirit) poured out on his head so profusely that it saturated his garments even to the ground (**Psa. 133:2**). Indeed,

the anointing oil with which Israel's prophets, priests, and kings were consecrated symbolizes the spiritual baptism by which we have the unction of the Holy One (**I John 2:20**), and are made kings and priests unto God (**Rev. 1:6**).

The Advent of The Holy Spirit

When we speak of the advent of the Spirit we must be mindful, as we have already seen, that there never was a time when He was not resident in the world. Yet, He came to dwell in a unique way on the day of Pentecost.

The outpouring of God's Spirit as foretold by the prophet Joel. What happened on the day of Pentecost was clearly the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (**Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-20**). Peter said, "This is that..." The question, however, is this: Is the outpouring that did come in answer to Joel's prophecy, in fact, the baptism of the Holy Spirit which John the Baptist and Jesus both foretold? John had said, "He that cometh after me...shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (**Matt. 3:11**) Jesus was clearly referring to that very prophecy when He said, "John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (**Acts 1:5**) He then went on in **verse 8** to say, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..." He seems to be saying that after receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, they would be mightily empowered to take the Gospel to the whole world. In other words, the outpouring of the Spirit, which Joel had predicted, was fulfilled when Christ baptized His church with (in) the Holy Spirit. This He had promised His disciples that He would do (**John 14:16-18**).

However, not all agree with this opinion. Some believe that what both John and Jesus, in referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, were speaking of was that which He would do **after** the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost through Holy Spirit-empowered preaching of the Gospel. (See **John 14:12**) They see what happened in **Acts 2** as being the advent of the Holy Spirit according to Joel's prophecy, but not the baptism of the Holy Spirit of which Jesus spoke in **Acts 1**.

The opposite view holds that the outpouring of the Spirit was indeed the baptism with (in) the Spirit, of which John and Jesus both spoke. But they would put

special emphasis on the definite article "the." It was that for which the disciples waited in the upper room, and when it came it was a one time occurrence, never again to be repeated.

These two opposite views are both, in my opinion, incorrect. It seems obvious that the baptism, which Jesus said would come "not many days hence," was that which did come upon the Church on the Day of Pentecost. However, it did not end there. As Conrad Murrell observes in his book *Spiritual Baptisms and Gifts*, "There are four 'Pentecosts' in **Acts**: one for Jews in **Acts 2:4**, one for Samaritans in **Acts 8:17**, one for Romans in **Acts 10:46**, and one for the Greeks in **Acts 19:6**." Besides these, there is also the Spirit's on-going baptizing work, which is performed through the preaching of the Gospel. This we will look at more closely later.

"When we speak of the advent of the Spirit we must be mindful, as we have already seen, that there never was a time when He was not resident in the world. Yet, He came to dwell in a unique way on the day of Pentecost."

The Significance of the Day of Pentecost.

Luke tells us that, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with one accord in one place." (**Acts 2:1**) It was then that there came a manifestation of the Spirit's presence that was both audible and visible to all who were gathered (120 souls in all). "There came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind..." (**Verse 2**), and there, "appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." (**Verse 3**)

It is very significant that the advent took place "when the day of Pentecost was fully come." The feast of Pentecost follows fifty days after The Passover (**Lev. 23:15-22**). God had instituted the Passover on the night that He delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt. He commanded that the blood of the sacrificial lamb be applied to the side posts and top of the door. Seeing this blood, death would pass over that house. Paul tells us that "Christ, our

Passover, is sacrificed for us" (**I Cor. 5:7**). As we compare this with **Leviticus 23**, we can see how the New Testament event was anticipated in the Old Testament.

The feast of Unleavened Bread followed the Passover. Just as those who partook of the Passover were to be separated from leaven (sin), so, partakers of Christ are exhorted to "purge out therefore the old leaven..." (**I Cor. 5:7**).

The third feast described in **Leviticus 23** is the feast of First Fruits. This was to celebrate the harvest. A wave offering of the sheaves was then offered. Again this speaks of Christ, who because of His resurrection from the dead is the first fruits of many who shall follow Him in the harvest of the Gospel.

Now, the feast of Pentecost defines itself as coming "fifty days after" – after The Passover. On that day they were to offer, "two wave loaves" (**Lev. 23:16, 17**). The offering on this occasion was not one of sheaves, but rather loaves – that which had been unified, put together, and then offered to God. This feast showed that through the death and resurrection of Christ, there would be a great harvest to God, a harvest that would be formed into one unified body, the Church.

When we come to the feast of Pentecost, we are moving into the realm of the Holy Spirit, for He will be the Agent who will unite the people of God from every kindred and tongue, and present them to God as one redeemed people. The Old Testament anticipated that this work would be accomplished when the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all flesh, at which time He would do His work of gathering together a loaf that would be offered to God as the harvest of the earth. How striking and significant is our Lord's choice of metaphors to depict the Gospel permeating the whole earth (**Matt. 13:33**)!

After our Lord had offered Himself as the true Passover Lamb, He said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high" (**Luke 24:49**). Jesus said in John's Gospel that when He had ascended unto the Father, He would ask the Father and the Father would send them the Holy Spirit. This was to be the fulfillment of the feast of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit descended to consecrate God's temple for His dwelling. Moses

constructed the tabernacle exactly according to the blue print that he had received from the mouth of the Lord in the mount. But, for all of that, it was nothing but an empty tent until a most significant event took place. *“Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent...”* (See **Ex. 40:34, 35**). We see the same thing again when Solomon erected that glorious temple. For all of its splendor, it was only an empty building until *“the glory of the Lord had filled the house.”* (**I Kings 8:11**)

In the New Testament Church, God has chosen a temple in which to dwell. It is not a temple made with hands (**Acts 7:48**). It is *“A spiritual house,”* built with living stones, put in place by the Holy Spirit. The Church consisted of only a hundred and twenty *“stones”* when the glory of the Lord came into it in the person of the Holy Ghost.

When Luke tells us that there appeared cloven tongues like as of fire (**Acts 2:3**), this corresponds with what Moses reported that he saw when the Shekinah glory of God appeared to fill the tabernacle. This was nothing less than the manifestation of the glory of God.

There was then the demonstration that God had come to possess His temple: *“They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* (**Acts 2:4**)

Soon it was evident what the function of this Holy Spirit-baptized Church would be. The Gospel was preached in many languages, and thousands were saved and added to the Church. Thus, empowered and protected by the Holy Spirit, it would take this Gospel to every kindred and every tongue on earth.

What About the Baptism with Fire?

Before we leave this part of our subject, we need to say a word or two about the other part of John’s prophecy. He not only said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost, but that He would baptize with fire also. Many see this baptism with fire as being postponed until the second advent of Jesus Christ. Thus, they see the first baptism of John’s prophecy as being administered just after Christ’s ascension into glory, but the second baptism as not

being administered until His return in judgment. Paul speaks of that awful day, *“When the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (**II Thess. 1:7b-8**, emphasis mine).

According to this view, the baptism with the Spirit has come upon **the church**, and the baptism with fire is reserved for **the wicked and unbelieving world**. How can this be possible? It seems quite obvious that John was saying that Jesus would be baptizing **the same people** with both of these baptisms. *“...He shall baptize YOU with the Holy Ghost, AND with fire”* (**Matt. 3:11**, emphasis mine). Whatever this baptism is, it is for the Church.

What then is this baptism? Do the *“cloven tongues like as of fire”* that appeared on the Day of Pentecost answer to this prophecy? (**Acts 2:3**) Perhaps they did in a symbolic way, for Jesus said, *“I am come to send fire on the earth”* (**Luke 12:49**). He then went on to talk about **His suffering** as being His own *“Baptism with fire”* (**Luke 12:50**). Prior to His ascension and glorification, at which time the Holy Spirit would be sent (**John 7:39; 14:16-18; 16:7**), His disciples were not able to drink of this cup (**Matt 20:22**).

However, subsequently, this would be the very cup from which all believers would be required to drink (**I Pet. 4:1, 2**). The baptism of fire speaks of our suffering with Christ (**Luke 12:49, 50**). It speaks of the persecution that the Church would begin to face immediately after Pentecost, and would continue to suffer throughout the entire church age. It is a given that *“in the world ye shall have tribulation”* (**John 16:33**). This baptism also speaks of the *“fiery trials”* to which all Christians are appointed for the purifying of their faith (**I Pet. 1:6, 7; 4:1, 2; 5:10**). Let us, then, *“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial...as though some strange thing happened.”* This is the baptism that we must all experience at the hand of our Lord. The incalculable blessing is that *“If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:12a).”*

The Baptism of The Holy Spirit Universal Among Believers

The baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is the universal experience of all believers.

“By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...” (**I Cor. 12:13**). By this, the apostle teaches us that the baptism by the Spirit unites believers to the body of Jesus Christ. John Gill remarks: *“This is not...water baptism; for the Apostle says not in one and the same water, but by one Spirit.”* This is the *“one baptism”* that all believers have in common (**Eph. 4:5**). That this is not water baptism should then be obvious, for all believers do not have one common water baptism. Thus, all who are a part of the body of Christ are not of the same water baptism.

In his letter to the **Galatians**, the apostle says, *“...Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus”* (**3:6**). The first great fact that Paul has put before us is that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes one a child of God. What does he say about these believers? *“...As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”* (**v. 27**). He is teaching that those who, by faith in Christ Jesus are the children of God, have been baptized into the body of Christ. They have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ. *“There is neither Jew nor Greek...bond nor free...neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus”* (**v. 28**). This experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the universal experience of all regenerate souls. One is regenerated, baptized by the Holy Spirit, indwelt and sealed by the Spirit, all in the same moment of time. Chronologically, there is no separation.

In the Word of God no individual is ever exhorted to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If this baptism were a second work of grace, if it were something to be experienced sometime subsequent to salvation, the apostle certainly would have laid down the basis on which we are to receive the baptism. He would have given us commandments concerning our responsibility to get this baptism, and we would have exhortations to *“Be baptized with the Spirit.”* However, no believer, under any circumstances, is ever invited to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it shows us that this is a universal experience for all believers. We need not seek it, pray for it, or try to get it. It is something that God has already given to us in regeneration. Just as it would be a great absurdity to exhort people to become born again, or to try and instruct them as to how to be regenerated, the same can be said with respect to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. ♦ ♦ ♦

EDITORIAL: Cancer and Comfort

Ron Staley

This issue of *The Sovereign Grace Messenger* features articles on various works of the Holy Spirit in the regenerate, believing soul. So the question might come, “Since this is the case, why is ‘Cancer and Comfort’ the theme of the editorial?” Admittedly, it is a result of recent personal experience. Along with my reluctance to bring in something so personal was this overruling thought: The work of the Holy Spirit does apply to every ‘joy or trial,’ and the grace applied to personal experience is the same grace available to all who believe in Christ, who by His Spirit, “*comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God*” (2 Corinthians 1:4, emphasis mine). The Holy Spirit is the divine “*Comforter*.” That word, “*Comforter*,” in its old and etymological sense, meant one who was called by the side of another in some legal process but came to mean also any purpose to help, encourage, strengthen, etc. We usually limit the meaning of comfort in our English usage to consolation. But in its Scriptural usage it is expanded to also mean exhortation, encouragement and help. My wife, Carolyn, and I have recently had a signal instance of this consolation, encouragement and help.

“*My grace is sufficient for thee*” are not just words, they are words of promise from the One who ordains all that takes place in the course He gives us. And so, dear saint, learn to “*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved*” (Psalm 55:22).”

As a pastor, I have been with others when *bad* news, including “It is cancer”, was received. Feeling not only the helplessness of the victim and the family but also even my own inability to be a help to them, I have learned that the only effective help would come as I was but a channel. In the final analysis, only God can truly help and I had to trust Him to convey His truth and grace to the hearts of His hurting children.

Recently, my wife had to have emergency surgery. There was a blockage in her colon, which caused her to become desperately sick. The surgeon, speaking with me after the surgery, thought it was cancer, which the lab report confirmed. At first, fear gripped my heart. It was, I think, the most difficult news I had ever received. I have to be honest and say that foreboding thoughts raced through my mind, as I fought with tormenting “what ifs.” I would rather have been in her place, for here was a woman I loved more than myself. I knew that the sovereign Lord we serve was in control and that He makes no mistakes. I had to trust Him with my wife as much as I have had to learn to trust Him with my ministry, even when trials, burdens, and warfare pressed sore. The words of David, from Psalm 56 came to mind: “*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*” As simple as it may sound, I realized that my whole responsibility now lay in the huge meaning of that simple word, “*trust in the Lord.*” Not in the theological knowledge I have

acquired over the years, nor in any labor in which I have engaged, no matter how disciplined and fervent. There was nothing at all in myself to which I could look; our help could only come from the Lord. Whatever help I have received, whatever peace was and is experienced in my own soul, has been realized with the measure of faith the faithful Lord of glory has brought forth even while burning up some of the dross. His purpose has eternity in view, and the trials of time serve to move our attention to things eternal. And the greatest comfort God, by His Holy Spirit, has given is the realization that even this will, out of infinite purpose, bring glory to Him. And my wife and I are in His infinite care.

But what about my wife, who after all, is the one who had the cancer in her body? I shall never forget the morning when we awaited the lab report, which alone would confirm if the blockage was truly cancer. When I arrived at the hospital I found her in tears. Quickly she stopped me from a wrong impression of what she was feeling. In the wee hours of the morning, she had been reading, praying and meditating upon Psalm 121. Earlier, she told me that the Lord had given her real peace in her soul. She had said something like, “You know, I have heard of all kinds of experiences and feelings people relay about sufficient grace. But all I know is that I am at perfect peace.” At the hospital, while wiping tears, she told me that the Lord had impressed on her heart a verse of Scripture that brought the greatest of comfort to her, which she took for her own: “*The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.*” (Psalm 121:8). She was at peace and her trust was in the Lord. How could such a supernatural peace be explained other than as coming from her divine Comforter, the Holy Spirit?

Carolyn’s cancer was contained within her colon and had not spread to any other organs or to the lymph nodes. She is recovering incredibly well from her surgery. It would be presumptuous to say that she will not have any more battles to face in this. And there have been times of having to fight with depression. But she knows to Whom she must bring her fears. And we have both found that the presence of fear does not mean the absence of faith. We hope the Lord will bring us to the place of being able to say, “*I will trust and not be afraid.*” But we also know that it is possible, and probable for both fear and faith to reside together. Then we can say, “*What time I am afraid I will trust in thee.*”

It is for sure that as the divine “*Comforter*,” the Holy Spirit is our Helper in gospel ministry and witness. This is priority. But He is also our personal “*Comforter*,” in whatever “*The God of all comfort*,” has purposed for our course. “*My grace is sufficient for thee*” are not just words, they are words of promise from the One who ordains all that takes place in the course He gives us. And so, dear saint, learn to “*Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved*” (Psalm 55:22).

Ron Staley is pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, Mechanicsville, Virginia and editor of *The Sovereign Grace Messenger*

The Holy Spirit in Missions and Evangelism

T..... J.....



TJ's work and the place of ministry is withheld due to security reasons, although may of our readers will know him. Contact information may be obtained by contacting the editor of the *Sovereign Grace Messenger*.

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God. The Spirit bears witness to Christ. The Spirit makes the work of Christ effectual. He applies it to us. The Spirit makes the Lord "our Lord." He makes the historical Christ a living personal presence. The Holy Spirit makes the Gospel the Gospel for us.

We have no mere religion of facts or rituals. Our faith is not so much religion at all but relationship. And this relationship is so deep that it does not merely involve closeness; it involves actual indwelling! Not only is the Holy Spirit the presence of God among men; He is God's presence living *in* men who believe! Whereas in times past, the Spirit fell "*upon*" men (**Ezekiel 11:5; Judges 6:34; I Samuel 10:10**) now the Spirit is "*in*" all who believe (**Romans 8:1-11; Hebrews 10:16; John 14:17**).

Basic Points of Agreement

Before we speak about the Holy Spirit's role in missions, let's cover the basics again upon which we all agree. We believe that the Holy Spirit is God of very God, and a personal one at that. He is not some impersonal force (**Acts 5:3-4, 1 Cor. 3:16**). He is omnipotent (**Micah 3:8; Acts 1:8, Rom. 15:13,19**), omniscient (**Isaiah 40:13-14; 1 Cor. 2:10-11**), and omnipresent (**Psalms 139:7**). He is not the privilege of some higher class of Christians, but inhabits all believers (**Rom. 8:9-16, Gal. 4:6, I Jn 3:24, I Jn 4:13**).

In this article, I want to concisely speak of the Holy Spirit's role in the great advance of the Gospel throughout the whole earth, the Holy Spirit's role in missions and evangelism. We need the Holy Spirit to bring us to salvation and then to lead us continually. We often forget, however, the role of the Spirit in missions, in bringing salvation to the ends of the earth. That, too, is His job. It is not as if Jesus died to bring some in and the Spirit is merely the mother that nurses her own. The Holy Spirit, on the contrary is God's great missionary. He is that "*Lord of the harvest*" in **Matthew 9** that sends forth the labourers into the fields. He commissions, sets apart, equips and sends. Furthermore, once He sends people to do the work, He accompanies that work to make it effectual and is

already there working in the hearts of the recipients once the Gospel is preached.

At all stages, beginning, progress, and end, missions belongs to the Holy Spirit. He saves. He calls. He sets apart. He sends. He directs. He is everywhere in the process and on both sides of the witness. He places words in the mouths of His sent out ones and He is already in the ears of the hearer, opening them to the truth. He commands us to go and yet He goes with us. If in our witness, we are dragged before heathen courts, the Spirit will even place the words in our mouths (**Matthew 10:20**). And when we arrive at our place of witness, the Spirit who has sent us has not only gone alongside of us (such as a *paraclete* would), but has also preceded us and is there waiting on us to announce those precious Words of Life.

A Concise Biography of The Holy Spirit

From eternity past the Spirit fellowshiped in perfect harmony with the Father and the Son. At creation it was the Spirit that brooded over the face of the deep (**Genesis 1:2**) and gives life to all that live (**Psalms 104:30**). If the Spirit withdrew in all senses of the word, all life would cease (**Job 34:14-15**). Despite the Fall, sin and the Flood, the Spirit did not withdraw totally. The Spirit, instead, equipped those in the Old Testament for service (**Numbers 27:18, Judges 3:10; I Samuel 16:13**) and caused His prophets to speak of the Savior to come (**II Peter 1:21**).

It was the Holy Spirit that fell upon Jesus at His baptism, commissioning Him for service (**Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22**). The Spirit compelled Jesus into the wilderness for His divine conflict with Satan (**Luke 4**), and afterward Jesus emerged victorious in the power of the Spirit. The Spirit also empowered Jesus to perform miracles. In fact, the Spirit came and remained on Jesus "*without measure*" (**John 3:34-25; John 1:32**) throughout His earthly ministry.

As Jesus prepared to complete His task and go away, He promised the Spirit to His disciples. True to that promise, the Spirit came in power to those in Jerusalem with a

In times past God spoke with an audible voice through the prophets (**Hebrews 1**). In these last days, God has spoken to us by His own Son. This Son once walked the earth, God's presence among men. What could get better than that?

The Spirit! Now, believers possess the Spirit; and are also owned by that same Spirit. We are our Father's prized possessions, kept and preserved by God Himself who gives us the Spirit as our seal – our *arrabon* – an earnest or pledge, an engagement ring for a wedding that can never be cancelled and for a marriage feast that will last forever (**Ephesians 1:14; Revelation 19:7-10**)!

We should not, therefore, long for some "good old days" when we could see Jesus with physical eyes and hear God's voice with physical ears. Sight and hearing occur across distance. The Spirit, however, is too close for that. He indwells us (**I Corinthians 3:16**)!

Jesus himself said that it was needful that He should go away so that the Spirit could come (**John 14**). The purposes of God did not take a step backward when the Spirit replaced Jesus' ministry on earth. Jesus spoke of this as an advance. Jesus spoke of this as even a greater benefit than His very presence among men during His earthly ministry.

view not to stop there but to go to the whole world. The Holy Spirit led the steps of these first ministers and directed their outreach. The Spirit authenticated His Word with signs and wonders (**Mark 16:20; Acts 2:22; Acts 8:6**). The Holy Spirit even settled disputes; when conflict arose over whether one needed to adopt Jewish cultural forms in order to become Christians, the verdict that was handed down was one that “*pleased the Holy Spirit*” (**Acts 15:28**). As Paul and his apostolic ministry team aimed to minister in new unreached areas, the Spirit even diverted their travel trajectory west into Europe rather than east into Asia (**Acts 16:6**).

We read much of this work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament book called the **Acts of the Apostles**. This account, however, might more accurately be thought of as “The Acts of the Holy Spirit.” Peter and Paul, after all, are not the main characters! The Spirit is the hero. He moves, energizes, equips and enlarges the New Testament church and deserves all the credit. From the very first verses of Scripture (**Genesis 1:2**) to the very last (**Revelation 22:17**), the Spirit is present and working. Below are some specific ways He works, with a focus on the spread of the Gospel to the whole world.

The Spirit Is Our Missions Mobilizer

The descent of the Holy Spirit was the causative factor in the first great movement towards the ends of the earth. “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*” (**Acts 1:8**) Thus, like the pistol shot signaling the beginning of a marathon, the descent of the Spirit precipitated a rush towards the ends of the earth, a race that has been ongoing now for two millennia. Not only did a mighty rush of wind signal the Spirit’s descent, a mighty rush of souls into the Kingdom followed. The Spirit was poured out in order to gather in some from every corner of the earth.

In **Acts 8:29**, the Spirit initiates another new outreach – to an Ethiopian eunuch. The Spirit tells Philip, “Go!” and Philip runs to the chariot. Oh, what obedience to the call! After Philip’s divine appointment was completed (v. 39), he was then “*caught away*” by the Spirit for further witness.

The Spirit Labors to Make Men Labor

Active and energetic human effort is always involved in great movements of the Spirit. Look again at the example of Philip above. He trekked to the desert and then ran after a chariot in order to witness to someone. We cannot sit idly by and hope for the Spirit’s work. When was the last time we chased any chariots! However, we also cannot merely stir up a lot of activity without prayer or due regard for Scripture and call this revival. We are not to be idle in the means, nor are we to make an idol out of the means.

“God works so that we will work. The Spirit labors in us to make us labor in the Spirit. Let us therefore engage in some holy sweat!”

God moves, and then we move. This could be called “cooperation,” but such terminology contains baggage. I prefer to call it “*us working because God works in us*” (**Philippians 2**) or “*walking in the good works that God has already ordained for us*” (**Ephesians 2**). God works so that we will work. The Spirit labors in us to make us labor in the Spirit. Let us therefore engage in some holy sweat!

Notice the interplay in **Acts 13** between those called by God, the larger corporate body and the Holy Spirit: “*As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.*” (**Acts 13:1-4**) From **Acts 13**, and also from **Acts 15:22-28**, we see that when the Spirit moves, His church moves. The Spirit approved. God’s sent ones approved,

and the whole church approved such that this new effort “*seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit*” (**Acts 15:28**).

The Spirit Equips and Empowers

The Spirit fell on select individuals in the Old Testament for special service (**Numbers 27:18, Judges 3:10; I Samuel 16:13**). The anointing with oil was symbolic of this. In this New Testament “*fullness of time*” how much more this is true. The Holy Spirit gifts the whole church with power and anoints each one of us with individual gifts (**Romans 12; I Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4; I Peter 4:10**). The Spirit empowers each and every believer to grow in the fruits of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**). The church, indeed, is “charismatic” in that it possesses the *charismata*, the giftings of the Spirit. These gifts of the Spirit need not be loud and visible, but they are real nonetheless. Believers, full of the Spirit, have bellies full of not just springs but “*rivers*” of living water (**John 7**).

Some Christians are called to special tasks. Often when these are called, they are usually overwhelmed with self-doubt and fears of inadequacy. There is much comfort in the fact that the Spirit is the one who calls; and those whom He calls He will surely equip and empower.

The Spirit Gives the Message of Missions

The Spirit not only calls and equips people to witness, He is the One who gives the message to preach. The Spirit thus gives not only the motivation but also the meat of missions. The message of missions is given by the Spirit, who moved in holy men of old to pen the Scriptures (**II Peter 1:21**).

The Spirit Directs Missions

Again, already mentioned above are clear examples of how the Holy Spirit guides missions and even directs new initiatives. How does the Spirit guide? The Spirit leads us to do His will by the Scriptures, by legitimate desires (“*if a man desires the office of a bishop...*” **I Timothy 3:1**), and by the corporate decision of his church (**Acts 15:28** – “*it seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit*”). During the era of the writing of the New Testament, the Spirit also directed by vision and prophecy.

continued next page

The Spirit Gives the Fruit of Missions

Finally, the Spirit is the one who blesses and determines the yield of our labor. Some plant and some water, but it is the Lord that gives the increase (**I Corinthians 3:6**). If it is the Spirit that applies the work of Christ for salvation, then it is the Spirit that applies the work of Christ for salvation (**John 3:5**). Full stop! The Holy Spirit is not merely an aid and an advantage to mission, but an absolute necessity. The Spirit is not one ingredient among many, but the main ingredient that has no substitutes.

The Holy Spirit is the one who births new souls into life by regeneration (**Titus 3:5**) and thus we are “*born of the Spirit*” when we are saved (**John 3**). Thus it is “*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts*” (**Zechariah 4:6**). How much we need the Spirit’s leading every day!

Conclusion

This article is nowhere near exhaustive. Reader, please search the Scriptures yourself. Use this article not as an authority, but as a jumping off point to research the richness of the Biblical record concerning our “*Lord of the Harvest*,” the Holy Spirit.

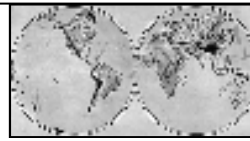
Revelation 22 is at the very end of the Scriptures and these last verses of this last chapter are appropriate to become my last words on this subject of the Holy Spirit’s role in missions and outreach – “*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*” (**Revelation 22:17**) The Holy Spirit and the bride of Christ, the church itself, invite sinners to drink of the water of life. Being the Spirit-filled body of Christ that we are, let us now be true to this Scripture and invite the lost around us to drink deeply.



Contact information withheld on website due to security reasons. Information available from editor of the SGM or sending church.

sending church:
Bible Baptist Church
3150 Sutton Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63143
(314) 645-4248

World Missions:



News & Updates

Guyana Report: Toil and Trial The Work of John and Kathy Hunter*



Ministering in a Third World country always poses a challenge. There are so many needs to be met with relatively limited resources. The first responsibility is to fulfill the greatest need of the people by presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them. This is made even more difficult in Guyana due to the plurality of religious systems, Hindu and Moslem in particular.

The Lord has granted some successes but there are also quite a few difficulties associated with life in Guyana. Frequent blackouts, for example! Should one occur during a church service, John must leave the service in order to start the generator. But these blackouts are only symptomatic of a larger problem, that of an entrenched and indifferent bureaucracy. Little is done with speed and efficiency. Although the country’s former dictatorship has now been replaced by a more democratic system of government, each step forward is made at a snail’s pace.

Crime, bribery, and begging are all offshoots of the poverty that has resulted from political instability. White foreigners, especially religious workers, are seen as “wealthy” and, therefore, obliged to help all who have need, whether that need is real or merely perceived. Under these circumstances one must learn to be somewhat hardnosed, to be “*wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.*”



Three things not caused by the political situation are heat, humidity and bugs. However, they still cause significant difficulty, being not just uncomfortable but destructive and dangerous as well. Bugs can cause rashes, sickness, and disease. They eat books and infest food items, if not properly cared for. At times, the heat and humidity can be oppressive despite attempts to deal with it. As a result, the Guyanese people have developed a poor work ethic, which aggravates the missionary by their lack of punctuality and commitment.

All of this may sound insurmountable but, as John reports, “Our God is able and the work goes on—we trust to His glory. Both of the churches are doing well. We had a drop off in attendance briefly but we seem to be recovering now. The Pastor’s Class is always a bright spot as the six men all appear to be learning and growing. The preaching of these who are involved in the ministry continues to improve. There is a good work ethic in these men not evident in the society at large.”

The Hunters thank you all for your prayers and support. You are vital partners in this part of the Lord’s vineyard.

* To learn more of the work of the Hunters or channel support, you may email them or contact their sending church.

email: j-khunter.gbca@juno.com
Hunter.jhkp@yahoo.com

sending church:
Sovereign Grace Baptist Mission
5440 Alabama Highway 202
Anniston, AL 36201

South Africa Update: Poverty and Pandemic

Paul Karstens*

At present, the students at the Bible Institute of South Africa are on mid-year recess. We commence again in about two weeks with the inter-semester school, which includes Ministry to Muslims and Christian Counseling. Marilyn and I have developed a very close relationship with our Zimbabwean, Zambian and Malawian students and, from time to time, we are able to send them food and clothes parcels, which are desperately needed.

Last week we were able to collect and send a considerable amount of food and clothes with one of our students who returned to Zimbabwe to be with his family. His name is Pastor Austin Mabena, who together with his family, live in abject poverty. Due mostly to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in that country, he and his wife Christine are taking care of 10 children at present. We do appreciate their ministry and are hoping to continue to assist them and others during this difficult time.

Another pastor friend from Malawi and his family took three large bags of clothes that we collected. We initially thought he would only select what he needed for his immediate family, but he and his wife ended up taking everything. The clothes we think are old and not usable are regarded as precious items!

From July through the end of November, I will be teaching Christian Ethics, The Gospel of John, and Pastoral Ministries. I will also be teaching Old Testament Survey on Thursday evenings in Villiersdorp. This ministry is for Xhosa speaking pastors at a very basic level and is taught through an interpreter since they do not understand much of the English language. This will continue to be a necessary programme for a number of years due to the enormous illiteracy problem in Southern Africa.

We are grateful for your partnership in the ministry. Your ongoing prayer support is appreciated and is a wonderful encouragement to all of us.

Items for Prayer:

- The pastors in the Christian Leadership Program. They are all precious servants of God who minister in extremely difficult circumstances.
- Students from the Southern Africa region who have to leave their families behind in order to pursue ministry training.
- The ongoing problem of Xenophobia in our country, especially those who were displaced by the recent violence.
- The country of Zimbabwe with its turmoil and unprecedented violence. Thousands are starving and many are fleeing for their lives. Pray for the Church in that country and for the faithful preaching of God's Word in these challenging times.



Paul, Marilyn, Brydon, Aydon and Tessalyn

* Contact and support information:
email: paulkarstens@gmail.com

Gifts channeled from the U.S. through:
Grace Baptist Church
510 Susquehanna Ave.
Milton, PA 17847

Prayer List and Contact Information for Other Missionaries

(Contact either missionary or sending church for more information)

Dr. Bob Doom and Global Baptist Mission:

Russian Bible Society, Director, PO Box 6068, Asheville, NC

Bill and Jennifer Hale in Cambodia:

First Baptist Church, 5304 East Parker Road, Parker, TX 75002.

Website: www.thechurchofmercy.org

Pat Horner in India:

Raleigh Springs Baptist Church, PO Box 34788, Bartlett, TN 38184. Email: gracemissionary@gracetoasia.com

Luis Paris in Columbia:

Fair Grove Baptist, 532 S. Orchard Blvd., Fair Grove, MO 65648. Phone: (417) 933-2053

Danny Roten in Mexico:

Website: www.sherwoodbaptist.com/missions/roten/news.php, Email: dan@sherwoodbaptist.com

Prem Waghmare in India:

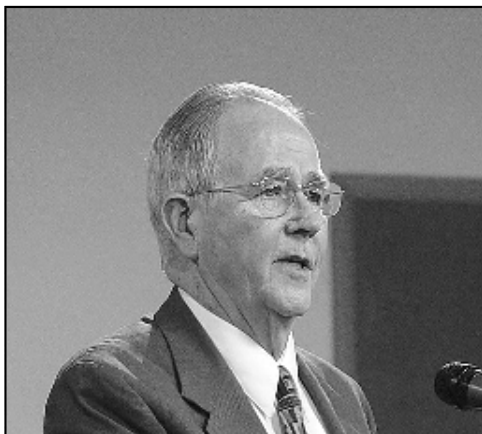
Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, PO Box 9424, Kansas City, MO 64133. Email: premw1@yahoo.com

Kyle White, support ministry for struggling churches in Siberia:

Community Baptist Church, 5697 Labus Rd. # 1, Elmendorf, TX 78112. Email: cbelder@juno.com, Phone: (210) 723-6568

The Old Covenant and the New Birth

Holmes Moore



Holmes Moore is the pastor of Bible Baptist Church, St. Louis, Missouri. It is largely through his vision and instrumentality that the Lord brought The Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship into existence.

No doubt the New Covenant introduced and brought to light many **NEW THINGS!** There was the **new relationship** of the Holy Spirit and the individual believer. That there was to dawn such a new relationship is made clear in such passages as **John 7:37-39**, “*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*” This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, and afterwards, when the coronation of Jesus Christ in Heaven redounded on earth with the Holy Spirit being given to His earthly Church. From that day to this it has been true, “*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.*” (**Romans 8:9b**)

Then, too, we have the **full revelation** of the written New Testament, giving us a full and settled canon of Scripture. (**1 Corinthians 13:9-13; Revelation 22:18, 19**) Thank God for the **full accomplishment** of our Redemption through the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God! (**John 1:29; Hebrews 10:8-14**)

Though so many **other things** might be named, the New Birth is not new to the

New Covenant Era. Jesus marveled that Nicodemus, an Old Testament scholar, was not familiar with the New Birth. “*Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master (teacher) of Israel, and knowest not these things?*” (**John 3:10**) We may infer from this question of Christ’s that anyone thoroughly familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures would be conversant with what the New Testament Scriptures call “the New Birth,” though the terminology would be different.

One of the Old Testament phrases used to express the concept of the New Birth is “*to know the Lord.*” For instance, we are told that Eli’s sons did not know the Lord. (**1 Sam. 2:12b**) In a like manner, we are told that Samuel did not yet know the Lord. (**1 Sam. 3:7a**) Note that Eli’s sons are called “*sons of Belial.*” (**1 Sam. 2:12a**) They had given themselves over to Satan and the works of the flesh in a full way, without repentance. Though outwardly they were “children of the Covenant,” inwardly they were ruled by the prince of this world.

Nonetheless, Samuel, though not yet born again, is not called a son of Belial. (**1 Sam. 3:7b**) Jesus charged some Pharisees of His day that had given themselves over to Satan and opposed Jesus so adamantly, “*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.*” (**John 8:44a**) All unsaved people are lost, and stand in need of the New Birth, but all are not, in this sense, the children of the devil.

This chapter documents the New Birth experience as it was brought to young Samuel. Here we have proof of the New Birth in an Old Covenant context. Thus it stands true, Old Covenant and New, that “*Ye must be born again!*” (**John 3:7b**)

Note How Many Advantages Young Samuel Had, While Not Yet Born Again

He was raised in ‘a Christian home.’ Hannah had earnestly desired and had fervently prayed for a son. She was in such agony of soul that her lips moved, but no audible words were heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk and rebuked her. When his misconception was corrected, he

sent Hannah away with a promise of a son from God. According to God’s promise, Hannah was given a son, Samuel, which means “Asked of the Lord.”

The first two years of his life, he was raised at home by his loving and pious mother, Hannah. Thereafter, he was raised by godly Eli, whom Samuel came to love as his own father. With Eli the High Priest, the Tabernacle of God became Samuel’s home.

He received a godly education. Young Samuel *cut his teeth* on Divine Training. He learned all a young lad could learn *about* God. He came to know thoroughly the **Law of God**. All these things became his “A, B, C’s!”

He ministered unto God before Eli. (**1 Sam. 2:18; 3:1a**) He performed all the holy duties that a young boy could perform. All such things comprised his earliest memories. He no doubt became skillful in all his holy duties. In other words, he got good at them! They became, as it were, second nature to young Samuel. Yet for all these privileges and advantages, Samuel was not yet born again. He knew *about* God, but he did not yet *know* God.

Isn’t it amazing how far one can go in Divine matters, how practiced one can become in holy affairs and still not “*know the Lord*”?

Consider How God Worked with Young Samuel in Bringing About the New Birth in Him

The new birth required the call of God. (**1 Sam. 3:4, 6, 8**) This call came apart from all ceremonies and forms. (**Vss. 1b-4**) When God’s call came, it was a **personal** call! (**Vs. 4**, etc.) “*Samuel!*” This was a graciously **persistent** call. (**Vss. 6a, 8a**) This was a **sovereign** call. (**Vs. 9b**) “*If he call thee...*” God had called once, twice, thrice! Yet Eli knew that God was not obligated to call at all, much less to call again. All God’s works are sovereign – especially His work of salvation!

The call of God required a personal response. At first, Samuel thought Eli

called him. (Vs. 5a) This was natural enough, since Eli often called the young lad for service. Even Eli did not discern God's call at first. (Vs. 5b) This may have been due to weariness or old age. After all, it was the middle of the night when the juices of human acumen do not flow at their height.

Yet it was not good enough for Samuel merely to report to Eli, for he had to report to **God himself**. (Vs. 9) In like manner it will never do for the sinner to answer the minister's call merely, or the call of conscience, or the "altar call!"

Finally, Samuel fully submitted to God's call. (Vs. 10) "*Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.*" Salvation is God's work and we must present ourselves to God personally and directly for this divine work to be done!

"I listened as I heard my father read the Bible and pray. Still, this Book was closed to me! There was no open vision to my soul! Nonetheless, I began to pray and to seek the Lord for salvation."

See the Results of the New Birth as Manifested in the Life of Young Samuel (Vss. 11-21)

The revelation of God's Word came to his soul. (Vs. 11-14) Before this we read that "*the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision.*" (Vs. 1b, c, emphasis mine) It was a rare thing for the Word of God to be openly revealed to a prophet and given to the people for their warning, edification or comfort. Israel had been given portions of Scripture by this time in Redemptive

History, but the Bible was generally a closed Book.

Before the regeneration of Samuel's soul, the Word of God was a sealed Book to this young lad, too. Now, the Word of God became open to him! Its truths flamed up in his soul and brought light, warmth, and understanding to him! The Bible was a new Book to him! He had read it before, but the words on the page fell cold, lifeless and useless upon his mind. Now all was different and new, for he was now "*a new man in Christ Jesus!*"

God was pleased to bring salvation to my soul when I was but twelve years of age. In our home there were Bibles and I had tried to read one from time to time. I listened as I heard my father read the Bible and pray. Still, this Book was closed to me! There was no open vision to my soul! Nonetheless, I began to pray and to seek the Lord for salvation.

On a Sunday night not long afterwards, my father had all the family attend Gospel services so that he could see a friend baptized. It was a large church of some five to six thousand people. Yet as the preacher took his text and began to preach, it seemed as though God was **calling my name!** That night, with so many others present, God was pleased to do business with my soul. He was pleased to save my soul and bring about the New Birth within me. That was fifty-eight years ago, and more, yet it has lasted until this day.

Summer break came soon after that fateful night and I had a lot of time on my hands. Usually I spent the long summer in the fields and on the river, hunting and fishing. However, this summer was different. I literally spent every waking moment reading the Word of God and praying. The Bible was no longer a closed Book. God opened it to my mind and heart! There came to my new-born soul open revelation! And so it has remained over all these long years, by God's goodness and grace!

Courage for the proclamation of God's Word came to him. (Vss. 15-18) At first, there was a fearfulness to speak God's revelation. "*And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.*" (Vs. 15b) Samuel lay on his bed to the last moment, fearing to have to deliver to Eli, whom he loved, such heavy tidings. Finally, old Eli took the initiative and asked for a full accounting of what God had spoken. "*What is the thing that*

the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me" (Vs. 17a). Through such encouragement, Samuel came to speak all the Word of God given. "*And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him.*" (Vss. 16-18a)

God used the word spoken for the good of his soul. (Vs. 18b) "*It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good.*"

Growth in grace was manifested in his life and ministry. (Vss. 19-21) Samuel's physical growth is typical of the spiritual growth that we experience. (Vs. 19) Where there is life there will be growth. Such growth, physical and spiritual, is not always consistent and steady, nor is it always perceived by us. Yet in due time it became apparent to all that Samuel was established as God's prophet. (Vs. 20) The long, dry season of **no revelation** had finally come to an end. God again was speaking to His people through His prophet – Samuel!

God's Word, once come, came repeatedly to Samuel. "*And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word of the Lord.*" (Vs. 21, emphasis mine)



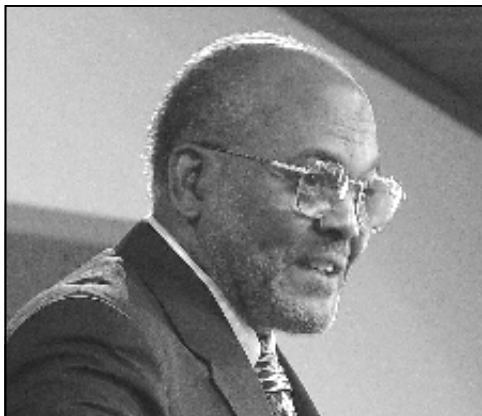
"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26)

"Superficial views of sin and rose tinted fancies about human nature will not admit the truth of the Scripture doctrine of sinfulness, alienation from God. They diagnose the disease superficially, and therefore do not know how to cure it. The Bible can venture to give full weight to the gravity of the sickness, because it knows the remedy. No surgery but God's can perform that operation of extracting the stony heart and inserting a heart of flesh. No system which cannot do that can do what men want. The gospel alone deals thoroughly with man's ills."

-Alexander Maclaren

Being Filled with The Spirit

Warren M. Burrell



Warren Burrell is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Chapel, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Pastor Burrell also conducts the Sovereign Grace Bible Institute, offering a one and a half year course. Course information available: burrell45@aol.com (336) 924-6001

When called upon to do this article, I was both delighted and fearful. Delighted because it is my opinion that there is not enough material on the subject. As I sought for research materials, I noticed that there was very little available. Even the Reformers, Puritans, and other heavy weights of years gone by had very little to say on the subject. I was also delighted because in the face of so much confusion, I saw this as an opportunity to share what I believe to be true to this Biblical doctrine.

But then I was also fearful that I might misrepresent this truth in some way, because there are even good men who differ on some points. My aim and prayer is that the people of God will be enlightened and edified; and that those who have not believed the gospel will be quickened and convinced of their peril without Jesus Christ as their Lord.

A Mandate

The words, “*be filled with the Spirit*” are found in Paul’s epistle to the **Ephesians** in **chapter 5** and **verse 18**. The text reads, “*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.*” These words constitute a command. In other words, they are not optional for the believer to take or leave as he wishes. To be filled with the Spirit is the believer’s Biblical mandate and not to obey it, as one writer puts it, is “flagrant disobedience.”

The Meaning

The words “*be filled*” can be rendered “being kept filled with the Spirit.” It is being continually filled. John Owen says that, “*the passive voice* underscores that it is the Spirit who does the filling, but *the imperative mood*, or the fact that it comes to us as a command, underscores that this filling is dependant upon our cooperation.” He also says that, “*the present tense* of the verb underscores that this is to be our present ongoing experience.” So this command indicates a conscious continuation and ongoing cooperation from the believer.

Notice first of all that we are to be “*filled with the Spirit.*” The word “*Spirit*” here is not a reference to “*the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*” in **Ephesians 2:2**; nor is it a reference to those ‘wicked spirits in high places’ that Paul refers to in **Ephesians 6:12**, but it is a reference to the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Triune Godhead. It is the Holy Spirit who is the Agent in this filling. Notice the word “*with.*” It is from the preposition *en*, which can be translated by indicating that we are filled by the Holy Spirit as the Agent.

The word “*filled*” is from the word *pleroo*. There are other related words that have an assortment of meanings. For example, the verb “*pleroo*” means to *fill*, to *complete*, or to *fulfill*. The adjective “*pleres*” means *full*, or *complete*. The noun “*pleroma*” means *that which has been completed* or *fullness*. These words amongst others are used to indicate *filling* or *fullness*, two words that occasionally characterize believers in the N.T.

It is my contention that some of these words refer more to *power in ministry*, while others have more to do with *fruitfulness in character, conduct* or of the *moral quality of one’s life*. To be filled with the Spirit in **Ephesians 5:18**, I think, has to do more with the latter.

This filling has to do with our coming under His control, under His rule, guidance, leading, and under His government! It is our ‘taking his yoke upon us.’ In the first part of **verse 18** Paul tell us to “*be not drunk with wine wherein is excess.*” I believe he is drawing an analogy

between being drunk with wine and being filled with the Spirit. Certain effects follow men who are in both states.

The Effects

When men are drunk with wine they oftentimes become bold, loud, talkative, obnoxious, and a number of other adjectives that I could use to describe them. I have seen men who are normally timid by nature, desiring to argue and fight everyone within the room. They sometimes indulge in all kinds of things that may not be characteristic of them at all. Their bodies are so filled with wine that they are under its control.

In **verses 19-21**, Paul lists the effects seen in the life of those who are filled with the Spirit. First of all, this filling of the Spirit brings *joy* and *worship*. Notice in **verse 19**, “*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*” Secondly, the filling of the Holy Spirit gives us *thankful hearts*. Notice **verse 20**, “*Giving thanks always for all things.*” Then notice that the filling of the Holy Spirit gives us a *submissive spirit*. **Verse 21** says, “*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*” But I would add here that the Spirit’s chief end is to glorify Christ (**John 16:14**). In this work of filling, He is conforming God’s people into the image of Christ, making us look more like Christ in our character and conduct.

This work is very painful at times for the believer, because the Holy Spirit is breaking down idols and is ridding us of lusts that we have been holding on to for a long time. Through conviction He is removing sins from our lives that are very dear to us and through ‘*fiery trials*’ He is teaching us to pray and rely upon Him more. Moreover, He is stripping us of our filthy piety and self-righteousness while in the fellowship of the saints. And so this work can be very painful and down right dirty at times.

A Distinct Work

Now, we must not get the filling of the Spirit mixed up with the Spirit’s ministry of indwelling, baptizing, and sealing.

The Holy Spirit *indwells* all true believers. This happens when we believe the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord says in **John 7:38-39**, “*He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.*” So when the sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he receives the Holy Spirit. We don’t have to seek or tarry for Him. Paul says in **Romans 5:5** that He is “*given unto us.*” The Holy Spirit is given unto us as a gift when we believe the gospel. In the latter half of **Romans 8:9**, Paul says, “*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*” In other words, if a man is not indwelt by the Holy Spirit, it does not matter how moral, religious, or how ethical he may be; he is not a Christian. Then in **I Corinthians 6:19**, Paul asked the Corinthian believers, “*What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you (indwelling), which you have of God, and you are not your own?*” And so the Bible teaches that all believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. There is no such thing as a believer who does not have the Holy Spirit. **Ephesians 2:22** says that the church is a “*habitation of God through the Spirit.*” The Holy Spirit not only indwells individual believers, but He also indwells the church corporately.

Like indwelling, the Holy Spirit also *baptizes* every true believer. I have oftentimes heard people tell others, “you are saved, but now what you need is the baptism of the Holy Ghost.” Beloved, this is not the teaching of Scripture! In **I Corinthians 12:13** Paul says, “*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*” (emphasis mine). The word “*all*” in this verse refers to all or everyone to whom Paul was writing this letter. In **1 Corinthians 1:1-2**, he is writing to all of the “*church of God which is at Corinth*” (all believers), “*to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus*” (all believers), “*to those called to be saints*” (all believers), “*with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*” (all believers). In **12:13** he tells these same people (all believers), “*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*” (emphasis mine). And so all believers have been baptized by the Holy Spirit.

Being baptized into the body is a reference

to our being placed into the body of Christ (the church). This is when the Holy Spirit not only unites us to one another as believers, but He also unites us to the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is when believers become “*members one of another*” and “*members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*” This speaks of the union that we have with one another and the union that we have with Jesus Christ. This happens when we believe the gospel.

“First of all, we are never commanded to be indwelt, baptized, or sealed; but we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit.”

Then the Bible says that we are “*sealed with the Holy Spirit*” (emphasis mine). In **Ephesians 1:13** Paul says, “*In whom ye trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.*” This *sealing* ministry of the Holy Spirit deals with our *security* and the fact that the true believer’s salvation cannot be tampered with.

My reason for mentioning these other ministries that the Holy Spirit has in the life of the believer is to draw two distinctions between them and the filling of the Holy Spirit. **First** of all, we are never commanded to be indwelt, baptized, or sealed; but we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit. I think this is due to the fact that we play a definite part in the Spirit’s filling. Regeneration is monergistic, but in the Spirit’s filling the believer cooperates. **Secondly**, indwelling, baptizing, and sealing all refer to ministries that the Holy Spirit has accomplished in the past (when we believed). They happened once and are never to be repeated. On the other hand, the filling happens repeatedly throughout the believer’s life.

Application

Now, what is our part? We must have a part because we are commanded to be

filled with the Spirit. Beloved, our part in this is to obey Scripture. The believer is no longer under the dominion of sin (**Romans 6:14**). To the believer, “*his commandments are not grievous*” (**I John 5:3**). We are not debtors to the flesh (**Romans 8:12**). We are to mind “*the things of the Spirit*” (**Romans 8:5-6**). We are to “*walk in the Spirit*” and “*not fulfill the lust of the flesh*” (**Galatians 5:16**). We should study (**II Timothy 2:15**) and “*Let the word of Christ dwell in (us) richly in all wisdom*” (**Colossians 3:16**). We should “*seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*” (**Colossians 3:1**). Beloved, this is our part!

You ask, “Is there more?” My answer is yes, there is much more. Let us go to the book of **Ephesians**. In **4:1** we are to “*walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.*” We are to “*put off concerning the former conversation the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that you put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness*” (**4:22-24**). We are to “*put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor*” (**4:25**). We are not to let “*the sun go down upon (our) wrath*” (**4:26**). We are not to give place to the devil (**4:27**). We are not to steal anymore (**4:28**). We are not to let any “*corrupt communication proceed from our mouths*” (**4:29**). We are not to grieve the Holy Spirit (**4:30**) with the sins listed in **verses 31-32**. We should “*be followers of God as dear children and walk in love*” (**5:1,2**). I could go on, but I hope you get the picture. This is the believer’s part in the process of being filled with the Spirit.

Warning

Finally, a word to my unbelieving friends. You have neither part nor lot in this matter. You do not have the Holy Spirit because you refuse to have the Lord Jesus Christ. You are out of control because you are not being controlled by the Holy Spirit of God. Your whole life is governed by your own selfish lusts and desires. Your greatest need is for the Holy Spirit to come and do a mighty work in your life by renewing your soul and revealing Christ to your heart. May God, by His Spirit, bring you to the point where you see Jesus alone as your only hope of salvation and cause you to bow to his Lordship.



Living Under the Influence

Don Johnson

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” Ephesians 5:18
“Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the spirit, serve the Lord.” Romans 12:11



Don Johnson is pastor of Grace Baptist Church of Batesville, Arkansas. Pastor Johnson is also a much used speaker in camp and conference ministries.

Praise the Lord that we can know our Creator, the Living God! And know Him not afar off, but enjoy intimate internal connection with Him. We who were such poor, lowly, fallen souls are not only restored to acceptance, but also given the awesome privilege of being filled up inside our being with God Himself.

In discussing the Holy Spirit's ministry within us, it is essential to keep in mind the absolute equality there is in the Trinity. When we speak of the Spirit, we mean the equivalent of God the Almighty Father, or Jesus the Eternal Word. The Holy Spirit is not some vague, sub normal influence. We are talking about all that God is. When promising His people the coming of the Spirit, Jesus said it was He that was coming to us. According to **John 14:18, 23**, it is all in all the same Person.

The concept of being filled with the Spirit is a very suggestive one, implying that we may, or may not be in such a condition. The fact that we are exhorted to *“be filled”* tells us up front that God is willing. The provision is secured. God is ready to give the Holy Spirit to those who feel their need, and earnestly ask (**Luke 11:13**). This is great! It is never the Lord's will that His children be without the saving influences of the Holy Ghost. But when it comes to

receiving this blessing, there is a high degree of personal responsibility attached. Ask, seek and desire we must!

We who believe in Christ are commanded to yield up everything to the indwelling Spirit. This injunction bids us to let go the control of our life, and bring all under His daily management. We must either *“be filled with the Spirit”* or we must fall into all sorts of temptations and troubles! Disaster and catastrophe is the ultimate end of a carnal, flesh-ruled life. It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing.

Other similar phrases are found in Scripture, such as, *“Put on the Spirit...”* *“Put on Jesus Christ...”* *“Put on the new man...”* *“Walk in the Spirit...”* *“Yield your members...”* *“Present your bodies...”* All such admonitions put the ball in our court.

How does this square with the fact that believers already have the Spirit? **Romans 8:9** tells us we cannot remotely consider ourselves “saved people” if we are not in present possession of the Holy Spirit. If we are without God's Spirit, we are also unjustified and in our sins. It is the Spirit that bears witness within our spirit that all is well with our souls.

The answer lies in the two aspects of spiritual work within the believer. We receive and are given the Spirit at our conversion. He initially renews our nature, making us creatures of righteousness and holiness. Thereafter, the Spirit of God brings us into conformity with our new man. The rest of our lives will be a matter of His bringing us into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in order for this to happen, the Spirit ministers continual renewing of our minds (**Romans 12:1-2**).

So, notwithstanding His presence, we are called to submit our faculties to the control and work of the Spirit. We cannot function right in this world except by continually presenting our bodies to the energizing, sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. But this will prove to be a challenge, for the *“flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.”* (**Galatians 5:17**) Being *“filled with the Spirit”* will not be

accomplished except through willful, stubborn, conscious choice!

Actually, this is the very crux of discipleship, and it is neither easy nor optional. A perpetual “yes” is required. This is what Christ was saying in His command to abide in Him in order to be fruitful (**John 15:1-2**). At no point can we wing it on our own. In order to bear fruit and serve God we must come back again and again for more of the Spirit.

Special oil made up of unique ingredients was used in anointing articles of the tabernacle, as well as the Old Testament kings and priests. Look at **Exodus 30:25-30**, **Psalms 92:10** and **Psalms 23:5**. This compound was to be pure and fresh. And the procedure illustrated the anointing of the Spirit required in the service of God. None could serve without it.

The apostles and saints in the early church were filled and refilled again with the Spirit. Over and over, they were empowered to speak the Word of God boldly, to the very people who had rejected and crucified Christ. In **Matthew 10:19-20**, Christ promised His people special help in wisdom and utterance, when they must answer their adversaries in crisis situations. Servants of God need immediate, special anointing or visitations of the Spirit that empowers them for those special moments of trial.

Paul spoke fondly of special inner grace and help that enabled him to bear an infirmity which he called his *“thorn in the flesh.”* All true men of God know they require fresh enablement and liberty every time they stand to minister the Word of God. This unction is critical. Being with or without it is self-evident.

Only if we are Spirit filled will we not be filled with the works of the flesh. It is in view of our constant need of renewal that all sorts of potential good or failure is set before us in the Scriptures as a possibility! We may grieve the Spirit, or we may please the Spirit. We may enjoy liberty and strength, or may be overtaken in a fault.

We might walk in the Spirit, or be overcome with fleshly lust.

Harmony, love and fellowship with one another are the work of the Spirit. People who are Spirit-filled are not cross with Christ's church. The Spirit fills no one who remains outside fellowship of the body of Christ.

All sorts of good works flow out of Spirit-filled lives. Such people are unselfish, generous, sacrificial, kind, and useful. Spirit-filled men alone make good husbands who will be good to their wives. Spiritual wives love, honor and respect their husbands. Godly children are tender and obedient to their parents. The oil of the Spirit is just the thing to make family life work as it was designed to.

The Spirit alone rekindles our zeal for the things of God. It is only as the Lord works in us that laziness, idleness, silliness, and lukewarmness are burned up. Strength and inspiration dry up without the Spirit. How we must have the Spirit quicken our mortal bodies, lest we grow tired and weary of well doing!

What effect does the fullness of the Spirit have upon our emotions and feelings? A great number of Christians judge their closeness to God by the way they feel. To such people, seeking God is looking for a special sort of feeling. And yet, to say that our feelings are utterly unreliable would be a mistake. Many blessings of being right with God are said to be qualities that have connection to our feelings. Peace, joy, rejoicing, gladness, and rest are divine things communicated to our senses.

What an indifferent state would salvation be if one could not discern it one way or another? When the Spirit indwells us, there is testimony borne to our spirit of His presence. **Romans 8:16** says: *"The spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."*

But it is also a mistake to elevate emotional highs as the preeminent evidence of being Spirit-filled. Whatever good feelings may or may not be experienced with God's presence are all secondary and peripheral. No standard of warm and wonderful feelings is set forth in Scripture as evidence of being Spirit-filled. Rather, the emphasis is placed on the high standard of conduct. Our fruit is the objective test by which God's nearness can be judged.

If a policeman pulls over a drunk driver, suspicious that he is under the influence, he does not stick his head in the window and ask the man, "Sir, how do you feel about yourself today?" No, the officer first engages the man in talk to ascertain if he is communicating sensibly and coherently. Then he puts a marker down and asks the man to walk a straight line. So it is with Spirit-filled people. The influence of God upon a man shows up essentially in his talk and his walk. The Bible lays down the straight line.

The outstanding evidence of the Spirit is boldness and clarity to give testimony to Jesus Christ and His gospel. Talk that exalts Christ and zeros in on the precious things of God is a good clue that one has the Spirit.

"The Spirit alone rekindles our zeal for the things of God. It is only as the Lord works in us that laziness, idleness, silliness, and lukewarmness are burned up. Strength and inspiration dry up without the Spirit. How we must have the Spirit quicken our mortal bodies, lest we grow tired and weary of well doing!"

Also Spirit-filled folks are not going to be walking in sin; rather, they will be walking in the light. How we walk or act in this world is an infallible evidence of having been with God.

There are many exhortations appearing in **Ephesians 5** other than *"be filled with the Spirit"*. **Verse 2** tells us to *"walk in love."* **Verse 3** clearly states that fornication is not to be once named among us. In **verse 11**, we are told to *"have no fellowship with*

the unfruitful works of darkness." And **verse 18** exhorts us to *"be filled with the Spirit."*

So take your pick. *"Walk in love,"* or *"be filled with the Spirit."* The conditions are synonymous. One form of conduct is not possible without the other. If I walk circumspectly, I am filled with the Spirit. If I am filled, fornication will not happen.

What about results of Spirit-filled labor? There cannot be a single standard of gauging the outcome of a Spirit-filled ministry. The consequences or results of living full of the Spirit might vary greatly. On one hand, the gospel might be greatly blessed with many visible increases of numbers. In another case, a Spirit-filled man might see tremendous purging and defection of his congregation due to a bold stand for truth.

It may be that a gifted, intelligent man preaches a very impressive, animated sermon, and yet not be nearly as Spirit led and filled as a lowly church member who is struggling hard to conquer a horrendous, recurring temptation at work. Who is first and who is last in this matter of having the Spirit cannot be judged by appearance. It will only be at that great day when every man receives his *"praise of God"* that success will be fully seen!

As Christians, we are not to face life and its pressures drunk on liquor or drugged by chemicals. It is not by our might or by our power that we overcome, but it is by the Spirit. The current need of the Spirit is inescapable. We need God to come. We need His power in our lives. We need strength to resist temptations. We need illumination to understand the Scriptures. We need help in order to pray effectively. We need to be led by the Spirit. Worship does not happen in the flesh!

There is no excuse for being dry and void of this life-giving possession. The formula is not complex. God will give us of His fullness. He knows our weakness and He understands the devil's malice. Our resources are greater than our needs. An infinite supply awaits us at the throne of grace. When one is filled with the Spirit, he is not venturing into some rare or unique sphere of Christian experience. He is simply drawing upon the promises it takes to be "a Christian." Praise God!



Sovereign Grace Baptist Fellowship



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2008 Host: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 2766 W. FR178, Springfield, Missouri. Gary Long, Pastor

MOTEL INFORMATION: A block of 15 rooms has been reserved for September 8 & 9 at the Sleep Inn, 233 El Camino Alto Dr., Springfield, MO (about 2 miles from church building). The rate is \$69.99 + tax per night for reservations made by August 26. Mention SGBF. Motel phone: (417) 886-2464. Further information available from Pastor Gary Long: (417) 883-0342, email: gwlong@juno.com.

Schedule

SPECIAL NOTE: There will be a special early arrival service at 7:00 PM on Monday, September 8. Dr. Michael Haykin will be speaking on the subject: "The Fire of Ardent Love"—The Life and Witness of Benjamin Francis (1734-1799). A discussion on the subject of baptism is to follow the service.



10:00 AM Morning Session

7:00 PM Evening Session

Speakers

Speaker

**Pastor Bobby Amos, Southside Baptist Church,
Fulton, Mississippi**

**Dr. Michael A.G. Haykin, Professor of Church History
and Biblical Spirituality, The Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky**

**Pastor Al Garard, Fair Grove Baptist Temple,
Fair Grove, Missouri**

Subject:

**"Jesus' Blood to Glorify:" The Welsh Revival of the 18th
Century: Some Lessons for Our Day.**

1:00 PM SGBF Business and Reports

(Ladies' Fellowship during time of Business Session)



Pastor Bobby Amos



Pastor Al Garard



Dr. Michael Haykin

MEALS PROVIDED BY THE CHURCH: Lunch is served at 12:00 PM. Supper is served at 5:00 PM.

If you are not on the mailing list and desire to receive *The Sovereign Grace Messenger*, add another recipient to the list, or have a change of address, please send your name and address to:

The Sovereign Grace Messenger
c/o Ron Staley, editor
New Hope Baptist Church
5452 Spotslee Circle
Mechanicsville, VA 23111
(One copy per family please)

**You may phone or email your name
and address to:**

(804) 321-2110
ronstaley1@verizon.net

