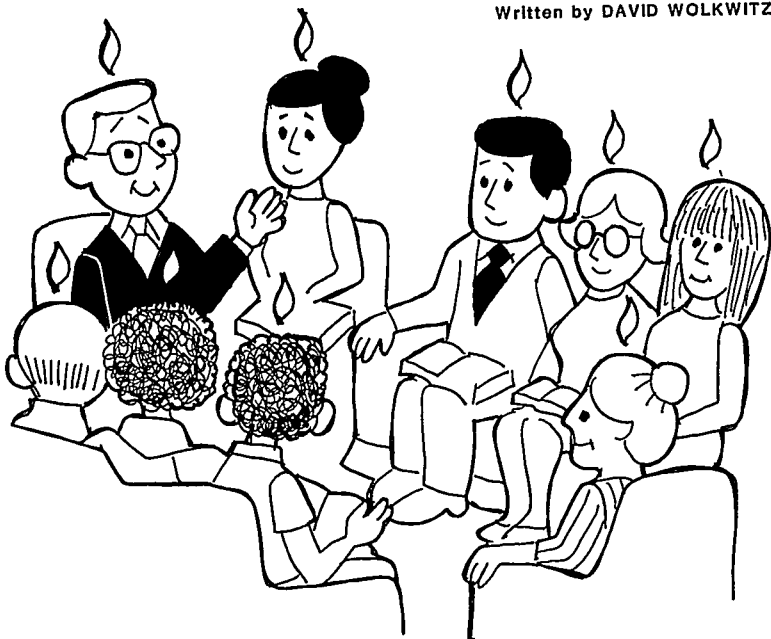


"ENCOUNTER" FOR REVIVAL OF POWER

*Twenty-six studies on
the HOLY SPIRIT*

Written by DAVID WOLKWITZ



Prepared and Published by the
General Conference Department of Church Ministries
and David Wolkwitz
Copyright © 1988



FOREWORD

David Wolkwitz has served in the denomination for 23 years as a pastor and evangelist in Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas-Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Arizona and Oklahoma, as well as serving as a chaplain at Moberly Regional Medical Center in Missouri for three and a half years. He is presently director of Outreach Ministries for the ASI in the Pacific Union.

In 1980, his mother, Mrs. Lucille Wolkwitz, attended a Lay Evangelists Training Seminar in Missouri. At the end of the week she declared, "I will have to urge my son David, who is an evangelist, to attend such a seminar." A few months later David and I met for the first time in Pennsylvania. David was sold on the idea of training thousands of church members as lay evangelists. I asked him if he would attend some of these seminars as chaplain, and I requested him to prepare six special topics about the Holy Spirit to be presented each morning to the group of lay-evangelists-to-be. David accepted with enthusiasm. During the last few years Dave and I have been together at a number of Lay Evangelists Training Seminars. Dave's morning worship presentations have touched hundreds of hearts, including mine. The Lord has really touched his lips with a coal from the divine altar.

David has prayerfully studied the word of God and the messages left by Ellen G. White in relation to the Holy Spirit. He has received invitations from many parts of North America to present his weekend workshop about how the Holy Spirit may change the surrendered life for the best and make of the person a true witness for Jesus.

The General Conference Department of Church Ministries asked David to put his messages into writing and prepare a number of lessons. These were to be used by the lay-evangelists-to-be who had attended the seminars to share systematically, week after week, the lessons on the Holy Spirit with the members of their Action Teams. David accepted, and what you have in your hands today is the product of his years of dedication to evangelism and a thorough study of the Holy Spirit.

I know that David's wife, Gaylene, has stood at his side and is now closely involved in sharing these messages. Dave and Gaylene have a married daughter and a son, all of them very much involved in church activities.

What you will study in this book is not something that comes from books; it is the true experience of a Christian couple as they have dedicated their lives to this ministry that is changing lives. As it is now printed and in our hands, may your life, my life, and many more lives be changed as we permit the Holy Spirit to have full control.

Samuel F. Monnier, Associate Director
General Conference Department of Church Ministries

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"All glory and honor and praise to the Holy Trio, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, for the plan of salvation with all its glorious provisions for man's redemption, wonderfully revealed in the Scriptures and marvelously illuminated in the writings of Ellen G. White." (Preparing for the LATTER RAIN, by DeWitt S. Osgood, Southern Publishing Association, 1973).

I have borrowed the previous paragraph from Osgood's acknowledgements in his book because it so beautifully states my gratitude to heaven for the invaluable aid of those two invaluable resources of the Scriptures and the writings of Ellen G. White in regard to this special subject of the Holy Spirit.

How often during the time it has taken to write this material on the Holy Spirit I have sat at my computer not knowing what to write next! At such times, I would simply bow my head and ask for wisdom from above--that an angel might be sent to stand beside me to give me the concepts and understanding I needed. I do not know the angel's name; yet I know that without this heaven-sent help, I could never have finished this assignment.

The original concept for this set of studies was suggested by Elder Samuel Monnier at a Lay Evangelists Training Seminar at Glacier View youth camp in Colorado. In addition, he has written many letters to keep the encouragement flowing my way. His patience during the many, many months which it has taken to accomplish this task will always be remembered.

In preparing this material for publication, the editorial assistance of Ethel Randall, secretary in the General Conference Church Ministries Department, has been invaluable! Without her expertise the syntax would simply have been unacceptable. Also to my dear wife, Gaylene, goes much appreciation for her editorial suggestions and encouragement. To borrow again from Osgood--"Many others, both ministers and laity, have enriched my ministry and blessed" my efforts in these studies. To my children, Jacinda and Jonathan, as well as to Larry Pitrone, Dick Wilcox and many others who have shown encouraging interest, a special thank you.

If only the latter rain and the second coming of Jesus our Saviour can be hastened by some inspiration and resulting action received from these studies, may His holy name be praised!

Outline of Twenty-six Studies on the Holy Spirit

ENCOUNTER FOR REVIVAL OF POWER

Human Effort Plus Divine Power Equals Success!

- A. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer
- B. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Life
- C. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Home
- D. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing
- E. THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work

	<u>Page</u>
Section A - THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer	7
Part 1 - Who is the Holy Spirit?	7
Part 2 - What is His Role? Part One	13
Part 3 - What is His Role? Part Two	19
Part 4 - How has He Worked in the Old Testament? Part One	25
Part 5 - How has He Worked in the Old Testament? Part Two	31
Part 6 - How has He Worked in the New Testament?	39
Part 7 - Christ's Eagerness to Send Him	47
Section B - THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Life	55
Part 1 - It Begins With Bible Baptism	55
Part 2 - My Encourager, Comforter and Guide	63
Part 3 - My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength,	69
Part One	
Part 4 - My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength,	75
Part Two	
Part 5 - Be Ye Filled	81
Section C - THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Home	89
Part 1 - The Spirit-Filled Home	89
Part 2 - Spirit-Filled Husbands	99
Part 3 - Spirit-Filled Wives	105
Part 4 - Spirit-Filled Parents and Children	113
Section D - THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing	121
Part 1 - Joyful Witnessing	121
Part 2 - Preparation: The Key to Effective Witnessing	129
Part 3 - Utter Dependence on Divine Aid	135
Part 4 - Efficiency Makes the Difference	141
Part 5 - To be Filled Daily - The Early Rain	147

Section E - THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work	153
Part 1 - All the Pieces, No Power	153
Part 2 - That Other Angel - Revelation 18:1	161
Part 3 - Preparing for That Other Angel	169
Part 4 - God Will Use Simple Means	177
Part 5 - The Grand Conclusion	185

All texts used in this material are from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise specified. Copyright (c) 1979, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

General Introduction

Something must be done! Complete preparations must be finished so Jesus can come. Nearly a century and a half has passed since the great Midnight Cry and the beginning of the preaching of the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14, and still the way has not been completely prepared for Jesus to return. And Jesus could have returned, "long ere this. . . !"

Where is our sense of urgency? Where are those concerned men, women and young people who make up the Remnant? There does not seem to be enough concern when year after year passes away and still He does not return! Surely it cannot be a part of God's ordained plan for this wonderful message to go on this long, to encircle the globe and still the work not be completed.

If we are conscientiously concerned, we must of necessity ask ourselves the question--Do we really want Jesus to return soon? At first the question seems unnecessary, but considered in context we begin to recognize the importance of the question. If we have been "working at it" for a century and a half, shouldn't we carefully consider the efficiency (or lack of it) in accomplishing the task that we've been given?

When we consider Pentecost and the same divine mandate of the early church to take the gospel to the whole world, we sense that they must have had something that we do not have, at least in sufficient and comparable quantity. At first glance, this may seem to be an unfair comparison. We have much greater experience; our facilities and institutions are so many more; and our membership!--what is 120 compared to several million! Be alerted, all of this which may appear to be an unfair comparison is just the point. As a church, we have so very much more of things that seem to give might and power, but honestly, could it be that as a people--individually and corporately--we have less of, or are less possessed by, that most important essential--Christ's highest gift--The Holy Spirit.

It is important to remember in our process of self-analysis that we must never even appear to attack or destructively criticize God's church. His servant wrote: "We should remember that the church, enfeebled and defective though it be, is the only object on earth on which Christ bestows His supreme regard." (2 Selected Messages, p. 396). She then continues: "He is constantly watching it (the church) with solicitude, and is strengthening it by His Holy Spirit." (Ibid.) At least two possible responses can be drawn from these quotes. First we could respond by saying that we will just sit back in complacency and think, oh well, it will probably all turn out all right anyway. Or, we could approach the subject with fear and trembling, asking God if there is anything in His counsel that we may have overlooked which is of special importance for completion of the worldwide task. Is there anything? What could it possibly be?

Part of the clue is to be found in the book Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 509: **"The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort."** Success--how sweet the word, and how especially meaningful in light of our assigned task. Hence, as the servant of the Lord tells us what the secret of success is, we take special notice; it is dependent on two specific things. At first glance, neither of these two things has been overlooked, have they? Don't we very often quote Zechariah 4:6: **"...Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."** And was not a past General Conference Session theme song on this very subject? Where then is the clue in the above statement?

Let us consider the two things separately; first, human effort. Every conference around the world is sufficiently concerned about properly trained laity that a personal representative is usually appointed to carry out the programs for such training. In fact, the marvelous machinery of this great church (and I say that with deep respect) is geared for all that human effort can possibly accomplish. Planning sessions are continually searching for better methods and plans so that the great task before us can be completed. There seems to be little lacking on this point, at least when it comes to projecting human effort.

And the second point, divine power, everyone knows refers to the power of the Holy Spirit. And we have that power in the church, don't we? It surely is true that we could not have accomplished all that we have without His aid. But let us take a more careful look at this factor of divine power. Consider the following from Historical Sketches, p. 294: **"The missionary movement is far in advance of the missionary spirit."** Or consider 1 Selected Messages, p. 411: **"The Holy Spirit is wanting (lacking) in our work."**

How can these things be? Consider carefully, is it possible that we could be so convicted of our need to be about our Father's business because time is short, that we overlook or fail to emphasize enough the need of the Power by which His work is to be done?

This last question is this author's conclusion from which this set of lessons comes. For several years now this burden has been growing on my heart. I must admit that at first, as this burden began to grow and then became heavy, I was unable or unwilling to accept almost any connection between the Holy Spirit and the need to witness. But the Lord has been patient in His leading. It is very clear that both must go together--they cannot be separated, especially as we look again at the previous statement which says that **"The secret of success is the union of divine power with human effort."**

Therefore, the conviction is growing that after putting so much emphasis on the human effort side for so many years, we should continue our privilege of witnessing, but begin anew to earnestly seek for the daily and latter rain measure of the Holy Spirit. IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT WE AWAKE TO OUR LACK IN THIS REGARD! The servant of the Lord felt this need for the church very keenly. She said: **"...what**

promise do we know less about by its practical fulfillment than this rich promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, whereby efficiency is to be given to all our spiritual labor." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 174. (Italics supplied).

It is my prayer that these lessons will awaken or strengthen anew your own conviction that a revival of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is our need of all needs, both in our individual lives and in this wonderful Remnant Church. May the Saviour give you a rich measure of this Spirit--His greatest Gift--to guide you through a rewarding study of this subject.

All in the name of Jesus,

David Wolkwitz, Pastor



Section A - Part 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Overall Objective of This Section:

In this section we are dealing with the biblical truth that through Christ the Holy Spirit is God's answer for our current world. We will be discussing in this section: Who He is--a member of the Trinity; What is His Role?--Christ's special representative; How has He Worked?--in both Old and New Testaments; and finally, Christ's Eagerness to Send Him!

Introduction

Before we can deal with the fact that the Holy Spirit is God's answer for my life, my home, for effective witnessing, and thus for a finished work, we must first seek to learn His specific functions. In this lesson the purpose is to show from inspiration Who the Holy Spirit is, as far as it is possible for the human mind to grasp. And to do this, not from logic or mere fact, but much more importantly, to understand this through the Christian's faith in Christ and His righteousness.

Please note first of all the great importance which the Saviour placed upon the subject of the Holy Spirit:

"Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration." (1 Selected Messages, pp. 156,157).

As we contemplate this statement for a few moments, we become aware that nearly one hundred years after it was written, ironically it still appears to be true today! Notice the following statement in which the servant of the Lord was shown, even more graphically, the need of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives:

". . .I seemed to be in meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor--the opening of our hearts to the Holy SpiritIn my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building, and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand,

Who is the Holy Spirit?

and only very, very few were admitted into the building." (1 Selected Messages, p. 109).

How much more we need the divine presence of this gift which was purchased for us at infinite cost! Our need is far greater than we imagine in order to bring about a finished work of character development within us individually, and through the latter rain to also effect this finished work on the earth, a work that has been over 140 years in process and in reality is still far from being completed today.

The Great Scriptural Doctrine of the Trinity

In Genesis 1:1 the Scripture says that **"God created the heavens and the earth."** Who was this "God"? In some places in Scripture the reference is to Christ as the Creator (see John 1 and Colossians 1). In Hebrews 1:1,2 it implies that the Father was the Creator with Christ acting as co-Creator; and then according to the first chapter of Genesis it is the Spirit of God who was the active agent of creation. How do these passages harmonize?

The secret is found in the first verse of the Bible. The word "God" in this verse is the Hebrew word "Elohim" which is the plural form of the word and means "two or more." Hence, all the passages are correct and the Scriptures are trying to tell us that all three, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit worked together in the creation of our world. Let us illustrate this even further.

In the Old Testament there are many references which indicate that the heavenly Godhead consists of more than one person or personality. In Genesis 1:26, there are three personal pronouns--"Us, Our, Our." Notice also that in Genesis 3:22 and 11:6,7; and also in Isaiah 6:8, it is obvious that there is definitely more than one personality indicated.

In the New Testament it is also clear that there is more than one being intended in the truth of the divine Godhead, and that the Holy Spirit is included. Matthew 28:19,20 associates the Holy Spirit with God the Father and God the Son, as their equal! Thus the Trinity is not 1+1+1=3, but rather 1+1+1=one Godhead with three separate personalities. Thus the Holy Spirit is equally divine with the Father and the Son.

The Holy Spirit is a Person

One of the reasons why the Holy Spirit is so mysterious in our thinking is because we think of Him as "It."

Who is the Holy Spirit?

However, He or Him does not refer to the Holy Spirit as male in contrast to female, but rather to denote a personality. The Holy Spirit is a person according to the Spirit of Prophecy, yet does not have a human personality. Notice:

"We need to realize that the Holy Spirit, who is as much a person as God is a person, is walking through these grounds." (Evangelism, p. 616).

"The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative, but divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof." (The Desire of Ages, p. 669). (Italics supplied).

You may want to look up the following biblical references which are ascribed to the Holy Spirit indicating that He is a Person--a divine Person.

1. He speaks - 1 Timothy 4:1.
2. He intercedes - Romans 8:26.
3. He testifies - John 15:26.
4. He directs - Acts 16:6,7.
5. He appoints - Acts 20:28.
6. He can be lied to - Acts 5:3,4.
7. He can be grieved - Ephesians 4:30.

Thus we see some of the emotions and actions which are characteristics of personality. Therefore, it should be clear, then, that the Holy Spirit is not some mystical force or vague influence; rather, He is a Person with the attributes of a divine personality.

We must here remember that in our desire to better understand the Holy Spirit, we must not even attempt to bring Him down to our level. The Holy Spirit is a divine Person--He is God! Notice the following attributes possessed by divinity and specifically attributed to the Holy Spirit:

1. He is omnipresent (everywhere present) - Psalm 139:7.
2. He is omniscient (all-knowing) - 1 Corinthians 2:10,11.
3. He is called "God" - Acts 5:4.

Conclusion

In conclusion there is one very important point to remember whenever one attempts to understand the Holy Spirit. Of course, there must be much prayer in any Bible study, but especially in the study of the Holy Spirit.

"The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. . . Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 52).

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Hence this lesson and all that follow must be very prayerfully studied, not to understand the nature of His person, but rather to understand the importance of His work in our lives and through us in the lives of other people to bring them to the foot of the cross of Christ.

Discussion Point:

Summarize to the group what you have learned in this lesson about the Holy Spirit.

Benediction:

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Season of Prayer

Who is the Holy Spirit?

QUIZ

Question: 1. Even though Jesus had an "infinite variety of subjects from which to choose," which subject did He dwell more on than any other?

Answer: _____
_____. (page 7)

Question: 2. The Holy Spirit is equally divine with the Father and the Son.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 8)

Question: 3. The Holy Spirit is a person, but does not have the human personality.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 9)



Section A - Part 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT - GOD'S ANSWER

WHAT IS HIS ROLE? - Part One

Lesson Plan:

This topic will be divided into two lessons. In the first lesson, we will study what the special connection of the Holy Spirit was with the Son of God throughout Christ's ministry here on earth; then in the next lesson we will study the role of the Holy Spirit as He works in perfect harmony and identity with Christ in connection with our salvation.

Overall Objective:

To show what the role of the Holy Spirit is--Christ's personal representative. In illustrating this through Scripture, we shall notice the perfect interaction between Christ and the Helper that He promised. This interaction was and is so perfect that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are often referred to interchangeably or synonymously; however, this is not to suggest that they are the same person, but rather to show their perfect harmony. We will specifically study Jesus' earthly dependency on this divine member of the Godhead. And finally we will see that our dependency on the Holy Spirit is synonymous with dependency on Jesus Himself. It is Christ's way of making Himself present in us.

Jesus' Earthly Sojourn was Dependent on the Holy Spirit

As we begin this lesson, the following important point must be kept in mind. During His earthly mission, Jesus chose to be completely dependent on the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit; yet this dependency did not in any way exclude or shut out the Father. Instead, the Holy Spirit was the means, or the agency by which the Father worked for and through His Son. Keep this relationship in mind.

Jesus was Dependent at His Birth

One of the most difficult areas in comprehending the virgin birth of Jesus was the role that the Holy Spirit played. Matthew 1:18,20 clearly states that the Holy Spirit played a key role. We cannot of course understand these details, but when remembering the Holy Spirit's active role in the creation of the world, that He "moved on the face of the waters," then it would follow that the Holy Spirit must have also been the active agent in the creation of the human form of Jesus. And so even at His birth, Jesus was dependent on the divine power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was Dependent at His Baptism

According to Scripture, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were shown as being in very close relationship at His baptism. And thus it was at this central event that the Holy Spirit descended in full measure upon Jesus. Notice John 1:32,33; here the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father to guide the Saviour in His earthly sojourn--to enable Jesus in His humanity by making available to Him the very same divine power that is now also available to each one of us! What do you think this event may indicate regarding Jesus' dependency on this heavenly Source of power? In other words, why do you think Jesus needed this special power?

Even as Christ prayed for divine power to enable Him to be man's substitute, notice the following quotation which indicates that this same Agency of Heaven is also available to us:

"The Holy Spirit will be given to those who seek for its power and grace, and will help our infirmities when we would have audience with God. Heaven is open to our petitions, and we are invited to come 'boldly unto the throne of grace,'. . . We are to come in faith, believing that we shall obtain the very things we ask of Him." (5 SDABC, p. 1078).

Jesus was Dependent in the Wilderness

Turn and read both Mark 1:12 and Luke 4:1. Notice here the specific leading of the Holy Spirit in the wilderness temptation experience. It is clear from these passages that the Holy Spirit was directing the activities of the Saviour day by day. Why need this be? Because Jesus knew that human nature was not capable of depending solely on its own wisdom and power. And if one so holy, so perfect, so pure, so wise as Jesus, was so submissive to this divine leading, should not we who are so less than all these attributes, recognize that we must cherish the same submission to the divine leading of God the Holy Spirit?

There is another benefit that attends here, namely, peace! Jesus had a perfect peace in His submission to the daily, moment-by-moment leading of the Spirit. And this peace He offers to you and to me if we will only recognize and choose to allow Him to give us a new supply every day. How very much we are in need of this peace. It is a peace that passes all understanding. It is the peace of knowing we have chosen that our helpless will shall be under the direction of Jesus through the gift of His Holy Spirit.

There is no question about it, Jesus emptied Himself of dependency upon Himself. And this is the secret. In order to be filled by God's Holy Spirit, one must be willing to be emptied of self. Notice how this is emphasized in the next quotation.

"To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling." (Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, p. 21).

The implication should be obvious; if we expect to develop strength and decision of character enabling us to detect Satan's approaches and to resist his power, we too must recognize our daily need for this marvelous divine aid! And praise the Lord that He has made this wonderful gift available to all--just for the asking!

Jesus was Dependent, for Power to do Good

The Scriptures record that Jesus "went about doing good," in other words, in His life there was daily evidence that divinity was shining through Him. He healed the sick, the lame, the blind; He brought comfort to the sorrowing; spoke truth to the searching; He was always kind, courteous and tenderhearted; even the scathing rebukes that He sometimes found it necessary to give, He gave with tears in His voice. Truly, Jesus went about doing good. Have you ever wished that every thought you thought, every word you spoke, every action, every expression on your face were just like Jesus? Have you ever felt a longing desire that you could respond in all situations just like Jesus would?

We can, we can, dear fellow traveler. That's exactly why Jesus came--to make it possible. And He not only came to show that it is possible, but He also wants us to become acquainted with the "how," or in other words, the "Who." Notice Acts 10:38, where it says: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him."

Can you see then that it was specifically because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit that Jesus was enabled as a human being to do these things? Our "doing good," our radiating the love of Jesus in every facet of our lives, is not the result of more determined effort on our part to "try harder" to do good; rather it is the result of being consciously dependent on our Helper, the Holy Spirit, who works in us to "will and to do of His good pleasure."

Please turn to Isaiah 11:1,2. Here it is made strikingly clear that the power that enabled Jesus to do so much good was the Holy Spirit. This was to be done in order to teach us that all our efforts are weakness without His aid. Notice the following thought from a letter the servant of the Lord penned in 1898--Letter 85:

What is His Role? - Part One

"All human effort combined is weakness without the deep moving of the Spirit of God." (Italics supplied).

Why is it that we are slow to learn this lesson? Why is it that so much "effort" is put into the human element and so little in seeking for this deep moving of God's Spirit? Why is it that we do not appreciate the working of this gracious gift of the Holy Spirit as we could? Is it because individually we do not seek daily for the "greatest Gift Jesus could send?" Is it because we do not recognize our great need?

We will study more about that later; for now, let us conclude this aspect of Jesus' dependency on the Holy Spirit by turning to Luke 4:14. (Please read it aloud). This example of the ministry of Jesus being under the specific power or direction of the Holy Spirit was Jesus' way, I believe, of showing us our need to have this same conscious relationship of dependency on the Holy Spirit. This dependency was the underlying characteristic of Jesus as a human being here on earth.

In Conclusion: The Holy Spirit is Christ's Representative Commissioned to Bring to Us the Presence and Experience of Jesus.

In John 16:14,15 Jesus spoke clearly what the role of the Holy Spirit was to be. This assurance of the Helper was given by Jesus to His disciples for all time in order to assure us that He would not leave us as helpless orphans, but rather through the indwelling of His Spirit, Jesus was promising to dwell in each one of us. And in reality this would make Him closer to each one than if He had remained bodily here on earth.

Notice the following two quotations which illustrate how completely the Holy Spirit brings Jesus' presence to us:

"Christ is represented by His Holy Spirit today in every part of His great moral vineyard. He will give the inspiration of His Holy Spirit to all those who are of a contrite spirit." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 215).

"The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ." (The Desire of Ages, p. 805).

Do you want this kind of relationship? Do you desire to have so close an experience with the Saviour that through His Spirit He will actually imbue or live out within you the very attributes of Christ? You can experience this day by day as you continue to claim the promise found in Luke 11:13. Turn there now and reread this verse as we bring this lesson to a close. Remember the Holy Spirit is there for the asking!

What is His Role? - Part One

The Reflection

We have spent this lesson in Scripture and in the Spirit of Prophecy observing the perfect oneness that existed between Jesus and the Holy Spirit. We saw how very dependent the Saviour, in His humanity, was on the daily, moment-by-moment guidance of this special gift.

In your own words, try to express why this information is important for you to have studied and learned.

Thought Questions

1. What did I learn that I did not know, or may have overlooked before?
2. What benefit would I like to see in myself as a result?
3. How could this help me to be more effective in soulwinning efforts?

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." (2 Corinthians 13:14).

What is His Role? - Part One

QUIZ

Question: 1. How dependent was Jesus on the Holy Spirit when Christ walked here on earth?

Answer: _____. (page 13)

Question: 2. Fill in the blanks:

a. "Jesus was dependent on the Holy Spirit _____.
_____ (page 13)

b. "He was dependent on the Holy Spirit _____.
_____ (page 14)

c. "Jesus was dependent on the Holy Spirit for _____,
_____. (page 15)

Question: 3. How much of our human effort is "weakness" without the deep moving of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: _____. (page 16)

Section A - Part 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer

WHAT IS HIS ROLE? - Part Two

Review

In the last lesson we focused on Jesus' total dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit in His daily life. We saw the special connection with the Holy Spirit and Jesus in the area of His birth and His baptism, as well as when He was in the wilderness. Of special significance in relation to His example for us in daily life was Jesus' dependence on the Holy Spirit for power to do right.

Introduction

In this lesson we will study the work of the Holy Spirit in our daily life and salvation; and how in this work Christ and the Holy Spirit are perfectly united. Thus, in reality, we have very special help available to aid us in living the daily Christian life, as well as working through us to be a witness to the world. In this lesson then we will continue to study the role of the Holy Spirit as He works in perfect harmony and identity with Christ in connection with our salvation and then through us to our neighbors and friends.

The Perfect Unity of Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Salvation of Mankind

Let's begin by noticing the three chapters of John 14, 15, and 16. These three chapters are a vivid and detailed attempt of Jesus to make clear to the twelve disciples as well as to us just what He was so concerned about in the upper room after instituting the Lord's Supper. (It would be helpful to read these three chapters all in one sitting before going further in this lesson; for they make clearer the importance of this very special gift.)

In John 14:16 the Saviour uses the term "another Helper" when referring to the Holy Spirit. For Jesus to have emphasized the word "another" surely indicates a very complete harmony and unity between Himself and the Holy Spirit; no one else could so perfectly represent the Saviour. And hence the daily study of the life and character of Jesus will increase our desire for more of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our own life. For it is through Him that our life is filled with more and more of the likeness and attributes of Jesus.

What is His Role? - Part Two

In the next verse (verse 17), Jesus makes a promise regarding the Holy Spirit which indicates that there is to be a change in function, a new capacity. He told the disciples that this special gift would no longer just dwell with them, instead the Holy Spirit would actually dwell within each of them. This promise is for you and me and begins at Bible baptism as we shall see later.

And so it was necessary for Jesus to leave this earth in order that His power might be displayed through each of His followers. The Holy Spirit then is the Agency by which Christ reveals Himself through us to the world. The depth of Jesus' love for each of us takes on new meaning as we realize that the Saviour is closer to us now than when He walked here on earth, all because of the person of the Holy Spirit. Notice this in the following statement:

"Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally. Therefore it was for their interest that He should go to the Father, and send the Spirit to be His successor on earth. No one could then have any advantage because of his location or his personal contact with Christ. By the Spirit the Saviour would be accessible to all. In this sense He would be nearer to them than if He had not ascended on high." (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 669). (*Italics supplied*).

And because of the fact that Christ is closer to us now than even when He walked on earth, one can understand that thus we need an increasing measure of this gift if we desire to walk closer to the Saviour each day.

Early in His ministry on earth Jesus preached one day at the worship service in Nazareth where He had grown up as a boy. On this occasion He very clearly told what His mission here was to be. The story is recorded in Luke 4:16-20. In this reference He quotes an inspired passage from Isaiah 61, listing six things that the Holy Spirit under inspiration had indicated was to be His work. They are:

1. To preach the gospel to those who are "poor" in whatever way,
2. To heal those who grieve, are depressed or discouraged,
3. To preach the assurance of His deliverance to captives of Satan,
4. And the recovery of sight to those who are blind,
5. To set the oppressed or downtrodden free,
6. To preach or announce the time when God would accomplish this.

In the passage just described, Jesus clearly states what Power it is that enables Him to accomplish these tasks--it is the Holy Spirit from heaven. The mission of Jesus which He read that day is to be our mission as well; hence, if He needed and depended upon this divine Agency, should not we too realize that only as we are controlled by and

What is His Role? - Part Two

dependent on this Power can we hope to fulfill the purpose of heaven for each one of us?

We Are Invited to Depend Completely on the Holy Spirit

As a people we have not been fully aware of our need for total dependence on this wonderful Power. This is in no way to suggest that we should not depend on Jesus; for total dependency on the Holy Spirit is in reality dependence on the Saviour. The Holy Spirit is Christ's chosen Agency to reveal Jesus and to be His aid in every need we have. Therefore to suggest complete dependency on the Holy Spirit is to suggest complete dependency on the Saviour Himself. Note the following:

"The Lord Jesus acts through the Holy Spirit; for it is His representative. Through it He infuses spiritual life into the soul, quickening its energies for good, cleansing it from moral defilement, and giving it a fitness for His kingdom. Jesus has large blessings to bestow, rich gifts to distribute among men. He is the wonderful Counselor, infinite in wisdom and strength; and if we will acknowledge the power of His Spirit, and submit to be molded by it, we shall stand complete in Him." (Messages to Young People, p. 55).

Also:

"When Christ ascended to the Father, He did not leave His followers without help. The Holy Spirit, as His representative, and the heavenly angels, as ministering spirits, are sent forth to aid those who against great odds are fighting the good fight of faith. Ever remember that Jesus is your helper." (Ibid., p. 17). (Italics supplied).

These quotations make it very clear that the role of the Holy Spirit is to bring Jesus to our aid. The last sentence of this last quotation shows the intimate relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit for our good; both are called our "helper." Hence as we submit to be molded and controlled by His special gift, the Holy Spirit, we are experiencing the work of Jesus in our lives.

There are two further quotations that I would like to share with you which indicate how very essential is our need of the Holy Spirit. They reveal that whether it is for salvation itself or for living a consistent Christian life, the aid of the Holy Spirit is clearly indispensable.

"He may have wisdom to overcome an opponent; but wise unto salvation, he cannot possibly be without the agency of the Holy Spirit." (Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 240).

"Let none leave the love of Christ out of their labors, but let each ask himself the question, Is my life a consistent

What is His Role? - Part Two

life? Am I guided by the Holy Spirit?" (Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students, p. 362).

Yes, according to The Desire of Ages, p. 175, we cannot even repent without the aid of the Holy Spirit. So the reason why we are invited to depend so completely on the Holy Spirit is because He is the Agency whereby Jesus is able to aid all of us at the same time. The two of them are perfectly in accord; along with our heavenly Father, they work not only in the forgiveness of sin but in the restoration of His image/character in each one of us. And in the process we become an illustration of God's infinite love for all of mankind, and thus God intends that we shall become clear channels through which His grace, His Holy Spirit, can flow out to the world.

Therefore, when we are thus controlled by the Spirit of God, we are not being restricted, but rather it is the highest form of freedom known to mankind. 2 Corinthians 3:17 says, ". . .and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

In Conclusion

Perhaps now we are beginning to grasp the importance of being "Spirit-filled" for to be "Spirit-filled" is to be filled with the presence of Jesus.

Thought Questions

1. Why do you think that the Holy Spirit would desire a similar unity between each of us as the unity that exists between Him and Christ?
2. Why would you be willing to pray at this moment for this unity to be complete in your life?

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Season of Prayer

What is His Role? - Part Two

QUIZ

Question: 1. Through Whom is our life filled with more and more of the likeness and attributes of Jesus?

Answer: _____. (page 19)

Question: 2. Strangely enough, as a result of Jesus' leaving this earth, He "would be nearer" than if He had not ascended; how is this possible?

Answer: _____
_____. (page 20)



Section A - Part 4

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer

HOW HAS HE WORKED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT? - Part One

Introduction

After studying who the Holy Spirit is and what His role in the life of Jesus was, we turn now to an area of His involvement that is little thought of, His ministry in the Old Testament. Most of our awareness and understanding of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit is a result of the preponderance of evidence in the Scriptures from Pentecost onward as found in the sacred pages of the New Testament.

On the surface it might appear that there is not sufficient evidence of the Holy Spirit's involvement in the Old Testament to complete even one lesson covering this time period. However, on the contrary, there is such an abundant evidence of His working in the Old Testament that we will take two lessons to cover it.

We notice that there seems to be a clear difference in the way or manner in which the Holy Spirit worked in the time of the Old Testament compared to the New. It appears that in the Old, He seems to come only upon select individuals in special measure. This of course is in great contrast to the New Testament where He came upon many at the same time. In our study in the next two lessons we shall see the marvel of His involvement in every aspect of the children of God, even in the Old Testament!

Several reasons appear as to why He seems to be less noticed in exposure during Old Testament times. First of all, the Son of God was not encumbered in the Old Testament with the human form as He was in the New when Jesus' presence was limited to one place. Therefore, the "need" of the Holy Spirit was not to the same extent in the Old. Secondly, Jesus had not yet been glorified and thus the Holy Spirit could not yet make Himself known in the same degree. Only after Christ's resurrection and ascension would the role of the Holy Spirit to all of mankind become so very prominent as Christ's special Emissary.

As we begin this lesson then, let us earnestly pray that our heavenly Father shall be glorified in our study of this special gift which he provided through the gift of His Son to all mankind.

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part One

The Holy Spirit in the Work of Creation

In Hebrews 1:1,2 the Scriptures make it clear that God the Father did create the world--it was His decision. Yet He was not alone in this work. This passage says that the Father accomplished this amazing feat through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. There was a wonderful working relationship between them as they covenanted together to create the family of mankind.

Would it be correct to say that creation was the work of all the Trinity? What role did the Holy Spirit play? Would it not be logical in our frail understanding to believe that since the Father and Son worked so closely together in creation that the third equal member of this marvelous union would also have had some role or function in this very important event?

Let us turn now to Colossians 1:15-18, a passage that very clearly reveals Christ as the one central figure in the act of creation, **"For by Him all things were created that are in heaven, and that are in earth. . ."** Then in the last sentence of verse 16 it says: **". . . All things were created through Him, and for Him: . . ."** The Son of God very clearly was the Creator of the world. Everything that was created was created through Him. The very last part of this sentence in verse 16 is intriguing. Could it possibly be an indication that even though Jesus was the Creator, Someone else may have been the Agent to have actually carried out Christ's instructions and/or commands? Could the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Godhead, have been this One? If so, this would have intricately involved all three in the creation story. Do you agree?

Let us see if there are other passages of Scripture that could make this any clearer. In Job 26:13 it says of God that **"By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; . . ."** This verse does illuminate the involvement of the Holy Spirit, but let's turn to Genesis 1:2 where the very account of the story of creation is detailed. Here it indicates that the Holy Spirit was specifically involved and thus it is Scripturally sound to say that the Holy Spirit was the Agent of creation. This is in no way to detract from the role of the Father or the Son; on the contrary it shows their perfect unity, all working together for the creation of "our little world."

In the book Education, p. 134, the servant of the Lord, speaking of this event, refers to the Holy Spirit as **"that Spirit who in the beginning was brooding upon the face of the waters."**

It seems clear then that in the act of creation the Holy Spirit was definitely involved. This makes clearer His role in the New Testament as the re-Creator. The Holy Spirit's work may not be described in the

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part One

Old Testament in the same detail as it is in the New, yet He was a very definite "part of the action" throughout the Old from creation to the cross.

The Old Testament: A Veritable Record of the Involvement of the Holy Spirit

When explaining the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the writing of all Scripture, the Jerusalem Bible translates 2 Peter 1:21: **"When men spoke for God it was the Holy Spirit that moved them."** Since this was true of the books of the New Testament, it would also be true of the Old.

Perhaps through careful searching we can find that His involvement in the Old Testament is even greater than we may have been aware of. For instance, in the following quotation it indicates that there was a pronounced difference between heaven's revelation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament versus the New.

Note:

"During the patriarchal age, the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner, but never in its fullness." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 37). (Italics supplied).

The involvement of the Holy Spirit in the lives of men and women in the Old Testament must have been strongly felt yet not with the same outward awareness as in the New Testament.

In the Time of the Patriarchs

In Genesis 6:3 there is a strong indication that the Spirit of God was deeply involved in the salvation of mankind. As the conditions of sin became worse prior to the flood, God had to finally declare that the day was coming that His Spirit could no longer plead with the hearts and lives of those whom He had created. A day was coming in which the pleas of mercy unheeded would finally be offered no more. And this so early in the history of the world.

One of the earliest times in which the fullness of the Holy Spirit was noticed was in the life of Joseph in Egypt, though to some extent it is easier for us to see this as we look back. Joseph had been guided by God's Spirit day by day even through the dark days of imprisonment. When he was finally remembered and brought before Pharaoh to interpret his dreams, Joseph gave very clear indication that his life was under the Spirit's control.

The work of the Holy Spirit has always been to direct the thoughts to

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part One

the God of heaven. And as Joseph stood before Pharaoh, the Holy Spirit spoke through him as Joseph denied that he personally had any divine power; instead he gave all the credit and glory to his God. Pharaoh was so convicted that this was no ordinary individual that he said to his advisors, **"Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?"** (Genesis 41:38). As the next few years unfold in the history of Israel, it is evident that the fullness of the Holy Spirit was poured out through Joseph.

Later after the children of Israel left Egypt and it was time to build a sanctuary to the God of Heaven, the Scriptures record that a man by the name of Bezaleel was singled out for a special infilling. In Exodus 31:3 God personally spoke and said, **"I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship."** This is an interesting verse. Bezaleel was not a priest or minister; he was a workman who under the divine direction of the Holy Spirit was enabled to do a superior work. So today God is no respecter of persons; be we "common" laborers, housewives, teachers, students or preachers, if we are willing to be used as God designs, we too can be filled to be a witness to His glory and power. The world would be awed.

The story of Balaam is a sad story of how a Spirit-filled person can become so engrossed with seeking self-glory that he turns to evil. And yet even here God's Spirit overruled and under His guidance evil was turned to good in behalf of His undeserving people. This should be a lesson to all.

Then there was Caleb. The Scripture records that he was possessed of "a different spirit," for he followed God "fully," (Numbers 14:24). And Caleb's counterpart, Joshua, was also a Spirit-filled man according to Numbers 27:18. Is it any wonder then that these two men, of all the twelve spies, stand out as mighty Old Testament examples that the Holy Spirit was very active in certain individuals lives. Oh today, God's church needs such Spirit-filled men, women and young people that He might work through them to bring deliverance to the entire world from the Wilderness of Sin!

God had not placed this gift upon such individuals because they were just simply His favorites, but rather because they submitted their will continually to Him. Thus all throughout their early wanderings, God had poured out His Spirit in order to guide His chosen people aright. Nehemiah reminds God of this in 9:20,30. He said, **"You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them." "Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit. . . Yet they would not listen; . . ."** May it not be said of you or me, "they would not listen."

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part One

The Time of the Kings

There are two specific kings in the Old Testament in which the work of the Holy Spirit is predominantly mentioned. And their yielding to, and/or rejection of this divine Agency is in marked contrast with each other--David and Saul. Both were very human, with the same kind of frailties that we possess; both were sinners, yet one yielded to the Spirit's conviction and wooing while the other refused. Let us look first at King Saul--Israel's first king.

Notice the following quotation:

"He (the Lord) caused the Holy Spirit to rest upon Saul to reveal to him his own weakness, and his need of divine grace; and had Saul relied upon God, God would have been with him. So long as his will was controlled by the will of God, so long as he yielded to the discipline of his Spirit, God could crown his efforts with success. But when Saul chose to act independently of God, the Lord could no longer be his guide, and was forced to set him aside." (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 636).

There are two reasons given in this reference that show specifically why God caused the Holy Spirit to rest upon King Saul in the beginning of his reign; first to reveal to Saul his own weakness, and second to show Saul his need of divine grace. Could these same two points be important in your life and mine today? Saul's will was to have remained controlled by God's will, and this could only have been accomplished by Saul's yielding to the discipline of the Holy Spirit. Had Saul relied upon God, God would have been with him.

In Conclusion

It is not just in His involvement in the story of creation that one begins to comprehend the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. It is in the lives of human beings--in the issues we all face from day to day as illustrated even in the Old Testament--that we begin to comprehend the involvement of God's Spirit.

Try to share with the group your impressions regarding the Holy Spirit's work in creation and in the life of King Saul. How does this speak to you in your world today?

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer for Greater Awareness

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part One

QUIZ

Question: 1. Which Old Testament Bible text says, "By His Spirit He adorned the heavens"?

Answer: _____. (page 26)

Question: 2. During the time of the patriarchs, the Holy Spirit was never revealed in His fullness.

Answer: True ☐ (page 27)
False ☐

Question: 3. What was Pharaoh's observation regarding the Holy Spirit being in Joseph?

Answer: _____
_____. (page 28)

Question: 4. According to the book Patriarchs and Prophets, when could God crown King Saul's efforts with success?

Answer: a. "so long as _____
_____.
b. "so long as _____
_____. (page 29)

Section A - Part 5

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer

HOW HAS HE WORKED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT? - Part Two

Introduction

The reason for the continued, extensive study of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament is because we are generally unaware of His intensive involvement in the lives of God's people in this part of the Bible. And particularly because of the book of Acts and the marvelous experience at Pentecost we are much more aware of the work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Thus our whole appreciation of His personal role can be better strengthened as we continue to notice how much He was involved in the Old Testament.

Continuation of the Period of the Kings

King David. Notice the following statement which speaks of why God chose and called David to the highest position of leadership after King Saul had rejected God's leading in his life.

"Then he called to the throne 'a man after His own heart';-- not one who was faultless in character, but who, instead of trusting to himself, would rely upon God, and be guided by his Spirit; who, when he sinned, would submit to reproof and correction." (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 636).

There may appear to be an unfair comparison between King Saul well into the time of his reign, and David before he begins to reign. However, this quotation, as well as our concentration on God's turning to David, is based primarily on character or characteristics. King Saul's character was essentially based on selfishness which became even more self-centered as he continued to reject the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Instead of relying upon God he more and more trusted in himself.

In contrast, King David, certainly one who was not faultless, did just the opposite. Instead of trusting in himself, he relied more and more on God and the guidance of His Holy Spirit. Perhaps God has recorded this character contrast in order to show us that we have a choice to make; that even though we have imperfections, God can use us to His glory!

Neither Saul nor David were faultless and neither are we. Therefore we can decide on a daily basis whether we will yield to the control of His Spirit or whether instead we will rely on ourselves. As we look at the vivid contrasts between Saul and David, even though King David made some very foolish mistakes, we can see in their contrasts the results

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part Two

of acknowledging or denying our failures before a merciful heavenly Father and crying out for more of His Holy Spirit. For it is the special work of this third Person of the Godhead to change our characters, making us more and more reflective of the beautiful character of Jesus.

Surely in the history of his adult life, King David could not be described as an "ideal Christian" in regard to his conduct. However, David was a man after God's own heart because when he did fail, when he deeply disappointed his Lord, his cry was, **"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. . . .and take not thy Holy Spirit from me"** (Psalm 51:10,11). What a vivid illustration of what God can do in the life of an individual who is willing to be nothing, that Jesus might be everything in them!

So much of David's life was the sad result of a weak character, although God had blessed with the evidence of His leading. How did this happen? Where did he go wrong and allow Satan to have control? Notice the following statement:

"David had enjoyed precious experiences of the love of God, and had been richly endowed with His Spirit; . . .And yet worldly success and honor so weakened the character of David that he was repeatedly overcome by the tempter." (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 746).

Question: What lesson is here revealed in David's experience that would be especially helpful to anyone who has enjoyed similar "precious experiences" and who has been richly endowed with the Holy Spirit? Try to make a direct application to your life; in other words, since we too may receive increasing endowments of the gift of God's Spirit, how can the same thing be prevented from happening to us that happened to David?

The Holy Spirit in the Time of the Major and Minor Prophets

In the time of King Ahab and the prophet Elijah, God's people had fallen into deep apostasy, and God worked signally to bring them back to a closer relationship of dependency on Himself. Notice this quotation:

" . . .the Spirit of God came upon. . .Elijah, moving him to rebuke the sins of a wicked king and an apostate people; . . ." (The Great Controversy, p. 606).

In the history of God's people, He has almost always used quite ordinary human beings--individuals who are especially sensitive to the leading of His Spirit to speak in His behalf. In this instance, Elijah spoke boldly, calling sin by its right name. Perhaps some might say that Elijah was just naturally a bold person; even if this were the

case, his running from Jezebel certainly proved that only when he was under the conscious guidance of the Holy Spirit was he able to "stand boldly for his God."

In the following quotation the servant of the Lord makes this very clear and thus assures each one of us that if we will fully rely on the Holy Spirit to make us what Gods us to be, then we can be all that He wants and needs us to be! Note:

"The success of the ministry of Elijah was not due to any inherited qualities he possessed, but to the submission of himself to the Holy Spirit, which was given to him as it will be given to all who exercise living faith in God." (2 SDABC, p. 1037).

In this final hour of earth's history, oh how desperately God needs men, women, and young people who will not trust on any real or imagined inherited qualities, but will instead rely on the power of the Holy Spirit by exercising "living faith in God."

And yet, dear friend, there is something that we each need even more than the "power" of Elijah's spirit. Sometimes when we think of the Holy Spirit and His mighty power, especially in relationship to the finishing of the work of God on the earth, we tend to think of the awesomeness of this outpouring when great things will be done for God. It is true, there will be mighty accomplishments for Him.

However, to be truly and totally useful to the Saviour through His Spirit, there are some other characteristics of the Holy Spirit that we need to remember as well. In the same reference we just referred to we see these qualities which the Holy Spirit will bring within us if we desire.

"Elisha received a double portion of the spirit that had rested on Elijah. In him the power of Elijah's spirit was united with the gentleness, mercy, and tender compassion of the Spirit of Christ." (Ibid.)

Notice that here the Holy Spirit is identified as the "Spirit of Christ." This enables us to recognize the infinitely close relationship that exists between them. Hence if we want to reflect more and more of the beautiful characteristics of Jesus, and since He is encumbered with a human body and can no longer (in person) be everywhere at the same time (omnipresent), we must have more and more of what? or, of **Whom?**--the wonderful indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. He will not only empower us, but will gladly bring into our lives these beautiful characteristics of Jesus--gentleness, mercy and tender compassion. This is equally the work of the Holy Spirit. Not only is He to work mightily through God's church to bring power and force to the Three Angels' Messages, but He must first bring these reflecting qualities into us individually on a growing day-by-day

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part Two

basis. Do we want this "dual work" of the Holy Spirit in our lives? What does the servant of the Lord say:

"If we would. . . be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one." (Testimonies, Vol. 9, p. 189).

Let us turn now to:

The Later Old Testament Prophets

The Holy Spirit and His work is made prominent in the writings of the prophet Isaiah though often He is mentioned in symbol form; such as water, oil, etc. In Isaiah 63:10,11, we see two specific references to the involvement of the Holy Spirit in God's people. In the last half of verse 9 it says, **"In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old."** Then in the first part of the next verse, how did God's chosen people react? It says they "_____ and _____ His Holy Spirit." (fill in blanks)

The more we study the work and involvement of the Holy Spirit in the story of the Old Testament, the more we can see that it is not an unknown truth, but only that His involvement is not as prominently illustrated or shown as in the New Testament. Remember that our purpose in studying His work in the Old Testament is to become more aware that God has always worked through the agency of the Holy Spirit; He has always been an integral part of God's plan.

Next, let us look at the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of the prophet Ezekiel. In chapter 1, verses 12 and 19-21, the Holy Spirit is specifically in charge of these prophetic creatures; they are under His direction. The Hebrew word for "spirit" is of course also translated in Scripture as "wind," "air," and "breath." Yet all of these are biblical symbols of the Holy Spirit. The point is that the work and involvement of the Holy Spirit is all throughout the Old Testament, although sometimes this involvement is hidden, it does not at first "meet the eye."

In Ezekiel 11, the first five verses make it very clear that there were times when God worked specifically through the Holy Spirit. In these verses Ezekiel is led by and talked to by the Holy Spirit. In verse 5 the Holy Spirit even tells Ezekiel what words to say. He is to tell the people that God even knows the thoughts of their minds.

Nowhere, perhaps, is the availability of the presence and control of the Holy Spirit in their (and our) lives made so clear as in Ezekiel 36:26,27. Here God essentially repeats His promise made in chapter 11, verse 19, and tells them the good news of the New Covenant, the Covenant that He offered Adam and Eve by faith when He promised the coming of the Messiah. Here in chapter 36, verses 26 and 27, He is

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part Two

promising to remove the human nature from control, and to put in its place the divine nature. Oh what a different story would have come from the Old Testament if only God's people had accepted this mighty work of His Spirit within.

This is **Righteousness by Faith in Christ** in the Old Testament--the very work of the Holy Spirit within God's people. Notice the following quotation:

"The same law that was engraved upon the tables of stone, is written by the Holy Spirit upon the tables of the heart. Instead of going about to establish our own righteousness, we accept the righteousness of Christ. His blood atones for our sins. His obedience is accepted for us. Then the heart renewed by the Holy Spirit will bring forth 'the fruits of the Spirit.' (And then referring to the Holy Spirit as His "grace," she continues--) **Through the grace of Christ we shall live in obedience to the law of God written upon our hearts. Having the Spirit of Christ, we shall walk even as he walked."** (Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 372).

Oh how God longs and loves to give the precious gift of the Holy Spirit to His people--even in Old Testament times. In Ezekiel 39:29, after talking to Ezekiel about the time of captivity, God assures His servant of the continued presence of this gift. He says, **"And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel. . . ."** Can God say this about you and me today?

The Minor Prophets Also Directed by the Holy Spirit

In Micah 3:8 the prophet contrasts his supernatural ability with that of the astrologers and soothsayers: **" . . . truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord,"** he said; then he states that the purpose of this infilling for him as a prophet was to clearly call sin by its right name. This was true of every prophet and not one of them even dared to do this awesome work except they were under the control of this mighty Power.

In the book of Haggai, when Zerubbabel and Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, were attempting to rebuild the former glorious temple, God spoke to them and to the remnant of His people. In Haggai 2:4,5, He encourages them in doing this work for Him. **"Be strong, all you people of the land, says the Lord, and work; for I am with you, says the Lord of hosts. According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!"** "Man, What a God!" as a recent author exclaimed. Even in the Old Testament He made available to His people this special gift; though the Holy Spirit would not be given in special measure until after Pentecost.

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part Two

In Conclusion

In conclusion, how have you been blessed by these two lessons on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament? Have they helped you to become more aware of His deep involvement throughout this long history? Can you also see that because the Son of God, the great I Am, had not yet become hindered by our very human form, the prominence of the Holy Spirit was not yet needed in the pages of the Old Testament?

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer

Of thankfulness for our greater awareness of the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

How Has He Worked in the Old Testament? - Part Two

QUIZ

Question: 1. God chose David to replace King Saul, not because he was perfect in character, but because instead of trusting in himself, he would do two things: what were they?

Answer: a. _____.

b. _____.
(page 31)

Question: 2. What was it that had weakened the character of King David which caused him to be repeatedly overcome by the tempter?

Answer: _____. (page 32)

Question: 3. The success of Elijah's ministry was not due to any qualities which he possessed.

Answer: True ☐ (page 33)

False ☐

Question: 4. In the Conclusion, what is the reason given for the fact that the prominence of the Holy Spirit was not needed yet in the Old Testament?

Answer: _____.
(page 36)



Section A - Part 6
THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer

HOW HAS HE WORKED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

Introduction

Leroy Froom, in his book The Coming of the Comforter, page 29, says:

"Consider the twofold work of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament He worked upon men more from without inward, but did not dwell or abide in them permanently. He appeared to them and empowered them, but did not often take up His abode in them. But from Pentecost onward there has been a great change."

In contrast to our previous lack of awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, we have been quite aware of His work in the New Testament. However, it is possible to have been unaware of the extensiveness of this involvement, at least aside from the experience at Pentecost. For instance, the Holy Spirit is mentioned 262 times in the New Testament--a veritable battalion of texts.

This lesson will primarily involve the study of the complete control which the Holy Spirit was given over the New Testament Christian church. This obviously involved not only the apostles, but also all the individual members as well.

Acts of the Holy Spirit

Have you ever noticed that the book of Acts is the New Testament book without a conclusion? This is because the conclusion is continually unfolding in the lives of God's people to the very end of time. It has also been observed that the book is really much more than the Acts of the Apostles; perhaps it should have been entitled Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Let's begin our study by turning to the mighty outpouring at Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4 essentially begins the story of this marvelous and unsurpassed event. Read these first four verses and particularly notice the word "all" which is used twice. Do you see any correlation between the "all" in verse 1 and the "all" in verse 4? Could this mean that there was no more individuality, or were they no longer determined that their own way or opinion was better than anyone else's? Acts 1:14 indicates that it was prayer and earnest supplication for the outpouring of the promise Jesus had given them that united them so amazingly.

How Has He Worked In the New Testament?

What a parallel! If only we as a people, as a church, will unite together in praying for the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit again, then we too will see a unity, a strength in oneness of purpose that will bring its own reward! It was their praying together for the promise of the Holy Spirit that brought fulfillment to the promise!

In the last part of Acts 2:11, as well as Acts 2:13, there are very different reactions on the part of those to whom the Holy Spirit made such a graphic appeal. What do you think these verses may indicate about the character of the people who had these different reactions? Is it possible that the same reactions could surface again when His Spirit returns as promised?

In response to their reactions, Peter is directed by the Holy Spirit to boldly speak in defense of this display of God's power. "Listen to me," he says, "it's only 9:00 in the morning. People are not usually drunk at this early hour! What you are witnessing is fulfilling the prophecy of the ancient prophet Joel." And he then proceeds to quote several verses from Joel to substantiate his convictions.

The real purpose then for our studying these "Acts," is to find their parallel for us in these last days of earth's history. Peter's reference to the prophecy of Joel also applies to us today--Joel's prophecy will be even more wonderfully and completely fulfilled to us!

There is something else we need to learn from the experience of the 120 at Pentecost. Notice the following quotation regarding the hatred they faced; yet notice particularly the lack of fear that characterized these disciples as they met their accusers.

"The scene is one full of interest. Behold the people coming from all directions to hear the disciples witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. They press in, crowding the temple. Priests and rulers are there, the dark scowl of malignity still on their faces, their hearts still filled with abiding hatred against Christ, their hands uncleansed from the blood shed when they crucified the world's Redeemer. They had thought to find the apostles cowed with fear under the strong hand of oppression and murder, but they find them lifted above all fear, and filled with the Spirit, proclaiming with power the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. They hear them declaring with boldness that the One so recently humiliated, derided, smitten by cruel hands, and crucified, is the Prince of life, now exalted to the right hand of God." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 42).

The book The Great Controversy graphically indicates that, as God's people, we too can again expect to see the hatred of the religious leaders aroused because of the boldness and courage manifested by such a "small" group--a remnant to be sure. Truly then, to be lifted above

How Has He Worked In the New Testament?

all fear in soul winning and filled with the Holy Spirit, resulting in mighty exploits for God, is an experience that we should earnestly desire from His hand.

However, before we are ready for this experience we must better understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures in order to enable us to desire a deeper infilling of His presence each day. In order to accomplish this we will now take a rather intensive look at the book of Acts as the illustration of His involvement in human lives further unfolds.

In Acts 5:1-10 we read the tragic story of Ananias and Sapphira who lied to the Apostle Peter, and yet their deeper sin was lying to the Holy Spirit. Somehow we do not usually associate the fact that if we promise God that we will do something, and profess to do it, and if in reality we do not, that we are really lying to the Holy Spirit. Because God is so loving and kind, we often fail to remember that if we close the door to the Holy Spirit, God the Father and His Son have no other way to reach us. Lying to the Holy Spirit is a very serious matter.

Next, in Acts 6:3-5 we find the new church with growing pains. Among the many new converts were many women who apparently had no one to care for them; and being a woman and on your own was an extremely difficult task in their culture. Hence the apostles, being concerned, requested the church to choose men who were not necessarily ordained to preach the Word, but who were very earnest men of God. What was one of the primary considerations that the apostles directed these men should have? And in verse 10 what was the reaction of the first disputers who encountered Stephen, one of the new deacons?

Then in Acts 8:14-24 an amazing drama unfolds, a drama filled with the thirst for power to control. The word had come to the apostles at Jerusalem that Samaria was receptive to hearing the Word of God. Peter and John were sent in answer to their request. Upon their arrival, the apostles recognized that these new "babes in the truth" had not received the Holy Spirit and the reason was that they had only been baptized in the name of Jesus, not in the name of the entire Trinity. After baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the disciples prayed for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to come upon these new believers.

The results must have been amazing and life-changing! For when Simon the sorcerer saw the dramatic change in these new converts, he wanted to be able to do this as well. But notice very carefully, Simon showed no interest in being changed himself by the Holy Spirit as the new believers had been; instead he wanted to have the power of the apostles so that he might be able to do "mighty things." Surely every one of us as "ministers" in the New Testament sense of the word, should desire to

How Has He Worked In the New Testament?

be used by the Holy Spirit in order to effect a lasting change in those confronted with the gospel. But this is not what Simon desired; he wanted "raw power" so he could "do magic" unequaled. He even offered to buy it!

The Holy Spirit, of course, cannot be bought with money; the very idea reeks of blasphemy. Simon must have come very close to committing the unpardonable sin--in this case attempting to use the Holy Spirit instead of surrendering his will to be used by the Spirit of God. Please carefully study Acts 8:21. What does this verse indicate that the real problem was?

Also in this same chapter is the story of how God used another deacon, Phillip, to reach out to a soul in need. What does verse 39 indicate regarding the involvement of the Holy Spirit in even the apparently small details of the gospel work? Here then, one can recognize the personal interest of the Holy Spirit in leading Phillip as well as the eunuch.

In Acts 10:44-47 it becomes apparent that at times, without explanation, the Holy Spirit does not work in the "ordinary" way. In nearly every other instance the evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit in the life of new converts to the gospel comes after water baptism, when the person is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Hence, according to the divine record, what occurred here is not the usual method. The apparent reversal of this order illustrates once again a very important point: we must submit and allow the Holy Spirit to use us and not even attempt to dictate to Him how He is to work.

Next, let us turn to Acts 13:2-4. Who gave the instructions and directions regarding Paul and Barnabas? The point to be made here is that God the Holy Spirit was heaven's chosen agent for the personal direction and guidance of the church after the ascension of Christ. And it is quite obvious that the Holy Spirit, and not only the disciples, was in charge of the day-to-day operation and development of the New Testament Church.

For Him to be so intimately involved indicates personal concern. And we today need to recognize that He is just as concerned, and that He is in charge of God's remnant church on the earth today. This is in no way to suggest that we do not need human beings to be God's chosen leaders for His people today, for similar leadership existed in the New Testament church. However, this relationship between the Holy Spirit and human leaders does indicate that we are to be consciously dependent upon His leading and guidance in the affairs of God's people today, even to the point of being always in the attitude of prayer, and often kneeling in prayer before decisions are made that may or may not be the

How Has He Worked In the New Testament?

Holy Spirit's will. Notice how this is further illustrated in Acts 15:28.

God surely provided the new fledgling church with direct, specific counsel to make proper decisions. And the disciples were consciously dependent upon His will as indicated in Acts 16:6,7. Notice here how these two verses indicate His direct leadership in the church. I wonder if any of the decisions we make today would be different if we were to be more aware and conscious of His desire to be in complete control of every detail. Let me illustrate:

A few years ago two pastors were attending a monthly church school board meeting. During the meeting the school board chairman and the school principal became embroiled in heated debate between themselves. As the argument reached nearly the point of physical blows, the younger pastor whispered to the senior pastor, "Maybe we should all kneel right now and pray that the presence of the Holy Spirit would come and take control." The second pastor replied, "We had prayer at the beginning; it's not necessary again." (Groups may wish to discuss further this situation.)

According to Acts 20:28, how specifically did the Holy Spirit arrange for leadership in the church? The New Testament Church was engaged in the most consuming effort of soul winning ever exhibited in the world; the same mission that we accept today. Therefore, should not we be as conscious of our need for complete dependence on His wisdom and leading?

All of us as professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ should be asked the question found in Acts 19:2: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit?" For it is entirely possible to profess allegiance to the Lord while we are unaware of our own consuming need to be moment by moment led by this very special gift--the gift for which the Saviour paid with His life in order to be able to send Him to the earth.

The Work of the Holy Spirit, on Past the Book of Acts

After much discussion as to the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts and Romans, the Apostle Paul speaks to the Corinthian believers. In his first letter to them in 1 Corinthians 6:11, Paul points out to these new converts that though they were once profligate sinners, they have now been washed, justified and sanctified in the name of Jesus. However, he also indicates how or by Whom this is actually accomplished, "by the Spirit of our God." Notice how the following quotation describes this process:

"It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to

How Has He Worked In the New Testament?

overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil. .
.. " (The Desire of Ages, p. 671).

Can you see agreement between this quotation and the verse we just read in 1 Corinthians 6:11? Also in 2 Corinthians 3:17,18, in Paul's next letter to them, the same theme is emphasized. In fact, in verse 17, the Lord makes it clear that the only source of real liberty is when we allow the Holy Spirit to have this full and complete control. And as the Holy Spirit enables us to behold the wonderful character of the Lord Jesus, we thus become changed or transformed into the same likeness. Praise the Lord for this awareness. The Holy Spirit is specifically God's chosen agency to re-create in us the beautiful character of Jesus.

Let us go now to the first chapter of Ephesians.

In verse 13, what is the work of the Holy Spirit that comes to us once we believe and trust in the Lord Jesus?

In verse 14, what is the Holy Spirit called? How long is He to be our earnest or guarantee?

What a special gift then is the Person of the Holy Spirit! This mighty Power is our guarantee from heaven, from Jesus Himself, that He will redeem us; and until He returns, He has given His Holy Spirit to us as a reminder and a pledge that His promise is sure.

Ephesians 4:30 gives one of the most important commands to everyone of us in the New Testament Christian church. What does the verse give as the reason why this command is so very important? Dear fellow traveler, do you want to be thus sealed?

In Conclusion


Please read Revelation 2:7,11,17,29; and 3:6,13,22. What phrase is used over and over again that illustrates the role of the Holy Spirit from the days of Jesus' earthly sojourn, even to the end of time? Oh, if only today God's remnant people would be more dependent upon what the Spirit says to God's church!

In this lesson we have been able to accomplish little more than touch the highlights of the mighty revelation and working of the Holy Spirit throughout the pages of the New Testament. But may we now have a new awareness of this mighty Power available to us today, even as to them at Pentecost.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the

How Has He Worked In the New Testament?

 communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer

Special prayer of thankfulness for our greater awareness of the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

How Has He Worked In The New Testament?

QUIZ

Question: 1. How many times is the Holy Spirit mentioned in the New Testament?

Answer: _____. (page 39)

Question: 2. According to Peter, what prophet's prophecy in the Old Testament was Acts 2 a fulfillment of?

Answer: _____. (page 40)

Question: 3. In Acts 5:3,9, whom did Ananias and Sapphira really lie to?

Answer: _____ (page 41)

Question: 4. What phrase is used extensively in Revelation 2 and 3 which indicates the direct involvement of the Holy Spirit in the church to the end of time?

Answer: _____
(page 44)

Section A - Part 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer

CHRIST'S EAGERNESS TO SEND HIM

Introduction

In this lesson we will seek to discover why the Saviour is so very anxious for all His children to receive a rich supply of this heavenly gift. Christ's eagerness for us to receive this gift is but a reflection of our heavenly Father's deepest desire that this very special gift would be in us.

We will begin by looking at the upper room experience where Jesus made so prominent to the disciples His specific promise of the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. Then we will study the conditions set forth in Scripture for the reception of this divine gift. Let us pray that as we study this lesson in particular, we will be filled with a much greater sense of our own personal need and that a desire to see this mighty gift descend upon our church will become all-consuming.

Jesus Announces His Departure

For three years Jesus had to prepare His disciples for the impending doom that was to befall Him, and had a number of times tried to impress them with the importance of the promise of His Holy Spirit.

It was in the upper room, just before His betrayal by Judas. Jesus had gathered the disciples to observe the Passover prior to His own death. The disciples were in no mood to "appreciate" what Jesus was attempting to tell them. And so Jesus, after instituting the Ordinance of Humility and the Lord's Supper, and after permitting Judas to leave to do his heinous work, pulled back the curtain unveiling the immediate future and revealed specifically what He would endure for them.

The Saviour is so tender and kind and approaches the reality with such thoughtfulness. In John 13:33 He gently inserts the "news" of His departure amidst His words of glorifying God by showing love to one another. Notice how this verse stands out in contrast to the other verses spoken (verses 31-35).

Interestingly, Peter immediately picks up on the reality of Jesus' words. In John 13:36,37 Peter is stunned by the announcement, and vows that he will lay down his life for Jesus! The thought that Jesus is going some place where he cannot go is terrifying to him. Jesus is so gentle with His response; Peter was genuine, he really meant it when he

Christ's Eagerness to Send Him

made this declaration, but while the spirit may be willing, the flesh is so weak! In these two verses Peter is probably vocalizing the thoughts of the others, and he asks the two questions:

1. "Lord, where are you going?"
2. "Lord, why can I not follow you now?"

Then it is that Jesus makes that awesome warning not only to Peter but to each one of us; we do not know ourselves as He does! And we will all deny Him at the most crucial moments unless we constantly cry, Not my will, Lord, but Yours be done. Take away O Lord what You choose to take, but take not from me Your Holy Spirit. Peter had yet to learn that lesson.

As the truth and the finality of Jesus' words sank into their minds, the disciples must have been overwhelmed with sorrow at this announcement of His near departure. Gloom and sadness settled in. This news that He was going where they could not now follow brought to the disciples grief and despair instead of joy and rejoicing. Someone said:

"...Paint a starless sky. Drape the mountains with darkness. Hang somber curtains of black on every shore. Darken the past, and let the future be even more bleak. Fill the picture with sad-faced, sorrow-shrouded men. Such was the disciples' situation, as they faced their Lord's departure." (Quoted in The Coming of the Comforter, p. 24).

For a moment or two, try to mentally play the role of one of the eleven disciples; describe how you feel at this moment of Christ's "heavy" announcement.

There in the midst of that electrically-charged moment Jesus shares with them a very special assurance--**He is definitely coming back!** All eyes are on Him as He unfolds that very special promise of John 14:1-3.

It seems that there are highlights in each of these three verses which indicate that our Saviour was very compassionate and understanding of their pain, their shock, their sadness. Let us notice these points now as a reassurance that He is not only the same yesterday and today, but even **now** for you and for me.

In the first verse of this chapter Jesus shows that He is aware of their feelings of loss and despair. Even before Peter or the others can vocalize these awful feelings, Jesus says, Don't be afraid--"Let not your heart be troubled." I understand your fear of the unknown, He says, but just trust me, I will not forsake you.

In verses 2 and 3 Jesus makes it clear that it will not be a permanent separation. In fact, in His absence from them He will be preparing

Christ's Eagerness to Send Him

beautiful homes for them with no payments or taxes, and an environment that breathes the very atmosphere of His divine love. Then as if in final assurance He promises that He will return to take them to this beautiful place where never another sorrow or heartache like they are now experiencing will be known!

Jesus Makes a Very Special Promise

After comforting them so tenderly He now unveils an even greater way of continuing on to comfort and help them. In John 14:16, Jesus, knowing that His physical absence from them is the heaviest part of their burden at this moment, promises them "another Helper." What would this significant word, another, imply about Himself? There is no Helper like Jesus, and that is why only the Holy Spirit, a divine member of the Godhead, could take His place as the representative of the Son of God. Truly, the Holy Spirit is Vicarius Filii Dei, Vicar of the Son of God.

Can you imagine the hope that began to well up within their hearts? They could see it was inevitable--Jesus was really going to leave them, and yet **they would not be alone!** The Holy Spirit, that other member of the Godhead, about whom they had known very little, would come and be everywhere at once, never leaving them. He would "abide with you forever."

Have you ever felt alone? Have you ever faced difficulties that seemed hopeless of escape? There is a statement in The Ministry of Healing, p. 249, which gives some wonderful and specific assurance when we face such feelings of need:

"We need never feel that we are alone. Angels are our companions. The Comforter that Christ promised to send in His name abides with us. In the way that leads to the City of God there are no difficulties which those who trust in Him may not overcome. There are no dangers which they may not escape. There is not a sorrow, not a grievance, not a human weakness, for which He has not provided a remedy."

What a precious assurance! Never alone! And not only are the angels our companions, but One of the members of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, is always there, dwelling within if we desire, as a Helper and Comforter. Oh what love heaven has for each one of us!

In John 14:16 there is an adjective used which illustrates that all that Jesus was to the disciples--Encourager, Confider, Guide, Provider, etc.--the Holy Spirit would be. The word used is "another"; in other words, the Holy Spirit would come with specific tasks of exactly representing all that Jesus was and had been to them, plus it would be His work to re-create in them, and in all who are willing, the very

Christ's Eagerness to Send Him

likeness of Jesus so that others could desire to be like Him too. The Holy Spirit was to be Jesus' successor here on earth.

There is another reason why it is so important for the Holy Spirit to become prominently known and felt. Jesus was now encumbered with our humanity; He could no longer be in every place in person. Thus through the presence of this gift, Jesus would be closer than when walking here.

In verse 17 of chapter 14 Jesus indicates that there will be a new measure of the Spirit's presence. He says, "...for He dwells with you and will be in you." This is the announcement of a totally new relationship that Jesus is opening to His disciples and thus to each one of us. Could it be that some of us are like the disciples in that upper room that night--still living in our spiritual experience "prior to the outpouring at Pentecost"? Could it be that this very special gift is still only "with us," instead of dwelling "in us"? What do you think? (Perhaps it would be well here at this point to discuss this concept for a few minutes.)

In John 15, it might appear that Christ leaves the subject of the Holy Spirit until near the end of the chapter. He appears instead to dwell on the very important theme of "abiding in Him." However, He is not at all overlooking the Holy Spirit. John 15 is one of the most important chapters in the book of John. It details the deepest desires that Jesus has for us to develop such an intimate relationship with Him that truly we would not only be secure to the Vine, but just as importantly, we would be enabled to bear much fruit. And all of this is, of course, the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit.

Witnessing, or bearing fruit, is, to put it simply, telling what we have seen and heard. And in John 15:27 Jesus told His disciples that they would bear witness of Him because they had been with Him since He began His earthly ministry. We too can bear witness for Him of the things He has done since we began our walk with Him. But please notice how it is possible to bear this kind of witness as indicated in John 15:26: The Holy Spirit sent from heaven bears this witness through us!

What are the Conditions for Receiving This Gift?

There are three conditions: A, B, and C.

A. First, we must perform the relatively simple task of "**asking**." Referring back to Luke 11:13, this verse gives rise to the title of this lesson. Please reread this verse. There appears in this verse a deep intensity of feeling. Jesus was attempting to portray the deep desire that He and the Father have for us to receive this gift. This is illustrated by the preceding four verses, where Jesus shows

Christ's Eagerness to Send Him

the importance of earnestly seeking for the greatest gift heaven can offer. But oh how little we ask. Could it be that we take for granted that the Holy Spirit is with us in full measure? Why do you think that we as the chosen remnant people do not ask daily for more and more of the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit? Could it be that we do not as a whole recognize our need?

Notice the following quotations re: asking for the Holy Spirit:

"It is not enough for us to read the Scriptures merely. We are to ask the Lord to fill our wayward hearts with His Spirit, that we may understand the meaning of His words." (Medical Ministry, p. 37).

"...ask Him to give you His Spirit and keep you by His grace." (Steps to Christ, p. 52).

B. After asking for this very special gift, it is not surprising that the next essential step is **believing** that the One we have asked to send us this gift is able to fulfill His promise. In John 7:39 notice what the prophet indicated is absolutely necessary in the mind of the recipient before one can receive the fulfillment of this very special promise.

Of all the three steps--A, B, C--**believing** is probably the most easily assented to. It is relatively easy to say, "I believe," but remember believing is so much more than mere mental assent. Yes, even the "devils believe and tremble." Real believing is much more. It is total trust in those "exceeding great and precious promises" that are so bountifully found in Scripture.

C. The third step in receiving this very special gift is to **claim** the gift as our very own--just because He promised! In Galatians 3:2 & 14, the Apostle Paul alludes to the fact that if there is not faith to believe and thus claim the promise and presence of the Holy Spirit, then it is merely a matter of "righteousness by works" to profess to have this gift. There can be no real claiming of the gift unless there is correspondent yielding to His promptings and convictions. For it is Pharisaically possible to profess all three steps yet never yield to His direction and control.

If we would only claim this gift by true submissive faith! For to believe something by faith is to claim it. Notice in the following quotation the importance of claiming this gift:

Christ's Eagerness to Send Him

"Just prior to His leaving His disciples for the heavenly courts, Jesus encouraged them with the promise of the Holy Spirit. This promise belongs as much to us as it did to them, and. . .if claimed by faith, would bring all other blessings in its train." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 174).

There must be some reason why we have not claimed this gift as we might have. Is it that we are of such little faith? Jesus did say, "O ye of little faith." Could this include us? Perhaps it is not possible to completely identify all the whys and wherefores. But one thing we can do is to **claim** this gift of the Holy Spirit now by faith. Oh how Jesus longs to send an increasing measure of this gift to each one of us. And oh that we would sense this longing on heaven's part. This is what Jesus meant when He said, **"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him"** (Luke 11:13).

In Conclusion

Let us reach out and accept so that we can reach out and touch someone for Him. Heaven is waiting for us to become the channels that we can be--channels through which will flow freely the grace of the Holy Spirit, bringing hope and courage to those who are longingly looking to heaven pleading for Christ to send them someone to point the way. May each of us determine as we continue in the study of these lessons that we will become so filled that we will be used to glorify His name.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer

A special prayer of thanksgiving for the new awareness that the Holy Spirit is God's answer for the finishing of the work on the earth so He can return.

Christ's Eagerness to Send Him

QUIZ

Question: 1. In John 14:1 Jesus shows that He is aware of which two feelings the disciples had?

Answer: a. _____
b. _____ (page 48)

Question: 2. Thought question: What do you think is the difference between the Holy Spirit dwelling with us and in us?

Answer: _____
_____.

Question: 3. What are the three conditions for receiving the Holy Spirit?

Answer: a. _____
b. _____ (pages 50,51)
c. _____

Question: 4. It is technically possible to profess all three steps and yet never yield to His directions and control.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐



Section B - Part 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Life

IT BEGINS WITH BIBLE BAPTISM

Overview of Section B

With this lesson we begin a new section of our study of the Holy Spirit. In contrast to the first section in which we looked at the general aspect of the Holy Spirit being God's answer for "everything"; in the remaining sections we will study this in much more personal detail.

Therefore in Section B we enter the area of personal involvement with this greatest of all gifts. It is one thing to theoretically discuss or study the function, history, and promise of the Holy Spirit, but it is far more important to know by experience what is meant through personal involvement.

In this section we will study the application of **how** the Holy Spirit is God's Answer for My Life. We want to see Him as a personal friend; one who can be counted on to faithfully point and guide me to the best friend to have--Jesus. The gift of the Holy Spirit is surely not to be taken for granted. He is a vital force within every detail of our lives.

There are some who are frightened or filled with mysterious forebodings regarding this gift; to see Him as a personal friend is almost beyond their comprehension. But in this section we shall see that Jesus has sent the Comforter for just this very reason--to continue His work of being a friend of sinners, to gently woo us into a closer relationship with the Saviour by pointing out our need. It is as if he says: Let me assure you that Jesus loves you more than you can imagine. And if you will allow Me to do it, I, the Holy Spirit will live out the very perfect life of Jesus within your own thoughts, words and actions. Would you like me to do that for you?

What a personal friend is the Holy Spirit, even though sometimes it is difficult to picture Him this way. But if He is to represent the character of Jesus, Who is all-loving and helpful, would it not be reasonable to understand Him in the same light of mercy and compassion as Jesus? Then let us open the door of our hearts and allow Him to teach us of the ways of Jesus in a very personal way.

As we studied Section A, we looked at two quotations which helped us focus on the great importance that Jesus placed on the entire subject of the Holy Spirit. So as we begin Section B, let us again take a

It Begins With Bible Baptism

moment to review these two quotations and thus focus on what He sees is so very important:

"Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration." (1 Selected Messages, pp. 156,157), (1891).

As we contemplate this statement for a few moments, we become aware that nearly one hundred years after it was written, ironically it still appears to be true today! Notice the following statement in which the servant of the Lord was shown, even more graphically, the need of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives:

"...I seemed to be in meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor--the opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit. . .In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building." (1 Selected Messages, p. 109).

Oh how very, very awesome--how solemn to think that few of us as God's people are aware of the scene presented! We must awaken out of sleep. We must be sure that our lamps are full of the oil of the Holy Spirit. For behold the Bridegroom is coming--even at the door of eternity. Why should we sleep any longer? It is high time to participate in this awakening, this realization of our inadequacy to finish His work on the earth. Where is the earnest cry for personal revival and reformation? The Saviour is waiting. Will we respond? Let us enter this lesson with a determination to submit all there is of us to His prompting and control, and we shall not be disappointed.

Introduction

In this lesson our objective is to learn how this experience is to begin and what is involved; in other words, to learn when the initial reception of the Holy Spirit occurs in the life of the Christian as well as to show the importance of asking for this special Presence on a continuing, daily basis.

If, as we are suggesting in this section, the Holy Spirit is God's answer for all the areas of my life, then in the life of the Christian at the central focal point of the public confession of that relationship--Bible baptism--there must be something there that involves this special gift. Could there be a correlation between water

It Begins With Bible Baptism

baptism and the baptism of the Holy Spirit as He begins His mighty work in me?

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit - How Very Important

In Mark 1:8 John the Baptist testified that the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Spirit. He appears to contrast this with the baptism that he was performing for the remission of sins. There is a difference then between the baptism that Jesus instituted and the one that had previously been performed by John. This seems to be confirmed when, many years later, the Apostle Paul was passing through the city of Ephesus where he met a small band of new Christians (Acts 19).

Apparently he saw no spiritual growth, no "fruit of the Spirit" in their lives, and so he asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit when they first believed; in other words, at their baptism had they received the Holy Spirit? The reaction of the people shows that they had not heard of the need of anything more at baptism than the remission of sins made possible by the shed blood of Jesus. They simply replied that they had been baptized "into John's baptism," which did not include being baptized in the name of all the members of the Godhead; it included only the forgiveness of sins by faith in the coming Messiah.

However, when Jesus came, He expanded the concept of Bible baptism to include even more than the forgiveness of sins, as vital of course as that is. He told His disciples that they were to baptize in the name of all three members of the Godhead. Besides Matthew 28:19, notice in Acts 1:4,5 how Jesus emphasizes this. He makes it apparent that after Pentecost there is to be a difference; the Holy Spirit would now be consciously included. The reason why the disciples had to be separately baptized with the Holy Spirit, was that in their initial baptism of water, by John, the Person of the Holy Spirit was not included; this was because Jesus had not yet been "glorified" (John 7:39). After His acceptance in heaven by His Father, however, He could then send the Holy Spirit, Who was to be included in all future baptisms. This was Jesus' plan.

This new awareness of including the Holy Spirit at baptism was made clear to the disciples at the close of His earthly sojourn when He said, "baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Obviously the baptism instituted by Jesus was to take the place of the baptism by John the Baptist. Now it was time to make His people aware that baptism was to be much more than a public symbol of the forgiveness and forsaking of sin.

As Jesus instructed His disciples (which includes us), He wanted to make it clear that baptism also now symbolized the special entrance of the Holy Spirit inside of each life. This new relationship became

It Begins With Bible Baptism

possible because of Jesus' personal identity with mankind. He came and dwelt among us, and He desires to continue that relationship. But because of His new physical limitation, the only way this is to be possible is through the indwelling presence of His personal representative, the Holy Spirit.

This very special gift which Jesus promised to send came literally within reach at the amazing miracle at Pentecost. In Acts 2:38 Peter urges his hearers to repent, be baptized, and **then** the Holy Spirit would be received. And so it is at baptism that the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit is made uniquely available to anyone who confesses the name of Jesus. What indication do you see in the next verse of Scripture that this heaven-inspired instruction applies to all future Christians?

The result at Pentecost, as well as now, of this infilling that comes to all who arise from these waters is **new birth**, being born again. And the effect is obvious, faces are all aglow with the radiance of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Yet there is something even greater; most new members who go through this beautiful experience come forth with an inspiration that they just must find someone with whom to share this new-found faith. Their desire to win souls is so great they must tell somebody.

And so we can say that at our baptism the Holy Spirit has been commissioned to enter each one of us in order to make us more aware of our need to be like Jesus, and to instill within us a heaven-sent burden to share this awareness with others. So often as Christians we think that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is some separate experience, because we are not sure of His presence in us. But by faith, we can say that since we have been baptized in the name of all three of the Godhead, we have been baptized with the Holy Spirit, and each of us has a measure of this gift dwelling within.

The tragedy is that so many of us are essentially satisfied with only a "little" of this precious gift. Perhaps because we are unaware of all that took place at our baptism, we do not usually long for more of this valuable relationship. And yet it is more, **much more**, that is needed if we are to see our characters perfected and our lives and church empowered to complete the awesome challenge that still lies uncompleted before us!

Notice how important this "renewing" or fresh baptism was to Jesus who did not rest content that at His baptism He had received this special infilling:

"From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul

It Begins With Bible Baptism

and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others. His words were given Him fresh from the heavenly courts, words that He might speak in season to the weary and oppressed." (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 139). (Italics supplied).

Jesus of course is our perfect example; if He felt the need for the daily baptism of the Holy Spirit in His humanity, should not we be sensitive to the very same need in our own lives as well as in becoming qualified for our work for Him? Notice the following quotations that so graphically illustrate our own need to receive this gift on a continual basis:

"Ministers and people, if saved at all, must . . . hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ, the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Church members,—those placed in positions of trust,—must be baptized with the Spirit of God, or they will not be qualified for the positions they accept." (Fundamentals of Education, p. 240).

"What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord." (1 Selected Messages, p. 411).

"Impress upon all the necessity of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, . . . so that they will be living, growing, fruit-bearing trees of the Lord's planting." (Testimonies, Vol. 6, p. 86).

"God desires to refresh His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit, baptizing them anew in His love. There is no need for a dearth of the Holy Spirit in the church." (Christian Service, p. 250).

In Conclusion

Please take some time right here to carefully contemplate the importance of these quotations for you personally. Try asking yourself the following questions:

Am I sensing my own need for a more conscious awareness of receiving more and more?

Do I have faith to believe that at my baptism I first received the indwelling Spirit, but that that isn't enough?

Do I believe that I need a new baptism of this wonderful gift from the throne of heaven?

This type of question allows the Holy Spirit to guide us in a personal application of our study instead of it becoming a mere intellectual

It Begins With Bible Baptism

approach to the greatest gift that Jesus could send. Perhaps it would even be appropriate to engage in a special season of prayer, pleading for God to pour out upon all present, not a sensational, dramatic reaction that might cause misunderstanding, but rather a deep flooding of each soul that will be life-changing and will be so full and so rich that the burden for souls will cause reformation in our time and priorities. May this be the prayer for each one of us, as part of God's people.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer

It Begins With Bible Baptism

QUIZ

Question: 1. Jesus is not the one who baptizes us with the Holy Spirit.

Answer: True ☐ (page 57)
False ☐

Question: 2. The baptism of John the Baptist did not include the reception of the Holy Spirit.

Answer: True ☐ (page 57)
False ☐

Question: 3. According to Acts 2:38, when does a person receive the Holy Spirit as an indwelling power?

Answer: _____
(page 58)

Question: 4. How often did Jesus receive a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: _____. (page 58)

Question: 5. There is no need for a dearth or lack of the Holy Spirit in the church.

Answer: True ☐ (page 59)
False ☐



Section B - Part 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Life

MY ENCOURAGER, COMFORTER AND GUIDE

Introduction

In the first part of this lesson it will be our objective to briefly focus on our need for the encouragement, comfort and guidance that Jesus brings to us. But in the major portion of this lesson we will dwell on the fact that it is the function of the Holy Spirit to accomplish this work; it is He who brings to us the abundant life, the joy of Christ's indwelling presence.

According to John 16:33 and 2 Timothy 3:12, we can expect that we will have some trials and persecution in our lives as Christians, although unfortunately some Christians appear to have more than their share. Turn now to 1 Peter 4:12,13. As you look at this passage, why do you think the apostle counseled us not to think of this suffering as strange? Instead, he urged us to "rejoice" or be thankful for it--why? In verse 14, Peter even suggests that we are "blessed" if we do endure; what does he say this indicates regarding the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives?

It is the "good fight of faith" of course; and without the element of faith or trust in the Saviour's ability to send or bring the encouragement we need, we would easily give up and find the good fight useless and futile. The loving Lord Jesus personally understands this good fight, and it was His specific purpose, before seeing His disciples suffer the initial discouragement at the cross, that He would assure them of special help. In John 14:18 He spoke of this third member of the Godhead as Himself; He said "I will not leave you orphans."

It is important at this point to remind ourselves that when He came forth from the tomb, He forever retained His human identity, thereby limiting His physical presence to one place at a time. However, such a limitation illustrates the very special identity or purpose of the Holy Spirit. This gift was given by Jesus in order to help us better understand that after His resurrection and return to heaven, He would still be as concerned and involved with our needs for encouragement and guidance. The only difference would be that as our Saviour--and through the special omnipresent ministry of the Holy Spirit--He, Jesus, could still be everywhere at the same time. This means that through the Holy Spirit, He is closer to everyone of us now than when He walked here on earth!

My Encourager, Comforter and Guide

What a God! Just think of it, Jesus was so concerned that we not feel as though we are orphans after He went back to heaven, that He makes it abundantly clear that He would send our Helper, the Holy Spirit, from His Father for the special task of constantly leading us to Him as Lord and Saviour of our lives. This assurance is found in John 15:26.

Notice the following quotations that make this assurance so vivid and sweet:

"Do not forget that you have a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which Christ has appointed. You are never alone. If you will listen to the voice that now speaks to you, if you will respond without delay to the knocking at the door of the heart, 'Come in, Lord Jesus, that I may sup with Thee, and Thee with me,' the heavenly Guest will enter. When this element, which is all divine, abides with you, there is peace and rest." (The Adventist Home, p. 350). (Italics supplied).

"When Christ ascended to the Father, He did not leave His followers without help. The Holy Spirit, as His representative, and the heavenly angels, as ministering spirits, are sent forth to aid those who against great odds are fighting the good fight of faith. Ever remember that Jesus is your helper." (Messages to Young People, p. 17). (Italics supplied).

Joy, Joy,--Oh, How Jesus Longs to Give Us This Gift of Joy!

What cause for joy and rejoicing--Jesus has provided for us the marvelous blessing of the Holy Spirit, and if we invite Him within, peace and rest result. The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength.

That night in the upper room where the work and promise of the Holy Spirit was more clearly revealed, Jesus connected this work of grace with joy. Notice in John 16:20-24 where Jesus promises that sorrow will be turned into joy, a joy that no one will be able to take from us! The Saviour emphasizes the importance of asking Him for the special blessings that we need, and that as we ask, we will receive and then our joy will be full. It reminds one of the passage in Luke 11:9-13 where it shows the Father's special willingness to give us of this precious gift.

Yes, Jesus will give us not just joy; He wants to fill us with joy! For living the life of Christ is not a sunless experience; instead it is to be an experience of happiness even amidst tests and trials. In the life of the Christian there is the peace that passeth all understanding. What comfort, yes, what joy, just to know that He is with us, that He will not forsake us--no, not ever!

My Encourager, Comforter and Guide

In contrast to the happy, joyful Christian, some professed Christians give the impression that to be a Christian and called by His name is a joyless experience. They misrepresent the Lord, implying that Jesus was gloomy and sad. Yet He was not that at all. While He was not filled with levity or joking, He had and still has a heart filled with joy. Notice this quotation:

"There are many who have an erroneous idea of the life and character of Christ. They think that He was devoid of warmth and sunniness, that He was stern, severe, and joyless. . . . It is often said that Jesus. . . was never known to smile . . ." (and then she adds) **"His heart was a wellspring of life, and wherever He went He carried rest and peace, joy and gladness. . . . the religion of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not quench the light of joy, . . ."** (*Steps to Christ*, p. 120). (*Italics supplied*).

It is possible through Christ's indwelling Spirit for every Christian to have joy, **real joy**, even amidst the pain and problems that life seems at times to deal so harshly. There is a little chorus that says:

**Joy, Joy, my heart is filled with Joy,
Joy, Joy, my heart is filled with Joy,
Since Jesus Christ my Saviour entered in,
That's the reason why my heart is filled with Joy.**

Now let me ask you, how does Jesus enter into our hearts/minds and bring to us this infilling of joy? It is through the Holy Spirit. This, my friend, is a major work of the Holy Spirit. And oh how Jesus longs to fill us with more and more of this wonderful gift, for it is the only way by which the Saviour is able to enter our lives and change us to be like Him.

Notice, if you will, 1 Thessalonians 1:5,6, where the Apostle Paul describes the effect of His labors on their hearts and lives. He says that to them the gospel was not just theoretical, but was with power--even the power of the Holy Spirit, changing their lives. He indicates that even though there was much trial and affliction as they learned the truth, that nonetheless even in the midst of such difficulty, the joy of the Holy Spirit was a very real part of their experience. This joy, my friend, is for you and me as well. Let's ask for this joy that it may be ours!

Paul knew by experience what it meant to have this supernatural joy that sustained amidst severe persecution. Notice in Acts 13:49-52 where the record states that the gospel was spreading so noticeably that the unconverted Jews succeeded in arousing terrible animosity against the believers. Paul and Barnabas did not let it defeat them; they pressed on. As a result, verse 52 says that they were filled with joy even of the Holy Spirit.

My Encourager, Comforter and Guide

In Romans 14:17, Paul describes the Kingdom of God, which he says does not involve the necessities of food and water; but instead includes the righteousness of Christ, the peace which passes all human understanding. Especially notice that the Kingdom of God also includes the joy of the Holy Spirit within us. Would it be safe to conclude then that this joy which the Holy Spirit is commissioned to bring to us is the result of our accepting the Lord Jesus Christ in all His righteousness?

Heaven's real joy for us then is in giving us the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, for He is the only one who can bring to us the divine presence and character of Jesus. What joy God receives and what joy this will bring to us if we will only ask for more and more of this very special gift.

Notice in the specific quotations that follow how very prominent this joy can be:

"Wherever His Spirit reigns, . . .there will be joy. . . ."
(The Desire of Ages, p. 153).

"There is truth in Jesus that is full of soothing joy to the obedient. It is the joy of the Holy Ghost. Be persuaded, then, to open the mind and heart, that you may see every ray of light shining from the throne of God." (1 Selected Messages, p. 318).

"When the Spirit of God takes possession of the heart, it transforms the life. Sinful thoughts are put away, evil deeds are renounced; love, humility, and peace take the place of anger, envy, and strife. Joy takes the place of sadness, and the countenance reflects the light of heaven." (The Desire of Ages, p. 173).

In Conclusion

Jesus said, "I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly;" He also said, "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy might be full." What hinders us then from receiving such abundant joy? Notice at least three things; you may think of more. First, there is insufficient asking--if Luke 11:13 is to be understood correctly. Second, we are too "satisfied" with the quantity we already have of this gift--at least according to Revelation 3:17,18. The third reason, however, is not quite so easily recognized nor accepted. It is hidden (though not so hidden) in a quotation in The Desire of Ages, p. 672. As we read this quotation, try to see if you can find the reason:

"There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord's promise (of the Holy Spirit); they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine

My Encourager, Comforter and Guide

agencies. . . .Through the Spirit God works in His people 'to will and to do of His good pleasure.' Phil. 2:13. But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves. This is why they do not receive the heavenly gift. Only to those who wait humbly upon God, who watch for His guidance and grace, is the Spirit given. . . .Christ. . .is ready to supply every soul according to the capacity to receive."
(Italics supplied).

Really, the third reason is clear; if day by day we are unwilling to submit to the divine direction of the Holy Spirit in our lives, if by word or action we show that we want to manage ourselves, then the Holy Spirit will not be given.

Oh, let us this very day ask for more and more that His joy may be ours. Let us never again be satisfied with a meager supply. And let us determine that by His grace we will yield and surrender to the Spirit's control.

Dear friend, as we close this lesson, perhaps it would be well to separate where individually we could pray alone for heaven to work out these miracles in us to His glory. Won't you just now decide with me that Jesus will have all there is of us?

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

My Encourager, Comforter and Guide

QUIZ

Question: 1. In John 14:18 Jesus wanted to be sure that His disciples did not feel like what, after He left?

Answer: _____. (page 63)

Question: 2. Rather than some temporary "fix," Jesus wants to fill us with His Spirit that we might be full of joy.

Answer: True ☐ (page 64)
False ☐

Question: 3. One of the major functions of the Holy Spirit is to fill us with joy.

Answer: True ☐ (page 66)
False ☐

Question: 4. What does the strong desire to "manage" ourselves indicate regarding the Holy Spirit?

Answer: _____
(page 67)

Section B - Part 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Life

MY CONVICTOR, MY POWER IN OVERCOMING, MY STRENGTH - Part One

Introduction

Jesus came to this earth not only to make possible the forgiveness of our sins, but to restore, to recreate in us His divine image or character. The book The Desire of Ages throughout its marvelous pages makes this clear as illustrated in His life.

One of the points that Jesus revealed over and over was that His Father's love was abundantly sufficient to forgive any sin that was submitted to Him. When you stop and think about it, His love had to be sufficient! The divine requirements could not be softened or bent to concur with man's inborn or inherited tendency to sin, and so God's mercy and forgiveness met the challenge of the human race, and each one of us is individually accepted through our faith in this wonderful sufficiency of Jesus.

His requirements are still very, very serious; there is no "take it or leave it" attitude possible in our relationship with Him. The Lord still requires strict obedience; He always has, He always will. And this realization is increasingly necessary because of the current humanistic philosophy that says "anything goes," as if His grace and love makes obedience obsolete.

According to Revelation 21:7 however, only "overcomers" will enter those pearly gates. And in the messages to the seven churches, in each segment of the history of the early Christian church, it is told that only overcomers or those who prove to be victorious will receive the blessings heaven has prepared for those who love Him and His appearing.

Thus we are enabled to realize that since sin entered the human story, it is not natural for human beings to easily discern or recognize their own spiritual needs. In fact, Romans 2:4 specifically tells us that even repentance does not result from some human, mechanical-type decision that matter of factly says, "Let's see now, oh yes, I think I will repent." Human pride does not even think it has any spiritual needs--"everything is O.K.!" And yet in Revelation 3:17 Jesus makes it clear that even though we may not be aware of our need, He is, and He longs to awaken us to this need before it is forever too late.

There is an interesting and significant passage in Proverbs 20:27. Notice there how the work of the Holy Spirit, through our conscience, is referred to as a "lamp searching all the inner depths of his heart."

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part One

We would do well, not only to allow but to ask daily for this special gift and His thorough work within us.

The Holy Spirit Reveals My Need and Convicts Me

Since bringing conviction is His specific work for us, one might expect this to be the major emphasis of His ministry. However, in John 15:26, it defines that His primary work is to testify and reveal who Jesus is. Interestingly enough, I need this revelation of Jesus before I can be aware of the need of His presence and power in my life! Only as I "see Jesus," only as the Spirit of God reveals Him and His character to me, can I see what He sees--namely, my spiritual blindness, nakedness, and poverty, my utter wretchedness. Without this revelation I cannot be aware of how very miserable I am.

And thus it is the Holy Spirit who perfectly understands us and how to accomplish this. Notice especially the following quotation:

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence. . .that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing you." (Steps to Christ, pp. 64,65).

The Bible is of course the written plan and history of God and His leading through His Holy Spirit. And in Hebrews 4:12 heaven reveals how very thorough this work is. His ability is so very keen; not one of us can escape His searching of the actions and motives of our lives. Yet it is very important to understand that His work is so much more than what some assume--an intent to "catch us doing something wrong." Nothing could be farther from the truth! While it is true that the work of the Holy Spirit is very thorough, we must also remember why He does this. Notice the following:

"There are today many as ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work upon the heart as were those believers in Ephesus; yet no truth is more clearly taught in the word of God. Prophets and apostles have dwelt upon this theme. Christ Himself calls our attention to the. . .agency of His Spirit in sustaining spiritual life. The sap of the vine, ascending from the root, is diffused to the branches, sustaining growth and producing blossoms and fruit. So the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, proceeding from the Saviour, pervades the soul, renews the motives and affections, and brings even the thoughts into obedience to the will of God, enabling the receiver to bear the precious fruit of holy deeds." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 284).

We see then that it is the "life-giving power of the Holy Spirit,

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part One

proceeding from the Saviour" that not only draws us gently to the cross of Christ, but also enables us to bear the precious fruit of good deeds. Praise the Lord for such an enabling gift.

There is an important point for us to notice in connection with the experience of Jesus' relationship with His disciples, and that is this: even though they associated with Him every day on a personal basis, that wasn't enough. Not until they beheld Him on the cross of Calvary were they really softened and prepared for the changes that He was about to make in them through the indwelling presence of His Spirit.

Oh that we too would spend time every morning at the foot of the Saviour's cross, as it were. You can see why "we would do well to spend a thoughtful hour each day" in contemplation of the price that was paid for us; for only thus can we be prepared for this wonderful indwelling Presence.

What is Our Greatest Spiritual Challenge?

Is it not to reflect Jesus' beautiful character of love and compassion? Specifically, how can we behold the loveliness of His beautiful character so much that by "beholding" we shall be changed? Let us prayerfully consider the following ways of beholding His perfect character and thus become changed:

1. By contemplation of the surrendered life of Jesus through a more consistent devotional life;
2. By observing the selfless life of Jesus we can have a genuine love and compassion for each other;
3. By concentrating on the deep love of Jesus for each individual soul, we can catch a vision of an involvement in personal witnessing;
4. By beholding Jesus' victory over every sin, we can accept His victory in place of our sins;
5. And by reliving the story of Jesus' forgiveness and acceptance to the thief on the cross, we can have a forgiving and supportive attitude toward all others.

Yes, you say, but how do all these things become reality; it all sounds good, but I am tired of only hearing what I should do; I must experience it. Dear friend, such burdens or concerns as these are born of God; let them lead us to His side where we will find not only comfort and rest, but where we shall receive continual infillings of His Holy Spirit who leads us to "behold," and also pours forth this wonderful gift **through** you and me--channels of His grace.

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part One

The Holy Spirit is the answer to such longings! Notice the following assurances of this very work which He will do in developing within each of us a character like the Master. Feast on the following gems:

"Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. Of what avail would it be to us that the only begotten Son of God humbled Himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and died, . . . if the Spirit had not been given as a constant, working, regenerating agent, to make effectual in each individual case what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer?

"It is the Spirit. . . ; that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the eternal inheritance. The Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies human beings, fitting them to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King." (Gospel Workers, pp. 286, 287).

"In describing to His disciples the office work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus sought to inspire them with the joy and hope that inspired His own heart. He rejoiced because of the abundant help He had provided for His church. The Holy Spirit was the highest of all gifts that He could solicit from His Father for the exaltation of His people. The Spirit was to be given as a regenerating agent, and without this the sacrifice of Christ would have been of no avail. . . . Sin could be resisted and overcome only through the mighty agency of the Third Person of the Godhead. . . . It is the Spirit that makes effectual what has been wrought out by the world's Redeemer. It is by the Spirit that the heart is made pure. Through the Spirit the believer becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Christ has given His Spirit as a divine power to overcome all hereditary and cultivated tendencies to evil, and to impress His own character upon His church." (The Desire of Ages, p. 671).

"It is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal to the mind the character of the consecration that God will accept. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the soul is enlightened, and the character is renewed, sanctified, and uplifted." (1 Selected Messages, p. 134).

"Christ promised that the Holy Spirit should abide with those who wrestle for victory over sin, to demonstrate the power of

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part One

divine might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength. . . ." (Gospel Workers, p. 286).

In Closing

We can see that this wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit is in reality God's very special gift for each one of us, not only to convict and show us what is wrong, but at that point He becomes much, much more. He is our power in overcoming every "hereditary and cultivated tendency to evil"; He is our strength for He brings into our lives the literal presence of Jesus.

Do you now sense a greater need for this power? Can we at this moment accept the assurance that His presence will be in us, just for the asking? Yes, how grateful we can be that He is here right now; He has guided us through this and past lessons. He is longing for human recognition, yours and mine. Let us just now, at this moment, yield our will in surrender to His control that Jesus might be everything in us.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part One

QUIZ



Question: 1. In reality there is no "take it or leave it" attitude with God.

Answer: True ☐ (page 69)
False ☐

Question: 2. In Proverbs 20:27, how is the Holy Spirit described?

Answer: _____. (page 69)

Question: 3. What is the evidence that the Spirit of God is arousing us?

Answer: _____
_____.
(page 70)



Question: 4. What is our greatest spiritual challenge?

Answer: _____
(page 71)

Question: 5. Whom did Christ promise that the Holy Spirit would abide with?

Answer: _____
(page 72)



Section B - Part 4

THE HOLY SPIRIT - Gods's Answer for My Life

MY CONVICTOR, MY POWER IN OVERCOMING, MY STRENGTH - Part Two

Introduction

In the last lesson we saw how the Bible makes it clear that only those who are overcomers will be blessed with an entrance into heaven. We focused on the fact that the wonderful love of God as revealed through the life of His Son is all-encompassing, yet this abundant love does not mean that obedience is not important. On the contrary, obedience is so important that the marvelous love of God was revealed in the gift of His Son.

In the last lesson we also learned that since it is not natural for us to readily recognize how really helpless we are in our battle of good over evil, there must be an outside power to aid us, and of course that special power is the Holy Spirit. We emphasized that unless we daily ask for this gift and allow Him to do His thorough work of revival and reformation within us, we will be unable to recognize our need of Him, and will be unfit for heaven.

In this lesson we will continue our study of the Holy Spirit; that He is our Convictor, our Power in overcoming, and also our Strength. In reality these attributes are the attributes of Jesus and illustrate the closeness between Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is simply reflecting or illustrating to us day by day the concern and care that the Saviour has for each one of us. He is here to seek our cooperation by allowing Him to recreate in us the very image of God. Finally in this lesson we want to particularly emphasize that the Holy Spirit is our strength; or to put it more personally, we can each say: because of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is my strength; it is He that will accomplish the impossible in me.

In the Sin Conflict the Holy Spirit is My Strength

Let me begin by reviewing once again Revelation 3:17 where we are made aware that it is not natural to acknowledge our helpless condition. In fact, the human nature says, "I am doing all right in spiritual attainment, I really don't need anything; all my devotions and the things I do for the Lord make that clear."

And yet our loving heavenly Father sees the reality. He knows that no matter how much we may appear righteous in our own eyes, we are so very much in need--"wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked." In our own righteousness, apart from His perfection, these words will always describe our natural condition; hence our very great need is for more

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part Two

and more of His Holy Spirit to indwell us on a daily, moment-by-moment basis. And how very grateful we can be that the Saviour loves us on the basis of His righteousness and not ours!

The natural human resistance to these realizations can only be broken as we **choose** to come closer to Jesus. Notice the following statement from that wonderful book Steps to Christ, pp. 64,65.

"The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power; that the vivifying influence of the Spirit of God is arousing you."

How special a work it is for the Holy Spirit to woo us each one individually to the Saviour's side and there show us our deep need of Jesus. Even the sin of adultery can yield to the Spirit's prompting as is illustrated in the life of King David. All of the fifty-first Psalm is dealing with his feelings, his broken heart, and the shame he has caused his Lord. The great cry of his heart is to be clean once again, unworthy though he is. Then he adds, "Do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."

We become more and more aware that the Holy Spirit is commissioned to be our strength in every conflict. To depend upon this gift of the power of the Holy Spirit is to depend on the Saviour. This is because the Holy Spirit perfectly expresses the thoughts, aims, and purposes of Jesus; yes, the only way that Jesus can give us His strength is through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

How thankful then we can be for this very powerful gift that enables us to live a life wholly consecrated to God. In the following quotation we will see again that the Holy Spirit has a very definite role in helping us to overcome every sin. But our part is to yield and surrender our will to His control; only this will bring His power to our aid. Note:

"In this conflict of righteousness against unrighteousness we can be successful only by divine aid. Our finite will must be brought into submission to the will of the Infinite; the human will must be blended with the divine. This will bring the Holy Spirit to our aid. . . ." (Messages to Young People, p. 55).

But what about emergencies when we seem to be caught unawares? Is there divine aid then too? Notice the following:

"God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part Two

our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts." (Christian Service, p. 253).

This is all connected with the basic quality of life that the Saviour wants to give to each one of us--happiness. This quality every unconverted human being desires to experience in his own way, which may be why it is so elusive. Notice in the next quotation the involvement of the Holy Spirit in our pursuit of happiness.

"Never will the human heart know happiness until it is submitted to be molded by the Spirit of God. . . .Through the influence of the Spirit, enmity against God is changed into faith and love, and pride into humility. . . .Christ is honored in excellence and perfection of character. (Now notice the happiness or joy that this causes in heaven.) As these changes are effected, angels break out in rapturous song, and God and Christ rejoice over souls fashioned after the divine similitude." (Messages to Young People, pp. 55,56).

Please note the emphasis of how this is to be accomplished.

"Every defect in the character, unless it is overcome by the help of the Lord's Spirit, will become a sure means of destruction. I feel as never before the necessity for our people to be energized by the spirit of the truth; for Satan's devices will ensnare every soul who has not made God his strength." (Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 573).

In the next statement notice how specific inspiration is regarding this work of the Holy Spirit:

"The Holy Spirit is our efficiency in the work of character building, in forming characters after the divine similitude. When we think ourselves capable of molding our own experience, we make a great mistake. We can never of ourselves obtain the victory over temptation. But those who have genuine faith in Christ will be worked by the Holy Spirit. The soul in whose heart faith abides will grow into a beautiful temple for the Lord. He is directed by the grace of Christ. Just in proportion as he depends on the Holy Spirit's teaching he will grow." (6 SDABC, p. 1109).

We have long been aware as a people of the importance of cultivating purity of thought and life; but have we been as aware of the importance of learning to curb our appetites? In this next quotation we can see that it is all important. Note especially the aid that is promised through the Holy Spirit even for this area of appetite:

"Cultivate purity of thought and purity of life. The grace of God will be your strength to restrain your passions and curb your appetites. Earnest prayer and watching thereunto will bring the Holy Spirit to your aid, to perfect the work,

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part Two

and make you like your unerring Pattern." (Testimonies, Vol. 2, pp. 91,92).

Conclusion: What Encouragement--None Have Fallen Too Low

It is this assurance that the world so desperately needs. Oh, the greatest burden or load that any human being can bear is the crushing load of sin. Its guilt has often been described as a "monkey on my back." Notice the following assurance that can be such a blessing if only we will accept the conditions:

"None are so vile, none have fallen so low, as to be beyond the working of this power (the grace of God). In all who will submit themselves to the Holy Spirit a new principle of life is to be implanted; the lost image of God is to be restored in humanity." (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 96).

Please turn to Ephesians 3:16-19 and notice here how or by what means Christ dwells in our hearts. It is "through His Spirit in the inner man," which in turn will enable us to not only comprehend but to know the marvelous love of Christ. Then comes that wonderful assurance in verse 20 which is so amazing; after stating how "able" God is, it tells us that this is true "according to the power that works in us."

The Word of God is full of special promises, like the one in 2 Corinthians 3:17, which states that wherever this Spirit of the Lord is, "there is liberty." Good news indeed! And of course we can go on repeating these special promises, but we must close. Let us turn to Romans 8:26,27. Please read the passage and share what these words mean to you on a personal basis.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer

My Convictor, My Power in Overcoming, My Strength - Part Two

QUIZ

Question: 1. As we become more and more aware of the offered strength of the Holy Spirit to help us in our conflict, we thus diminish the need for the strength of Jesus.

Answer: True ☐ (page 76)
False ☐

Question: 2. How does Jesus give us His strength?

Answer: _____. (pages 76,77)

Question: 3. When will the human heart know real happiness?

Answer: _____.
(page 77)

Question: 4. An effective means in curbing the appetite is to covet the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Answer: True ☐ (page 77)
False ☐



Section B - Part 5

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Life

BE YE FILLED!

Introduction

This lesson or chapter is a very special one; in it we want to focus on the New Testament passage that specifically commands, "Be ye filled." This focus must be more than simply an intellectual awareness of some factual material; yes, it must be much more than that. Perhaps we could look at this divine command as an invitation to be fully filled; for a very specific purpose. He wants to make each one of us another consecrated channel to diffuse the Light of the world.

In this lesson we will seek to accomplish several objectives: one, we will begin by showing the importance of being filled; two, we will briefly focus on New Testament Christians who were filled with the Holy Spirit, and the results they experienced; third, we will see that this is the essence of the new covenant experience. We want to sense heaven's special appeal for us to receive this blessing on a daily basis.

Let us notice in Ephesians 5:18 where this command is given: "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." As born-again Christians we would not think of being drunk with wine. But are we equally concerned to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Interestingly, in verse 17, we are admonished to understand that to be thus filled is verily the will of the Lord. In fact, the Apostle Paul suggests that it would be very unwise not to understand this.

Oh how very important it is that we should be filled to overflowing as a result of asking for this gift on a daily basis. Perhaps we have been satisfied as a people with a little of this blessing when it is available without measure. Notice in the following quotation that such a degree of receiving is available; also notice the quality of complete surrender which thus brings this gift without measure:

"To Jesus, who emptied Himself for the salvation of lost humanity, the Holy Spirit was given without measure. So it will be given to every follower of Christ when the whole heart is surrendered for His indwelling. . . . It was the good pleasure of the Father that in Christ should 'all the fullness dwell,' and 'in Him ye are made full.'" Colossians 1:19, RV; 2:10, RV. (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, p. 21).

Be Ye Filled!

Hence we can see that in order to receive this gift without measure, the whole heart must be surrendered to His control. But are we willing to allow this? It is not easy; the natural inclination is that we want to manage ourselves! (See The Desire of Ages, p. 672). Because of this inclination, inspiration tells us that the sternest battles fought are those fought with self. And yet this is the point of focus. Only by dwelling on the self-sacrificing life of Jesus as our example can we expect to have the desire to surrender, and only as we yield to His will for us and ask for His Holy Spirit to empower us, will we be able to make this wholehearted surrender.

However, this is not done by all of God's people. Speaking in reference to this power, the servant of the Lord says:

" . . . what words shall I use sufficiently to express what has been done with reference to it? The heavenly Messenger has been repulsed by the determined will." (Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 358).

If we as Christians were fully filled, then clearly there would be no room for the human nature to control. Why not spend a few minutes this week thinking of what you could begin or continue to do that would bring you closer to this experience of being "fully filled."

To Be Filled - What it Meant in New Testament Times

Let's begin with the life and experience of John the Baptist. In Luke 1, the angel told Zechariah that "many shall rejoice" at the birth of his son John. And as we look in sacred history we can see that there surely was a saving effect on the lives of others because of John's witness.

In Luke 1:15 the angel told Zechariah that a very special blessing would be given to John--the filling full of the presence and control of the Holy Spirit, "even from his mother's womb." What an unusual pronouncement this was; then just like it was prophesied, verse 80 records that John became "strong" in or with this mighty gift.

In Luke 1:16 and 17, the results, as predicted because of this special infilling, were powerful. "And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. . . .to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Yes, it happened as God said it would. We too can be thus used by heaven for the saving of both those within the church as well as those without if we will be fully filled with this special gift.

Oh for such power to come upon God's chosen ones today, upon the ordained ministers, upon all of God's people, this "priesthood of believers." It just must happen! for without the mighty outpouring of this life-changing power in our own lives, God will not be able to use us to affect the world as it needs to be affected.

Be Ye Filled!

Let us turn next to the record of the Spirit-filled lives in the book of Acts. In Acts 2:4 it records that at Pentecost, . . . "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. . . ." The reaction of those unconsecrated ones to this divine evidence was the accusation of drunkenness. This type of reaction is predictable when we remember Satan's accusations ever since man fell into sin. Where had this divine power come from, according to verse 33? Notice that inspiration makes it clear that it was from the Father Himself.

One of the primary ways to help determine the origin or source of any supernatural manifestation is to search for its purpose. According to the listeners' testimony in verse 11, notice their awareness of the fact that these disciples were not speaking their own ideas, but rather they were speaking of the mighty deeds of God!

Notice, too, that that which impressed these unconverted Jews from many nations was the fact that disciples were speaking of these wonderful deeds in the mother tongues of these visitors to Jerusalem. But the recognition of and emphasis upon these mighty deeds of God impressed these visitors as much as the fact that they heard it in their own language. Hence, the real focus is placed on souls being won to Jesus Christ, not on the previously unheard of ability to speak in another language "having never learned."

Please note: this distinction is extremely important! By many, the emphasis today is on the "tongues." Yet in Scripture this is not stressed by the writers; rather, the emphasis is always on the purpose of this special bestowal of the Holy Spirit--to emphasize that He will prepare and empower all who are willing to be "made willing" to be an instrument of God in order to reach the lives of men and women with the message and offer of eternal life. Thus the Holy Spirit can rightly be described as the Great Enabler.

In Acts 4:8 we again notice the emphasis on being filled with the Holy Spirit. This special gift enabled Peter to speak with holy power, and this he did in presenting the Lord Jesus Christ. In verses 13 and 14 we see the reaction of the authorities to such Spirit-filled preaching. Think of it, the enemies of God at least temporarily speechless because of the evidence of the work of God's Spirit!

After regaining their composure, the religious authorities released Peter and John, but forbade them to teach any more in the name of Jesus. No power on earth, however, is able to prevent God's truth from being heard, even amidst threatenings and warnings, and the apostles continued to preach with holy boldness. A very earnest petition was sent heavenward from these men as they recognized that they desperately needed an extra measure of divine aid.

Be Ye Filled!

In Acts 4:31 the divine reassurance came, Scripture records it, and they were thus enabled to preach and teach the word of God with boldness. But how? Inspiration's testimony is that their being "filled with the Holy Spirit" was the key, which of course came as a result of their earnest petitions. This speaks mightily to us as a people; we will face increasing and severe opposition, yet the power is there to withstand the forces of evil if we will only ask for it.

Let us look briefly at three other experiences in the book of Acts which will continue to emphasize the mighty Power that will be sent to our aid.

In the divine record, Scripture states that Stephen, in the midst of being stoned to death, was "full of the Holy Spirit." Notice in Acts 7:55 what special blessing, or privilege was given to him as a result of being filled full of the Holy Spirit; it says he was privileged to see Jesus ministering in the heavenly courts above.

In Acts 9:17 is the record of Ananias being led to Saul at the time of the transformation of Saul's life. Ananias states that equally important and perhaps even ~~more~~ important than receiving physical eyesight is to be "filled with the Holy Spirit." How easy it is and how often we seem to fall into the trap of being more concerned about our physical needs than we are in being filled with this special blessing which is available to all.

This characteristic of being "filled with the Holy Spirit" became an essential part of the Apostle Paul's life. In Acts 13:9 we see that the testimony of the lives of these messengers of God was characterized by this very fact. Notice especially in Acts 13:50-52 that even when persecution was stirred up against them and they were forced to flee for their lives, they still were of the same experience. In fact, it says that "the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit"; perhaps even indicating that they were filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit!

This Filling Full is the New Covenant Experience

"Why will you die?" is the question that God asked of Israel in the days of Ezekiel. He had the power they needed; "turn from your sin" the Lord pleaded. In Ezekiel 18:31 He urged them, "get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit." Sin was and is the culprit, both in destroying God's presence in their lives and in making our return to Him seem impossible.

It takes a very sincere realization of our own need before we come to this point. Victory cannot be ours until we recognize that without divine aid we are completely helpless. King David finally came to this realization; he saw how helpless he was in his own strength. It was a

Be Ye Filled!

○ painful awareness and yet a saving one; notice in Psalm 51:10 and 11 when he cried out in utter dependency, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." This could not have been the first plea David had ever made for forgiveness; yet he was not defeated into thinking that all hope was gone. And as he breathed this prayer for cleansing, he also pleaded for a renewing of the Spirit of God.

It was this cry of recognition for his need of the continued presence of the Holy Spirit that enabled King David to become an overcomer. He realized that unless he was filled with this wonderful and powerful gift, he would be without all hope and this he could not accept. He needed and he desired to be restored to the likeness of the character of God; as he continued in verse 12, he said, "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your generous Spirit."

Even though this may appear to be a low point in King David's life, a time when it might appear that God would reject David for his immoral conduct; in reality God then drew even closer to David at this time--why? Because of David's humility and acceptance that as a sinner, he was without hope unless healed by renewed forgiveness and by the indwelling presence of the wonderful Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

○ There is a beautiful evidence of faith in the next two verses which illustrate so marvelously what will happen when the Holy Spirit is allowed to come in to cleanse and empower. Thus after pleading to be upheld by God's Spirit, King David, the converted adulterer, is inspired to say that the result of this cleansing and infilling will be the saving of souls. **"Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise"** (Psalm 51:13,14,15).

This, my friend, will be the result of every one of our lives as we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us with: 1) the recognition of every defiling sin; 2) hope for God's mercy and forgiveness; and then as we accept this mercy, we will experience the joy of His salvation which is manifest by 3) the desire to share with someone what Jesus has done for us.

○ To accomplish all this is the Father's desire and plan as unfolded through His Son and as unfolded even before He came down from heaven. Notice this "new covenant" experience which He promises in Ezekiel 36:26. Because our natural thought process is hardened and selfish, He promises to give us a new heart and a new spirit. In other words, He will take away this natural human pride and selfishness and replace it with right motives and sanctified desires. I want this experience on a daily basis, don't you? Do you have the faith to believe that even as we study about this wonderful power--the Holy Spirit--He is changing

Be Ye Filled!

you into His likeness? I hope we will all have this faith, because if we will accept it, He will change us into the image of God.

Conclusion

Carefully consider the following in closing:

"Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts." (Steps to Christ, p. 26).

"By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit" (1 John 4:13).

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Special Prayer

Be Ye Filled!

QUIZ

Question: 1. Why does the Holy Spirit want us to be filled with His presence?

Answer: _____

(page 81)

Question: 2. According to Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 358, how has the heavenly Messenger been repulsed?

Answer: _____
(page 82)

Question: 3. What does Luke 1 reveal as to the result of John the Baptist being fully filled?

Answer: _____

(page 82)

Question: 4. What is one of the primary ways to determine the source of a supernatural manifestation?

Answer: _____
(page 83)



Section C - Part 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Home

THE SPIRIT-FILLED HOME

Introduction to Section C

In the last two sections we have studied about the Holy Spirit in relation to His being Christ's gift, first for the world as a whole, and then for each of our lives in a personal way.

In this section we will study a more intimate way in which the Holy Spirit needs to direct our daily lives--and that is our homes. Too often it is in the home where the reality of living a Spirit-filled, Christlike life breaks down. And yet this is the very place that should be the foundation of our daily living for the Saviour when we are outside the home.

If there is any topic or area of concern that needs to be carefully studied in light of the Holy Spirit's searching, convicting, and life-changing power, it is the Adventist home. It has been said that if Satan can destroy this institution, he can then destroy the church. And although he will never completely accomplish this, surely all of us would agree that he has succeeded far too often in this God-ordained citadel. Something must turn the tide. A wave of unhappiness and divorce has struck God's remnant church in almost epidemic proportions. Is there not a standard that can be raised in behalf of these sacred institutions? I believe there is; it is the specific ministry of the Holy Spirit. So let us study as ones that must give an account, for He will save our homes!

As we studied the previous sections, we looked at two quotations which helped us focus on the great importance Jesus placed on the entire subject of the Holy Spirit. The reason for repeating these quotations at the beginning of each section is to give us opportunity to be indelibly impressed with their importance. And so as we begin this section let us once again take a moment to review these two quotations, focusing on what heaven sees as so very, very important.

"Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration." (1 Selected Messages, pp. 156,157).

The Spirit-Filled Home

As we contemplate this last statement for a few moments, we become aware that nearly one hundred years after it was written, its importance has not diminished. And now is an opportune time to change this situation. Notice once again the next statement in which the servant of the Lord was shown, even more graphically, the need of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives:

"...I seemed to be in meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor—the opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit. . . In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building." (1 Selected Messages, p. 109).

Oh, how very, very awesome; a situation that we are now becoming more and more aware of! We must continue to awaken out of sleep. We must be sure that our lamps are full of the oil of the Holy Spirit. For behold the Bridegroom is coming—even at the door of eternity. Why should we sleep any longer? It is high time to participate in this awakening, this realization of our inadequacy to finish His work on the earth. Where is the earnest cry for personal revival and reformation in our lives and thus in our homes? The Saviour is waiting—will we respond? Let us enter this lesson with a determination to submit all there is of us, and all there is of our homes, to His prompting and control, and then we shall not be disappointed.

Introduction

In this lesson we want to study the subject of the home in such a way that our homes will be seen, as they were ordained by God, to be the walls of the church, treasuring the presence of Jesus. As such, they need to be under the guidance and direction of the special gift of the Holy Spirit as much as does the individual life.

There is a beautiful quotation in The Adventist Home which is only one sentence long and says what this lesson is trying to say. Note:

"The sweetest type of heaven is a home where the Spirit of the Lord presides." (The Adventist Home, p. 15).

How very much we need this special presence in every one of our homes. Satan is so angry with even our feeble attempts at letting Christ rule in the home. He knows that if we really become aware of the power that is available to us in our homes, another battle is lost. If we really understood how very special a gift the Holy Spirit is to our homes, we would be pleading in great earnestness for a rich, daily outpouring of this blessing. Notice why:

"We must have the Spirit of God, or we can never have harmony

The Spirit-Filled Home

in the home. . . .We cannot cherish home affection with too much care; for the home, if the Spirit of the Lord dwells there, is a type of heaven." (Ibid., p. 118).

"Men and women, children and youth, are measured in the scales of heaven in accordance with that which they reveal in their home life. A Christian in the home is a Christian everywhere." (Sons and Daughters of God, p. 255).

How would you describe an ideal home? Is it not a home where love for God causes genuine love for each family member and where peace and submissive harmony characterizes each member? As less than perfect human beings, we are to reach out by faith to attain this ideal, while at the same time we must plead each day for the patience and grace to accept one another in our homes--just as we are. This is the way Jesus loves and accepts us; He loves us with unconditional love!

It must be possible then, if we allow His Holy Spirit to individually guide us, that our homes can become "a little bit of heaven here on earth." Think very carefully now for a few moments. What would you like your home to become as a result of this section of study on the Holy Spirit? Is there heartache and distrust in your home? Are there things that go on behind those closed doors that grieve the heavenly messengers? Is the Holy Spirit an unwelcome guest because self is reigning instead? Perhaps it would be good just now to pause in our study for a few moments of earnest, silent prayer that God will, in fact, "raise up a standard against the evil one."

The Control of the Spirit, the Most Important Key in Marriage

Ephesians 5 could well be called the "Spirit-filled Home Chapter." Let's turn there and begin with verses 17 and 18. This is a very vital passage; instead of drowning the sorrows and heartaches of family life with the devil's intoxicants of anger, denial or self-pity, what is the will of the Lord for each of us regarding the Holy Spirit? We have thoroughly studied this command in the last lesson. But it is important to notice it here in the context of the home. A Spirit-filled home is the answer to all the problems of every family; however, it is in my own life that the work must begin. Yes, we cannot have Spirit-filled homes until we can individually yield our personal lives to His control.

In verses 19-21 there are three Scriptural principles which Christ wants to develop in our lives and which, in turn, will make our homes a little bit of heaven here on earth. They are:

1. A peaceful joy and happiness resulting in a "song in our hearts";

The Spirit-Filled Home

2. A continual thankfulness to the Lord for what He has done and is doing;
3. And then there will also be a natural submission to one another.

Oh, what our homes would be today if these three things were present within each family member! And what a natural soul-winning witness this would be to those around us. Let us awake to our need of the Holy Spirit. Yes, we can never fully enjoy these wonderful transformations until we know by experience what it means to plead every day before His throne for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit upon us. Won't you come to Jesus each morning as you begin the day and ask Him for this gift? He is waiting; He wants so much to give it to us. Let us ask without delay.

In the rest of this chapter of Ephesians, as well as the first part of chapter 6, we notice three commands that the Apostle Paul felt quite strongly about.

First, the husband is told: Love your wife! (See verses 25,28,33). Gentlemen, why do you suppose this command is emphasized three times, so strongly? Could it be that God made our companions to be especially needful of being told and shown each day that we love them? Could it also be that this strong emphasis is for our benefit as well; in other words, that because of the "male ego" we are naturally prone to "do our own thing" and just assume that our companions know that we love them? Can it serve to soften our naturally strong natures by remembering every day to simply say to her, "I love you for today, and I'm glad you're mine and I'm yours." Said sincerely, though maybe not always strongly felt, this statement will be used by the Holy Spirit (who inspired it) to rebuild and rekindle love in many a heart of those who have let the luster of heaven's love sadly dim through the years.

The next command emphasized in this chapter of Ephesians is in verses 22 and 33. Let us first go to verse 33. We see heaven's counsel that a wife is to reverence (or respect) her husband. There is no qualification given as to whether or not he deserves it or is good enough; the wife is simply admonished to respect and submit to him.

This kind of submission is totally foreign to the natural heart--the human nature. And to the wife's heart which is not first yielded in submission to the Holy Spirit, it is impossible. But in proportion (possibly direct proportion) to her willingness to submit her life to the control of the Saviour is she enabled to sweetly submit to her husband. This submission, however, will be more difficult unless verse 21 is taken seriously by both; for only as both husband and wife understand the need for daily surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ can they be in the attitude of submission to one another.

The Spirit-Filled Home

Wives, why is it that God would require such a sacrifice as to submit to your own husband? Is this a "puttdown"? If one listened to the suggestion of Satan, that conclusion would be almost automatic. But remember, both are blessed by submitting to one another; yet, after the husband has submitted his decision or thought to her opinion, she, in turn, is to yield to his conclusion, trusting the outcome, the results, to Christ. And as the wife willingly thus yields to Christ and then to her husband there will come a new harmony into the marriage that even now many are experiencing in their homes perhaps for the first time. Through many means Satan will attack this divine directive more and more as we approach the end of time.

The last command referred to here is in chapter 6, verse 1. We will deal with this in more detail in the last chapter or lesson of this section on the home. However, suffice it to say at this point, the tendency in far too many homes, even Christian homes, has almost reached the point of the parents obeying the children. Satan has come in like a flood in this regard in many, many homes. It is not always easy for us as parents to live a life that is exemplary before our children and which will result in their respecting us. But lead them we must; we are God's appointed agents to secure their salvation. Therefore, **this greatest need in our homes today is for the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit**; without Him we will never have the harmony that we so desperately need. Let us as families, in family worship at least once a day, fall on our knees together and plead for this mighty, divine blessing.

The Real Test of Being Holy Spirit-filled

The test of being filled with the Holy Spirit then, is how we live at home, not just what we do or what we are away from home. If a husband or wife treats the other in an unChristlike way or acts unChristlike in the home, the Saviour is disappointed and the Holy Spirit is grieved. How many Seventh-day Adventist Christian homes at this very moment are filled with heartache, maybe even physical abuse? It is the mighty, divine power of God the Holy Spirit that is needed in every home. He is the power that Jesus promised to bring peace and harmony into these inner sanctums. Pray, oh pray for this special gift. Even though there may be apparent harmony, if the presence of the Holy Spirit is not evidenced by the changing of the lives of the family members, so that day by day they more perfectly reflect the character of Jesus, then we can be sure that He is not there in the measure that He needs to be.

Many Christian writers today, including the servant of the Lord, are clearly emphasizing that when natural human minds are filled with the supernatural Holy Spirit, they will be changed. What do you think is the key thought in this concept? Is it not that the control of our human lives is turned over to the supernatural control of the Holy

The Spirit-Filled Home

Spirit? Yes, He is waiting at the door of your heart and mine to thus control us; His wisdom is infinite, and we shall never be sorry for yielding complete control to the Saviour's working through this divine power.

How to Live a Spirit-controlled Life in My Home

Here are three specific suggestions, let us list them and then briefly discuss them:

1. **Yield and surrender my will 100% to the Saviour.**
2. **Examine my relationship with each member of my family.**
3. **Daily ask for the Holy Spirit to be in control of my life.**

Step 1: How in the world, you say, does one achieve 100% submission or surrender of my will to God's will? For just a moment try the following illustration: Close your eyes and picture yourself as Isaac, Abraham's son, lying on top of the altar, tied down with rope and looking up into the tear-stained face of your own father as he prepared to carry out God's instructions. Could we be that submissive to the Holy Spirit? Spiritually we would be saying:

Dear Lord, I choose at this moment to be fully yielded to Your control. I relinquish my talents, my job, all my possessions, even my future; I give them all to You--they are Yours. And with these things, I choose to include my temper, my fears, my thoughts and my ambitions. I am Yours, take me now and do with me as You see best; use me only to Your glory.

As you consider such a surrender, which of the things mentioned would be the most difficult for you to give over to Him? Fortunately, we are promised the presence of the Holy Spirit to not only convict us of our needs, but also to encourage us to turn everything over to Jesus Who is mighty to save. Whether it is in our personal lives or in our homes, is it not wonderful that Jesus has provided this mighty power Who actually dwells within us? Let us, therefore, ask daily of Jesus that He will send more and more of this special gift, Who will in turn bring into our lives the very presence of Jesus, enabling us to live this life of submission.

Step 2: This second step may well be one of the most needed and yet perhaps the most neglected. How do I examine my life to see if I am sinning against any member of my family? The first essential is to accept the fact that it is necessary. However, I cannot begin to accomplish this examination until I daily allow the Holy Spirit to search the thoughts and motives of my life, then I can grow into the image of Jesus.

The Spirit-Filled Home

Why is it that it is often easier to be nice, polite, and kind to those outside of the home than it is to those inside the home? It is often our families that bear the heaviest brunt of our inadequate human natures. Yes, it is in the home where we really reveal what we are like; for it is here that we often take off our imaginary masks of the "everything is fine" syndrome. And yet amazingly this fact of inadequacy, along with the searching and molding influence of the Holy Spirit can actually bond the family together.

But in perhaps the majority of the homes there is very little allowance for self-examination of our actions, our thoughts or our motives. There is, however, a beauty in this reality; it is this: Jesus has His special love ready for any home where even one member is willing to first surrender to the control of His Holy Spirit, and then ask for His guidance in this process of examination--"Lord, where do I lack in my home? I submit to your search, dear Saviour, please come just now and reveal these things to me." Will you allow this to be your prayer at this moment?

Step 3: The last step seems almost unnecessary; daily asking for the Holy Spirit to be in control of my life. As each person considers steps one and two, all that remains is the asking in faith! Please turn and read again Luke 11:9-13; notice the emphasis is placed on the human action of asking or seeking this blessing from our heavenly Father. Verses 9 and 10 promise that we will receive what we ask for, and verse 13 makes it clear that He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to us than apparently we are to ask for Him.

How often do you think one should ask for this infilling? Once a week? once a month? or do you feel that it should be like the manna, gathered on a daily basis and occasionally maybe even asking for a "double portion"? We would do well to memorize and often repeat verse 13. And if we will individually and as families begin to ask and ask and ask, our Father will respond by giving and giving and giving--"how much more" is the emphasis of this verse! He wants so much for us to have this gift which was purchased by our Lord at such infinite cost!

And if we will begin to ask as never before, an amazing thing will happen. If we consciously ask for a rebaptism of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of every day and whenever else we sense a need for more, to ask for this Power will become as natural as breathing. I can assure you, however, that it will not be easy to begin this kind of earnestness; Satan is livid with rage at such a thought, that is why he has worked so hard for so long to keep this subject and its importance hidden from us as a people.

The Spirit-Filled Home

In Conclusion

Three key points will be helpful to remember:

First, remember that this Spirit-controlled life even in the home will be a progressive one, and there will probably be some disappointments along the way. Yet the Spirit of God will bring healing to your marriage at these times if you are daily yielding to His influence. He can do this much quicker and more lastingly, if it is your regular pattern to thus yield, than if your conscious yielding is reactionary; in other words, only in a time of crisis.

Second, remember to focus on learning to accept your partner's weaknesses or lacks and let the Lord change him or her. Power to overcome weakness comes through the Holy Spirit; hence, pray every day or even more often for His rich presence to fill your partner with this power of Christ to change.

Last, remember that a successful marriage is not dependent on two perfect people, but rather on individual people filled with the Holy Spirit. And as a result, a husband and wife can share their total selves unconditionally. They can absorb conflict, disagreement, disappointment, tragedy, and even selfishness of the other. To borrow a phrase from current marriage concepts, **"Love is a decision."** Let us decide now as a result of this study and the conviction of the Holy Spirit to be faithful and loving life companions.

Closing Quotations

"Where the Spirit of God reigns, there will be no talk of unsuitability in the marriage relation." (The Adventist Home, p. 120).

"What can be more pleasing to God than to see those who enter into the marriage relation seek together to learn of Jesus and to become more and more imbued with His Spirit." (Ibid., p. 114).

"The Spirit of Christ will be an abiding influence in the home life. If men and women will open their hearts to the heavenly influence of truth and love, these principles will flow forth again like streams in the desert, refreshing all and causing freshness to appear where now is barrenness and dearth." (Child Guidance, p. 484).

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." (2 Corinthians 13:14).

The Spirit-Filled Home

QUIZ

Question: 1. Our homes were ordained by God to be the "walls of the church."

Answer: True ☐ (page 90)
False ☐

Question: 2. What makes the home a type of heaven?

Answer: _____
(page 90)

Question: 3. What is the most important key in marriage?

Answer: _____
(page 91)

Question: 4. According to Ephesians 5 there is to be submission on the part of both spouses.

Answer: True ☐ (page 93)
False ☐

Question: 5. What is the real test of being Spirit-filled?

Answer: _____
(page 93)



Section C - Part 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Home

SPIRIT-FILLED HUSBANDS

Introduction

An ideal Christian husband--what do you think he should be like? Are looks vital? Does he need to earn a high salary? How about family background, does that determine whether or not he is ideal? Probably "no" to all of these, would you agree? As we seek to discover the traits of the ideal Christian husband, it will be important to consider them from the perspective of God's image, for there is no ideal husband on this earth. And yet by God's grace all husbands have the privilege of reaching up to Him to become more and more like the ideal--by beholding we become changed! In the world about us the increasingly powerful humanistic philosophy dictates that all of the above questions are vital for us to answer.

In this study it is our purpose to study God's plan for the Spirit-filled husband. He is to be the human representative of Jesus in his home, under the specific guidance of the divine representative of Jesus, the Holy Spirit. And as that human representative, he will, of course, seek to be an adequate provider for his family and to become all that God can make of him. In this journey he must remember that he can only reach this height if he allows the Holy Spirit to fully fill him every day.

The Divine Art of Being a Spirit-controlled Husband

Let's look first at God's intended role of the husband's leadership in the home. Turning to Ephesians 5:22,23, we see there is a rather clear implication of the divine directive of the husband's role in the home; he is to be the leader. Perhaps this verse is too often misread; it clearly appears to command the wife to submit to her husband as she does to Christ, or does it? In other words, is that all that is implied in the verse?

Gentlemen, is it possible to see implied in this verse that wives are to submit to their husbands as he in turn submits to his Creator? Surely that could be taken too far, and some wife might say to her husband that she would not submit to him because he does not submit to God as much as she thinks he should. However, the point made here is that if a husband rightly desires his wife to submit to him as to the Lord, he should be very conscious of the need of a total submissive attitude to the Lord on his part as well as in his own proper submission to his wife.

Spirit-Filled Husbands

What we have just concluded in verses 22 and 23 is further emphasized in verse 21 to include the husband's submission to his wife--that is, the consideration of her ideas and opinions, her feelings and concerns. Further, the divine command for the wife to be submissive to her husband does not dictate that his position is to be one of superiority and enforcement. Instead, this verse 21 helps to keep this Christ-inspired balance in check; if there is a submissive spirit between both husband and wife, then the Spirit-filled husband will never take advantage of any misinterpretation of verse 23.

The last part of Genesis 3:16 says to wives, "Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." Then in 1 Corinthians 11:3 it says, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." Because of being unaware of these words of Scripture, the mind of an unconverted man, one who is not in subjection to the will of God, will almost certainly misuse and possibly even abuse this principle.

The controlling Christ-centered love is the great need in the heart or mind of every husband. This love as mentioned in Ephesians 5:25 is the very same love that Jesus has for His people. We call it "agape" love, which comes from the Greek verb meaning "to love unconditionally." If the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, then the wife will be loved unconditionally--even if she doesn't meet his expectations! There is, of course, a need for discussion between them if there are unresolved differences, but this discussion will be only more frustrating if it is not done in the context of unconditional love.

The Holy Spirit is the only One who can actually bring such love to a husband for his wife. Oh, how the husband needs to pray each day for Jesus to daily send His Spirit to live within him, which will in turn make him a Spirit-controlled husband. Since it is true that God so loved that He gave His Son, and since it is true that it was unconditional agape love, then Jesus is still willing to love us this way, and the husband will have the same love toward his companion. Notice the following quotation which illustrates the special role or function of the Holy Spirit in this wonderful work:

"In the church and in every business transaction a man will be just what he is in his home. If he submits to the Holy Spirit's guidance in the home. . . then when in responsible positions he will pursue the same course. Remembering the tenderness of Christ toward him, he will manifest the same love and tenderness toward others." (Sons and Daughters of God, p. 255).

In order to reach God's ideal for the Christian husband, it is so vital for him to realize the concept that he is the human representative of

Spirit-Filled Husbands

the Saviour in the little kingdom or area of his home. Then from this citadel will flow rivers of living water, both from husband and wife, to touch many lives outside of this God-ordained union. Notice in the next quotation how absolutely essential is the presence of the Holy Spirit in order to attain the respect for each other that will result in these rivers of living water:

"The sweetest type of heaven is a home where the Spirit of the Lord presides. If the will of God is fulfilled, the husband and wife will respect each other and cultivate love and confidence." (The Adventist Home, p.15).

Since it is God's directive that the husband is to be the "house-band" of the home, a way must be found to exercise this authority with a heaven-born humility and helpfulness. Perhaps the next quotation will help us:

"It is no evidence of manliness in the husband for him to dwell constantly upon his position as head of the family. . . It will not make him more manly to require his wife, the mother of his children, to act upon his plans as if they were infallible. The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church." (Ibid., p. 215).

There is so much a godly husband can do to make life's journey for his companion lighter and more enjoyable. Instead of assuming a dictatorial and authoritative role of superiority, the husband must live out Christ's divine characteristics of strength and stability in the context of compassion and kindness. And He will send the Holy Spirit if we ask for Him to come; if we desire this gift day by day.

We live today in a world where conflicting views of home responsibilities are proposed. It is not God's ideal for the husband to reverse the roles with the wife. However, neither is it God's ideal for the husband to share no part or portion of the home domestic duties. We are not suggesting here that improperly motivated lists should be written out, assigning specific duties to the husband to help around the home. Rather, he can be praying that God will open his eyes to the needs, and then husband and wife can joyfully share their duties together. Notice the following counsel to the husband which could be so helpful:

"Let the husband aid his wife by his sympathy and unflinching affection. If he wishes to keep her fresh and glad, so that she will be as sunshine in the home, let him help her

Spirit-Filled Husbands

bear her burdens. His kindness and loving courtesy will be to her a precious encouragement, and the happiness he imparts will bring joy and peace to his own heart." (The Ministry of Healing, p. 374).

Oh, how much unhappiness would be avoided in our homes if this counsel were followed with a ready and willing heart. Especially is this true today when so many wives are working outside of the home. God must surely look with disappointment on the husband who comes home from work, eats the meal his wife has prepared, and then "plops" himself down in the overstuffed chair with his paper and the TV, while his working wife has to continue her labors at home.

This is not to imply that all husbands are this way; however, when considering this last quotation, we can see very readily that God's plan is for them to share life's burdens **together**. Gentlemen, let us look to Jesus for the indwelling of His Spirit in order to help us to be willing to be made willing, for much of what we are suggesting here is contrary to the traditional male concept. Perhaps it would also be appropriate here to suggest the following: if more wives would plead with God for a deeper interest in their husbands' activities, both at work as well as at home, they might then discover that husbands would respond in kind to the wives' labors in the home.

There is obviously no set way for every husband and wife to divide the responsibilities, for circumstances alter cases. However, the appeal that the Holy Spirit is making in the heart of every born-again husband is that he should ask for divine help and then respond to the convictions that come to gladden the home. The result that we would see in our homes would be deeply rewarding, but we can never experience this "joy of the Spirit" if we do not ask. Hence, let us come anew, even boldly, to the throne of grace and there find the help we so desperately need in the closing conflict with sin. Heaven stands ready to supply our needs; and is this not the primary need for husbands in these closing hours, to become Spirit-filled "house-bands," holding their families together in the awareness of the responsibility that God has laid upon them?

Conclusion

Somehow as we close this lesson on "Spirit-filled husbands," there is a sense of deep conviction. Do you feel it? Is God's gentle Holy Spirit tugging at the strings of your heart to be the kind of husband that His Spirit can enable you to become? Let us with new purpose and resolve determine that "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Come, Holy Spirit, we need Thee!

Spirit-Filled Husbands

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Spirit-Filled Husbands

QUIZ

Question: 1. If a Christian husband desires that his wife be a submissive wife, what should he also do?

Answer: _____
(page 99)

Question: 2. The Christian husband is to love his wife unconditionally.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 100)

Question: 3. What is the "house-band" of the family?

Answer: _____. (page 101)

Question: 4. The counsel of heaven is that the husband should not help his wife bear her burdens.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 101)

Section C - Part 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Home

SPIRIT-FILLED WIVES

Introduction

"...He made. . .a woman, and He brought her to the man" (Genesis 2:22). What a work of infinite art--to place this lovely creation beside man. Having been made from his side, she was part of him--to stand beside him, and together they were to represent God's zenith of creation.

How human it might be to overemphasize Eve's sin of wandering from Adam's side, as if sin is woman's fault; and yet it does illustrate that both are made to work together in the accomplishment of life's goals. Happy then the home when both sense the joy of companionship, of taking an interest in the specific concerns of the other.

In this lesson we will see God's plan for woman to be the outward symbol of the church of God on earth; what a lofty representation! God has accorded to her the high privilege of representing in marriage His bride; and this symbol becomes a beautiful illustration of all that God desires the relationship to be between Himself and His people.

"I Will Make Thee an Helpmeet"

In Genesis 2:18, KJV, Scripture records God's observation that it was not good for the man to be without a companion. Would you be willing to accept the same observation for woman? Perhaps it would be possible to see the word "man" in the generic sense as applying to "mankind," or all human beings. But what does it mean to be a "helpmeet"?

An unknown author defined helpmeet as follows: "Being a helpmeet means offering thoughts, insights, and feelings, then committing her husband to God as he makes the final decision." This definition may not mesh with everyone's opinion, but it does illustrate a wonderful blessing in store for both. Just think what a marriage could become if both would accept the fact that God wants to make them "helpmeets," a word portraying the concept of "gentle service or submission to."

If you were to list three specific ways that a Spirit-filled wife could be of special help to her husband, what kinds of ways might you include? How about a tidy home (with his help)? Is this an area that helps to provide the atmosphere where balanced family life can exist?

What about defending her husband before others, especially his motives? Can the Spirit-filled wife find ways in which to uphold her husband

Spirit-Filled Wives

even if he is guilty of some wrong? Can she at least refrain from criticism to others. There might also be another area of helpfulness: what about keeping herself abreast of the times, both in current events and the things regarding his occupation?

Surely the list could go on and on in finding ways to be a helpmeet to her companion, keeping herself presentable, etc. But most essential to the point is that only through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, our "other Helper," can she be to her husband what God wants her to be.

The Biblical Role Model

Let's look for a moment at the biblical model of the beauty of a wife's character. Please turn to Proverbs 31:10-12 and read this passage; why do you think a God-fearing wife such as mentioned here is so great a blessing to her husband? And is the benefit only to him, or will there be blessings for her as well as she realizes that she is fulfilling God's purpose for her life?

The principle of loyalty and respect for her husband is very clear, but besides this, what is another principle of the beauty of a wife's character as mentioned in Ephesians 5:21-24? Is it not the principle of submission? (Please read the passage now.) In the minds of many, both men and women, this divine concept or principle is an evil thought. However, please note that this command of God is mentioned in relationship to the command, "be filled with the Spirit," and biblical submission is only possible as a result of being thus filled.

"Submission" is a word which is often abused and distorted from God's original intention. What does this word submission bring to your mind? To the human mind it has the connotation of being "less than." However, this is not the divine interpretation. Submission expresses the very same relationship that God desires us to experience in which we lovingly and willingly submit to His wisdom and guidance. The wife's submission to her husband is not to be a forced, reluctant "giving in." Instead, it is to be an illustration of that submission, or yielding, of both husband and wife to their Creator and Friend, Jesus Christ and to His Holy Spirit.

But how can a wife be enabled to submit to her husband, "as to the Lord"? If the Christian wife will submit in love to her Creator, she will be infilled by the enabling Holy Spirit!

Never has God intended that the wife be some sort of slave with forced obedience, stripped of her own individuality; submission does not mean suppression or silence. Deciding to obey the word of God and to joyfully submit to her husband will result in greater freedom because it is in obedience to the will of God that we find real peace and

Spirit-Filled Wives

freedom from life's destructive stresses. The more that a Christian wife learns and yields in submission to the Holy Spirit, the more her husband will be enabled by the Holy Spirit to appreciate, yet not demand, her submission.

This beautiful unfolding of God's plan for the Christian wife and her husband is nothing short of a modern miracle--so very far from the self-centered thinking of human nature, the very philosophy of the world.

Please notice the following statement in the book The Ministry of Healing, p. 176, showing what the Lord will do as we submit to His plan:

"...we can choose to serve God, we can give Him our will; (that is our part) then He will work in us (that is His part) to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus our whole nature will be brought under the control of Christ. . . By yielding up the will to Christ (submission), we ally ourselves with divine power." (Italics supplied).

Today is a day of women's liberation, when so-called "feminists" are proclaiming that a woman should not be subordinate to her husband, that she should "do her own thing," even suggesting that the truly liberated woman does not really need a man, that she has it within herself to be all that she wants to be. Our minds may recoil at such brazen rebellion against the plan of God; yet it may be that many men have allowed Satan to so control them that they have abused the dignity and womanhood of their wives. This fact does not, however, justify this modern thinking on the part of women today.

The Expanded Roles of a God-Fearing Wife

When a wife reverences the Lord, she is enabled to become the queen of her family; she is the manager of her home. And the promise of Scripture is certain on this point. Notice Proverbs 31:27,30, and how the godly wife is described. Some modernists today would have her believe that these words, instead of being understood as counsel from heaven, are, they believe, really old-fashioned.

It is true--many husbands have abused and taken for granted that the wife is "there when he needs her, just to do her thing." Heaven abhors such an attitude of indifference and bigotry. And yet the very word "wife" means "weaver" or one who uses her gifts and talents from the Lord to weave, if you please, into the very fabric of the family unique designs of industriousness, love and compassion.

So much of "managing" involves the process of setting forth priorities and decision-making. Why do you think that the success of her work would depend so much upon the wife's attitude toward these

Spirit-Filled Wives

responsibilities and privileges? Can you think of a couple of contrasting attitudes that would illustrate different approaches a wife might have toward the work given to her by God? What about chafing and rigidity on the one hand, in contrast to acceptance and flexibility on the other?

What might the Spirit-filled manager of the home likely see in the counsel of Colossians 3:23 as she approaches her work each day? If the Holy Spirit is invited into her life each morning to guide and give her the special wisdom she needs to fulfill her high calling, then, according to this passage, she will be enabled to cheerfully accomplish whatever she sees as the fulfillment of her role as manager of her home.

The Importance of Love, Affection and Affirmation

Many husbands have allowed the archenemy to pull them away from their homes because no genuine, expressive love existed. One can almost picture an unsundered husband or wife blaming the other for the failures that exist in an unsanctified home. Can the wife assist her husband to remember God's special emphasis to **love her and not another?**

More than once a wife's involvement in the interests of her husband has caused the love of both to be rekindled and nurtured again. Ted and Donna (not their real names) are good examples. Ted was a pilot and loved to fly, but Donna was not too excited about it. Even though her father was also a pilot, and she had flown with him as a girl, she still was not eager to fly on speaking appointments with her husband.

Circumstances and Ted's mid-life crisis were drawing him away from her. She was frightened as she realized that she just might become one of those "statistics," one of those losers in a broken home. She fell helplessly at her Saviour's feet, pleading, "Lord, change me." Instead of focusing on her husband's imperfections, she realized that her only hope was twofold: 1. yield her life to the complete control of the Holy Spirit, Who would change her and make her the wife that her husband so needed, and 2. then she could entrust her husband and his struggles to the mighty power that Jesus paid so much to send--the Holy Spirit.

Thus, instead of trying to change him to be what she thought he should be, she entrusted him to the Lord; and a literal miracle of the Lord took place. Because she yielded total dependency to the working of the Holy Spirit, He was able to bring the changes that were needed in her own life. She became the wife that her husband needed. Instead of finding fault in him, she found positive things about him to compliment and appreciate. She entrusted her fear of flying to the Holy Spirit and became involved in her husband's interests.

Spirit-Filled Wives

As the Holy Spirit redirected and remolded her character and characteristics, a marvelous transformation began to emerge in her husband. Ted was resistant at first; it was difficult to get used to the fact that his wife was accepting him for what he was, imperfections and all. Yet slowly the Holy Spirit began to change him, and he began to see that his sweetheart was really accepting him for what he was. As Ted began to accept her new winsome ways, he began to realize that instead of resisting the changes that he needed, he now began to desire to be different. And as both have continued to change, they realize that if it were not for the mighty indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit making the change, their profession of faith in Jesus would be just that---mere profession.

Only such changes in the lives of both husbands and wives will bring loving intimacy into the act of marriage; more than a mere function or duty, it becomes an experience where each share in the other's strengths, and thus it takes on new, rewarding meaning. Woe, woe to the husband or wife who, because of lack of consecration to God, uses this beautiful privilege as a bargaining wedge. After you read 1 Corinthians 7:3-5, what do you understand is commanded as being forbidden in the act of marriage? Do you agree with this counsel?

According to this passage then, affection is a vitally important aspect of the marriage relationship, and the godly wife has a tremendous part to play in showing love, affection and affirmation. And only as she is day by day Spirit-filled, is she thus enabled!

In Closing

Let us notice two quotations which illustrate the work of the Holy Spirit in achieving these roles:

"We must have the Spirit of God, or we can never have harmony in the home. The wife, if she has the spirit of Christ, will be careful of her words; she will control her spirit, she will be submissive, and yet will not feel that she is a bonds slave, but a companion to her husband. . . . We cannot cherish home affection with too much care; for the home, if the Spirit of the Lord dwells there, is a type of heaven." (*The Adventist Home*, p. 118). (Italics supplied).

(Speaking to a wife) "Keep cheerful. Do not forget that you have a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which Christ has appointed. You are never alone. If you will listen to the voice that now speaks to you, if you will respond without delay to the knocking at the door of your heart, 'Come in, Lord Jesus, that I may sup with Thee, and Thee with me,' the heavenly Guest will enter. When this element, which is all

Spirit-Filled Wives

divine, abides with you, there is peace and rest." (Ibid.,
p. 350).

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians
13:14).

Spirit-Filled Wives

QUIZ

Question: 1. What is the submission of the wife to her husband (in the biblical sense) an illustration of:

Answer: _____
(page 106)

Question: 2. According to the lesson, what is the definition given to the word "wife"?

Answer: _____
(page 107)

Question: 3. In the illustration of "Ted and Donna," instead of trying to change Ted, what did Donna do?

Answer: _____

(page 108)

Question: 4. According to 1 Corinthians 7:3-5, what is forbidden in the act of marriage?

Answer: _____
(page 109)



Section C - Part 4

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for My Home

SPIRIT-FILLED PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Introduction

Our first responsibility, in degree of importance, is to present ourselves individually before God, yielded and submissive to His control. Next would come the sacred relationship between husband and wife, to be presented before Him as symbolizing both the divine relationship between an individual and his Lord, and also serving as a symbol of the marriage of Christ and His bride, the church.

The third, yet certainly not least, important responsibility, is the very sacred responsibility of being the parent(s) who will represent to the child what God is like--a loving heavenly Father who loves His children; and loves them so much that He meets much more than just their basic needs.

Our heavenly Father, through the intercession of His Son and the direction and guidance of His Spirit, shows infinite concern about our growth in Him; and this in order to more clearly reflect His wonderful character of love. For lack of this witness the world about us is dying; therefore, what an opportunity the Christian, Spirit-filled family has to witness of and for the Saviour.

In this lesson we will ask Him to present positive reinforcement to all parents that the training of our precious children will be a "perfect" success as we consciously depend on the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Inspired Admonition

There is something very special about having a "childlikeness" in our own character as evidenced by simple trust and confidence that Somebody bigger than you or I is able to sustain. Let us as parents come boldly to His throne of grace and there find help in time of need. Do you, dear parent, desire to become like a little child, to trust Him with the salvation of your children? As we begin the study of this lesson, are we willing to be nothing so that He can be everything in us? Can we submit to the "Lover of the children," allowing Him to have His way in our lives so that we can become those channels through which He can daily pour out His Holy Spirit upon our children? May the answer, right in the beginning be, "Come, Holy Spirit, we need Thee"!

In Luke 18:16,17, Jesus appears to speak almost severely to His disciples. What did He say to all gathered there regarding the necessity of becoming childlike? Quite important then, would you not

Spirit-Filled Parents and Children

agree? And the reason, of course, is that we cannot teach our children to reflect the love of Jesus in the witness of their lives unless as parents we choose to become as little children, trusting our heavenly Father to guide us in reflecting love to others.

In the Old Testament, Solomon began his reign as the king of Israel by going before the God of heaven and acknowledging his need of God's help. Turn to 1 Kings 3:7 for a moment and contemplate the depth of sincere submission to God and His plan for Solomon's life. This was Solomon's response to the test question that God had proposed to him. Oh how very much our God must desire that each parent would seek, not for wealth, fame or position, but instead to be so filled with the wisdom of His Holy Spirit that they can one day soon present back to Him their "beautiful flock."

May the prayer of every parent who studies these lessons be, Take away, O Lord, what You choose to take, but please don't take from me Your Holy Spirit, for I am only as a little child, even in adequately training my children for You. I do not know how to go out or come in; I don't even know where to start!

Would you agree that the principle we have just studied is crucial to the success of parents; in other words, expressive of their need for dependency on the wisdom of heaven? If so, why do you agree? And having children in the home is a part of God's plan to enable us to become more childlike. As we consider the awesome responsibility of raising these jewels for Him, we are filled with a sense of need to trust wholly in Him and His wisdom.

The Holy Spirit - Heaven's Teacher and Helper for Parents

It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that fits us as parents for the training of our children. Notice the following quotations which illustrate this:

"Let the softening, subduing influence of the Spirit of God work upon your hearts and fit you for the work of training your children." (The Adventist Home, p. 342).

"Parents, in the ardor of your first love, are you seeking for the conversion of your children, or are you engrossed with the things of this life to such an extent that you are not making earnest efforts to be laborers together with God? Do you have an appreciation of the work and mission of the Holy Spirit? Do you realize that the Holy Spirit is the agency whereby we are to reach the souls of those around us?" (1 Selected Messages, p. 190). (Italics supplied).

Spirit-Filled Parents and Children

Think on these questions: Why is the Holy Spirit needed by parents to fit them for the work of training their children? What is the natural condition of the human heart, especially as it applies to the heart of parents? What then is the answer to the challenge facing every parent regarding the eternal destiny of their children?

There are two things indicated by these quotations which will help us to experience the answers that we need; one involves our priorities in everyday life, and the other involves dependency on outside help. What are these two things? First, an appreciation of the work and/or mission of the Holy Spirit; second, an awareness that the Holy Spirit is the Agent by which we can accomplish this awesome task. Praise the Lord for such a Helper!

This next quotation found in The Adventist Home, p. 206, is so very special, sent from the Saviour who loves our children with an infinite love. Note:

"Christ has made every provision that every parent who will be controlled by the Holy Spirit will be given strength and grace to be a teacher in the home. This education and discipline in the home will have a molding and fashioning influence."

This quotation reemphasizes the need of every parent to be under the complete control of the Holy Spirit. In contemplation, let us think of specific areas of our own life, as a parent, where we would want to be more completely controlled by Him, areas like our temper and unkind words, or perhaps we may be filled with our own selfish desires. It might also be that our vocational goals supersede the goal of being a Spirit-filled parent. The secret of success in all of these things is the joining of His power and our effort. This union we must have, and He is willing to give it if only we will faithfully ask!

The Holy Spirit is the Great Enabler for Mothers

The primary responsibility of tenderly teaching the children life's important lessons rests upon mothers, and thus her great need of special endowment. Notice the special assurance that is given to make this a reality:

"The mother should feel her need of the Holy Spirit's guidance, that she may herself have a genuine experience in submission to the way and will of the Lord. Then, through the grace of Christ, she can be a wise, gentle, loving teacher of her children." (Child Guidance, p. 69).

According to this statement, being aware of the need for the guidance of the Holy Spirit enables mothers to have the grace of Christ. Would

Spirit-Filled Parents and Children

dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit enable her to be this kind of teacher every day, even under any situation of stress that being a mother might bring? The realization of the need for such constant guidance of the Holy Spirit would lead a godly mother to specifically pray for this gift at the beginning of every day, and for extra measures throughout the day.

The Holy Spirit is Also the Great Enabler for Fathers

In the following quotation, special assurance is also given to fathers and is based on the principle of submission of his will to the control of the Spirit whom Jesus will gladly send if we desire it. Note:

"In the church and in every business transaction a man will be just what he is in his home. If he submits to the Holy Spirit's guidance in the home, if he understands his responsibility to deal with minds there, then when in responsible positions he will pursue the same course." (Sons and Daughters of God, p. 255).

Oh how the devil loves to emphasize the extremes in the human nature of earthly fathers. Either he turns over his share of the responsibility to his wife, or there is such an extreme "heavy-handedness" in discipline that the true purpose of his responsibility is obscured or distorted. However, if he will take seriously the assurance in this last quotation, then every father will be a much better success both at home and at work.

The Holy Spirit Meets the Spiritual Needs of Children

As we remind ourselves of Jesus' special interest for all children, we realize that this concern is no trite or unimportant matter. Jesus really does have an infinite and very deep concern for each one of our children. Would it not stand to reason that if His concern is so deep for them, that He would also be willing to especially equip us as parents?

Let's look at a number of significant quotations which help to make us aware of the availability of divine help. Three specific areas of parental responsibility emerge that will guide us to strengthen our children to set their goals on a heavenly home. Note:

First, our commitment to God must be reaffirmed:

"If we live in communion with God, we too may expect the divine Spirit to mould our little ones, even from their earliest moments." (The Adventist Home, p. 275).

Then, we are to teach our children to pray for the Holy Spirit:

"Teach your children that it is their privilege to receive

Spirit-Filled Parents and Children

every day the baptism of the Holy Spirit." (Child Guidance, pp. 69,70).

And third, God desires family worship:

"From every Christian home a holy light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in action. . . . From these homes morning and evening prayer ascends to God as sweet incense, and His mercies and blessings descend upon the suppliants like the morning dew." (The Adventist Home, p. 37).

And, God assures success!

"Let Christ find you His helping hand to carry out His purposes. By prayer you may gain an experience that will make your ministry for your children a perfect success." (Child Guidance, p. 70).

"If parents will strive for unity in the home by inculcating the principles that governed the life of Christ, dissension will be driven out, and unity and love will abide there. Parents and children will partake of the gift of the Holy Spirit." (The Adventist Home, p. 178).

There are some very special Scripture promises too that God has recorded which make it clear that parents are not left alone to attempt the impossible! He is willing to save to the uttermost.

One of those beautiful promises is given in Isaiah 44:3, which clearly indicates that God will bless our children with a specific portion of His Holy Spirit. It says, **"For I will pour water (a symbol of His Spirit) on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on Your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring."**

Then in the same book of Isaiah, chapter 49, verse 25, the Lord makes it very clear that He is aware of the potential of great conflict with Satan that every parent faces. Yet in spite of this He promises, **"For I will contend with him who contends with you, and I will save your children."** Every morning every Christian parent may claim this promise. What an assurance we have that He can do the impossible. And how will He do this? The third verse of chapter 44 gives the answer; it is through the special ministry of the Holy Spirit Who will not only empower the children, but also enable every parent who asks for this divine power and who clings to these very special promises.

In closing, would you be willing to consider the following suggestion? In your own words, try to write out a short letter to God; a prayer of thanksgiving to the Saviour, expressing your gratitude for the gift of the Holy Spirit in training your children.

Spirit-Filled Parents and Children

Oh, what assurance, what help is available! Will you decide this very moment to ask forgiveness if you have not been claiming this special Power in behalf of your children? Let us begin anew, even now. It is not too late to pray as never before that our heavenly Father, through the intercession of His Son, will send, in answer to our earnest pleadings, a new, daily measure of this wonderful gift! For He will save our children!

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Spirit-Filled Parents and Children

QUIZ

Question: 1. According to the lesson, what is the third area of responsibility of the leader/s in the home?

Answer: _____.
(page 113)

Question: 2. How important is it that our lives be spiritually characterized by childlikeness?

Answer: _____.
(page 114)

Question: 3. When was King Solomon the wisest and richest?

Answer: _____.
(page 114)

Question: 4. According to The Adventist Home, p. 206, what key element on the part of parents is essential in order for Christ to enable parents to receive grace and strength for their work?

Answer: _____.
(page 115)



Section D - Part 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing

JOYFUL WITNESSING

Introduction to Section D

In the first two sections we studied about the Holy Spirit in relation to His being Christ's gift, both for the world as a whole, and for each of our lives in a personal way. In Section C we studied a more intimate way in which the Holy Spirit needs to direct our daily lives, our homes--the very place that should be the beginning of our daily witnessing for the Saviour as we go from home.

In this section, The Holy Spirit, God's Answer for Effective Witnessing, we will focus on the specific ways in which the Holy Spirit can provide power, not just to make witnessing something we do, but to focus on His ability and desire to make our lifestyle one that is both efficient and effective for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The most effective style of witnessing is, first, when we are prepared for it; and, second, when it is joyful. God's divine instruction makes it clear that in order for witnessing to be a natural lifestyle and at the same time efficient, we must be utterly dependent on divine aid. This dependency must be a daily experience; and so it is this early rain experience which will prepare us for the latter rain measure of His mighty power.

As we began each of the previous sections, we looked at two quotations which helped us focus on the special importance Jesus placed on the entire subject of the Holy Spirit. We continue to repeat them at the beginning of each section in order to indelibly impress upon us their importance. Please take just a moment to review these two quotations:

"Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration." (1 Selected Messages, pp. 156,157).

As we contemplate these thoughts, we become aware that nearly one hundred years after it was written, its importance has not diminished. And now is an opportune time to change this situation. Notice once again the next statement in which the servant of the Lord was shown,

Joyful Witnessing

even more graphically, the need of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives:

"...I seemed to be in meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor--the opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit. . . .In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building." (1 Selected Messages, p. 109).

Introduction

In the first lesson or chapter of this section, our focus will be on joyful witnessing; i.e., witnessing which is done with happiness, and with a sense of eagerness rather than reluctance. Wouldn't it be great to witness of God's love if it was so natural that it was actually fun? Perhaps too often we have "gone out" to witness, not because it was something we really looked forward to, but rather because we felt guilty if we didn't!

Which is better, witnessing because it is naturally a joy to do so, or because we feel guilty if we don't? The answer should be obvious, and in this lesson we want to look at witnessing in such a way that we can enjoy it with a new and refreshing approach. Then instead of almost dreading it, we can keep looking forward to other encounters with Jesus in the greatest privilege on earth--that of sharing with someone else what Jesus means to us. We will actually look forward to meeting someone whom the Lord through His Spirit has directed us to. What a revival this would bring if God's church could catch a vision of such witnessing. I believe it can and will if only the Holy Spirit is daily invited in.

What is Witnessing?

Very simply, witnessing is something that is told or shown by one who has heard or seen; it cannot be hearsay. There are two questions which are very important in regard to witnessing and which can help to focus on the reason we really need the indwelling presence of His Spirit to witness through us. First: How anxious am I to become a powerful witness for Christ? Second: What do I know that I am so anxious to receive power to tell?

How effective do you think a witness would be in being able to convince others of the truth of a matter, if they could only relate what someone else had heard, seen or felt? How much more convincing they would be

Joyful Witnessing

if they could relate exactly how they felt or what they had experienced in coming to know Christ as Lord and Saviour. And if the witness told it with an expression of joy and happiness, it would be even more appealing.

Let's now look at a model of true witnessing in the following biblical illustration:

Joyful Witnessing is a Major Indication of Conversion

If this is true, then some of us may be in trouble, for witnessing, if we engage in it at all, is often done rather reluctantly. If it is really true that joyful witnessing is a major indication of conversion, then some of us may have to do some reexamining of our profession to be Christians. Be careful, however, don't jump too quickly to a conclusion; for we will discover that real witnessing is not just something we do. Real witnessing is what we are; it is a lifestyle, rather than something we "tack on."

Turn to Luke 8:38-40 and read it slowly, a couple of times. In these three verses we will find three evidences of conversion:

The first evidence of conversion is found in verse 38. What was the man's strong desire? To be with Jesus, not to let Him out of his sight. Why do you think his desire to be with Jesus was so strong? Because he had experienced a marvelous transformation at the feet of One who had shown him love as had no other! Yes, the first evidence of conversion in anyone's life is a **desire to be with Jesus every moment**--nothing else is as important. And it must come **first**, because unless it is the most important thing, the next two evidences will never occur.

Today, being with Jesus is in walking where Jesus would walk; in the aisles of the grocery store speaking a word of kindness to one who might be discouraged, or perhaps being friendly to a neighbor across the fence, or even in taking someone a loaf of bread. Being with Jesus is being so in tune with the Holy Spirit that He can bring the presence of Jesus to others through us, wherever we are and whatever we do. Do we then really desire to be where Jesus is?

The second evidence of conversion is found in verse 39 (especially the last part). This man **joyfully** accepted (we'll see how this is known in just a minute) the responsibility of being Christ's witness to these angry people. Because of the animosity that had been manifested by the people of the town--anger over the loss of the swine--this man would be more valuable to the cause of Christ by obeying Jesus' command, than by going away with Jesus. They knew this man and his former condition; many of them had perhaps been mistreated by his insanity. Can you

Joyful Witnessing

imagine their reaction as they later reflected on the miraculous change?

How can we know that the former demoniac joyfully accepted the responsibility of witnessing to those around him? Because in verse 39 it says that the command of Jesus only required that he "tell" those in his own house. Yet it also indicates that he apparently went beyond the call of duty. He proclaimed the good news not just to the bare minimum, his own house, but throughout the whole city! He had to have been filled with joy and enthusiasm; his witnessing was surely more than some kind of "tacked-on" activity. This kind of witnessing is the kind that really counts; it is what we are, a lifestyle of sharing naturally with others what God has done for us. This man had surely met the first two evidences of conversion.

The third evidence of conversion will not always be seen in our life time, but it will be there just the same. **There will be fruit for our labors.** Didn't Jesus say in John 15:5 that whoever abides in Him and He in them, bears much fruit? Then in verse 8 he added, **"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."** Unless we bear fruit to His glory, we are not His disciples no matter what the profession. Remember, however, that the restored demoniac didn't work to bear fruit in order to give evidence that he was a disciple; he wasn't even thinking of it. Fruit was born simply because witnessing was a natural part of him--he had something to tell!

Notice the following quotation:

"No sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit we shall not be able to hold our peace."
(Steps to Christ, p. 78).

If we are not experiencing this desire to share with others, could it possibly mean that it may have been a long time since we have "come to Christ"? If so, then we can be sure that He is waiting to revive us and to so enrich us with His Holy Spirit that we will be led to spontaneously share with others as He opens the opportunities.

Search this next quotation and see if you can find the answer to the following question: But why is the principle of joyful witnessing so very vital?

"God could have reached His object in saving sinners without our aid; but in order for us to develop a character like Christ's, we must share in His work. In order to enter into

Joyful Witnessing

**His joy,--the joy of seeing souls redeemed by His sacrifice,--
-we must participate in His labors for their redemption."**
(The Desire of Ages, p. 142).

Nothing is more important than to develop a character like Jesus, And we can if we are willing to be made willing to labor for the redemption of souls that He places in our pathway. Please let me reemphasize, witnessing is so much more than the things we do--Bible studies, Ingathering, literature distribution, etc., as important as these things are. Witnessing is **what we are, how we react, what we do!** And as witnessing becomes a joyful lifestyle, the other things we mentioned will become a natural part of our lives.

In Conclusion

There is one final point to keep in mind--witnessing for the Lord will often bring difficulty. Trials may come in service for Him; this we may even expect. However, the angry reaction of some who hear is no reason to "throw in the towel." Notice Acts 13:50,51. What reaction contrasting the often-repeated human response of despair and discouragement do you think Paul and Barnabas showed? Surely they didn't quit and give up.

Notice especially verse 52. What emotion did the Holy Spirit fill them with? **"And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit."** I believe that we could even safely paraphrase this to say, "they were filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is waiting to give us joy in witnessing, even when we face moments of disappointment in sharing the good news of the Gospel.

In the following quotation this principle is illustrated:

". . .the infilling certainly proved a stimulus to spiritual life, and joy was the natural result. The message of this new religious faith was so fresh to the Gentile converts that they may have shown more of the outward manifestations of joy than did their brethren in the faith, the converted Jews."
(6 SDABC, on Acts 13:52).

This thought from the commentary may help to explain why newly-baptized members, just filled with the Holy Spirit, often have a greater measure of unashamed love for sharing the truth than we who may have been in the way a little longer. And it also illustrates the need of every one of us to be rebaptized every day with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Then we shall become the witnesses that Jesus said we should pray to become. Let's notice this from the final quotations:

"The Holy Spirit will come to all who are begging for the bread of life to give to their neighbors." (Testimonies, Vol. 6, p. 90).

Joyful Witnessing

"Hearts cannot fail to be touched by the story of the atonement. As you learn the meekness and lowliness of Christ, you will know what you should say to the people; for the Holy Spirit will tell you what words to speak. Those who realize the necessity of keeping the heart under the control of the Holy Spirit will be enabled to sow seed that will spring up unto eternal life." (Colporteur Ministry, p. 107).

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Joyful Witnessing

QUIZ

Question: 1. According to the introduction, what is the greatest privilege on earth?

Answer: _____.
(page 122)

Question: 2. In considering what witnessing is, what two questions help us focus on why we really need the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: a. _____.
b. _____.
(page 122)

Question: 3. Joyful witnessing is a major indication of what?

Answer: _____. (page 123)

Question: 4. According to the lesson, what are three evidences of conversion?

Answer: 1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
(pages 123,124)



Section D - Part 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing

PREPARATION: THE KEY TO EFFECTIVE WITNESSING

Brief Review of the Previous Lesson

In the last lesson we learned from the story of the demoniac that there are three major indications of conversion: 1. A desire to be every moment with Jesus; 2. Joyfully accepting the responsibility of witnessing; and 3. Claiming fruit for the harvest. We also learned that real witnessing is a lifestyle; yet too many times we have shown to the Lord an activity that is sort of "tacked on" with an attitude of "let's get it over with."

As God's people, we believe that we must receive the latter rain measure of the Holy Spirit in order to finish the work. But, according to the following quotation, notice how important it is to learn to witness in order for this special measure of His presence (the latter rain) to descend:

"The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God." (Christian Service, p. 253).

Therefore, let us focus on the great importance of preparation, as an absolute essential for effective witnessing.

Preparation for Effective Witnessing

The concept of preparation for witnessing is not a new concept to us. This is evident because of the many different "programs, methods and plans" that have been developed by the church to utilize the gifts and talents of God's people. And it is also important to realize that true preparation will always involve continuing preparation in improving our skills of communicating the good news of the gospel. Notice the following quotation:

"Every worker who follows the example of Christ will be prepared to receive and use the power that God has promised to His church for the ripening of earth's harvest. Morning by morning, as the heralds of the gospel kneel before the Lord and renew their vows of consecration to Him, He will grant them the presence of His Spirit, with its reviving,

Preparation: The Key to Effective Witnessing

sanctifying power. As they go forth to the day's duties, they have the assurance that the unseen agency of the Holy Spirit enables them to be laborers together with God." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 56).

The indication is clear; Jesus' example was to kneel in a prayer of consecration each day in order to be filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit and thus to be prepared for the day of witnessing. In the next quotation note the specific counsel regarding our need of being daily prepared by the mighty agency of the Holy Spirit:

"God's faithful messengers are to seek to carry forward the Lord's work in His appointed way. . . . They are to wrestle with God in earnest prayer for a baptism of the Holy Spirit that they may meet the needs of a world perishing in sin. All power is promised to those who go forth in faith to proclaim the everlasting gospel." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 459).

It almost sounds something like the time when Jacob wrestled with the angel. How are those who "go forth in faith to proclaim the everlasting gospel" admonished to do the Lord's work? The servant of the Lord says they are to "wrestle with God in earnest prayer for the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Can you imagine what will happen in the finishing of the gospel, if all who go forth to proclaim this everlasting gospel (and that includes "all") really learn what it means to wrestle with God for this mighty power.

If this power which is promised is taken for granted, if we simply assume that He is there, then God will be limited. It would mean that we are not really in earnest in seeking for this gift. Yet when we are reminded of Luke 11:9-13, it is clear that God certainly is willing to give us much more than we ask for. How it must pain His heart to see us so casual, so complacent regarding both the availability as well as our own need. It's as if we are saying, I don't really need this power, Lord, but if you think I do then you can send Him. Surely actions which indicate this really do grieve Him.

The Preparation of Learning to Wait

Please turn to Acts 1:4 and Luke 24:49. Here we see specific instruction which clearly indicates that before we "sail forth" in any endeavor to finish the work of the gospel, we are first to wait for the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Since we could have been in the kingdom "long ere this," and because we are already late in finishing the work, why might this important principle be overlooked? Because the human mind sometimes operates on the principle of guilt (what we should already have done), and it

Preparation: The Key to Effective Witnessing

becomes easy to rush on ahead of the Lord, independently, without that utter dependency on the power of God.

If we are not consciously dependent on the Holy Spirit, it becomes not only possible but probable for us to assume that we already have the Holy Spirit. And instead of learning to be in the attitude of humbly and actively waiting on this mighty power, we would be unmindful of our need.

The basic concept of waiting is not a new idea in Scripture at all. Please read the following three passages: Psalm 27:14; Psalm 37:7-9; Lamentations 3:25,26. There are probably others that you think of as well. Why do you think it is that throughout Scripture the principle of waiting is emphasized? (If desired, see a concordance for more references.)

Let's notice several Bible examples of people who learned to wait on God, on His timetable. In the Old Testament there is Moses. When he was 40, he thought he was ready to be used; yet God was not ready to use him. And then when God was ready to use him, after 40 years in the wilderness, Moses didn't think he was ready. What a change in his attitude!

In the New Testament one can easily think of the Apostle Paul, filled with zeal for the cause of God. Before his conversion he did not let "grass grow under his feet" in the persecution of the Christians. After his conversion he was still not ready. The Holy Spirit led him into the Arabian desert where he was to learn the lesson of waiting on the divine leading of heaven. Only after waiting in the desert for three years was he ready to be used by God. Can we see ourselves in either of these servants of God? How prone we are, when we are convicted that we are already late, to hurry on ahead, unaware of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit Who is gently waiting to be asked to lead the way.

But perhaps the most amazing example of learning to wait for heaven's timetable was Jesus. Yes, even He learned to wait--for thirty years. Obviously Jesus set the example in learning to wait on divine Providence. His example is vividly for us, and not until we both individually and denominationally learn to wait can He pour out His power.

In the context of the finishing of the work of God on the earth, can you imagine why it would be necessary for the Lord to first teach us the lesson of learning to wait on Him, before He pours out the mighty power of the latter rain? If the Holy Spirit were to descend in latter rain measure before we learned this lesson, we would take the credit to ourselves. We would not recognize that the mighty outpouring was in

Preparation: The Key to Effective Witnessing

answer to learning to wait on Him. Hence, the Saviour is waiting for us to learn what it means to wait for it.

When God sees that we have learned what it means to wait, when He sees that He can safely trust us with this mighty outpouring, that we will not take credit to ourselves, **then** He will pour it upon us. Look again at the special emphasis on waiting given just prior to Pentecost; read Acts 1:4,5,8 and notice that this instruction was given before they began preaching the gospel.

Our Great Need of This Power

Consider the following thought from T. A. Hegre (source unknown):

"Who will deny that we need power for Christian living and for Christian service? The baptism of the Holy Spirit is offered to every Christian and is needed by every Christian. This experience and the resultant power is for witnessing. This power is needed today. Our need is not for great organizations or noisy demonstrations, but rather for the power of the Holy Spirit to witness unto Jesus Christ."

Yes, recognition of our need is the key to dependence on His power to finish the work of the gospel in the world. Notice the unique thought of the following quotation:

"Those who are engaged in service for the Master need an experience much higher, deeper, broader, than many have yet thought of having. . . Many have a twilight perception of Christ's excellence, and their hearts thrill with joy. They long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour's love. Let these cherish every desire of the soul after God. The Holy Spirit works with those who will be worked, molds those who will be molded, fashions those who will be fashioned. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings." (The Ministry of Healing, p. 503).

According to the next reference, how are we conformed to the leading of the Holy Spirit?

"When one is fully emptied of self, when every false god is cast out of the soul, the vacuum is filled by the inflowing of the Spirit of Christ. Such a one has the faith that purifies the soul from defilement. He is conformed to the Spirit, and he minds the things of the Spirit." (Gospel Workers, p. 287).

Therefore conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit is the key:

"The Holy Spirit will make all who are willing to be educated, able to communicate the truth with power." (Medical Ministry, p. 12).

Preparation: The Key to Effective Witnessing

What then is God waiting for in each of us? He needs us to be willing to submit our will to Him in order to be educated for the service of witnessing. Are we ready to do it? Perhaps you sense that just now as we conclude this lesson, Christ is anxiously waiting to see if we are thus willing. We must be prepared to meet a soul in need.

Let us sincerely choose to be prepared to witness today, tomorrow and when and wherever we can. Jesus is coming soon, and He earnestly desires to see us respond to the appeal that He is making. Remember, as we are daily prepared by His Holy Spirit, we will then be prepared for the final measure of this special gift. Surely our prayer would be that of the Apostle John: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Preparation: The Key to Effective Witnessing

QUIZ

Question: 1. True preparation for witnessing will always involve what?

Answer: _____. (page 129)

Question: 2. According to Testimonies to Ministers, p. 459, why do God's workers need to wrestle every day with God in prayer for the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: _____.
(page 130)

Question: 3. Part of the process of preparation is to understand the importance of learning to wait on the Holy Spirit before plunging blindly ahead.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 130)

Question: 4. According to Medical Ministry, p. 12, the Holy Spirit will make everyone able to communicate the truth with power.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 132)

Section D - Part 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing

UTTER DEPENDENCE ON DIVINE AID

Introduction

Our study of this lesson will be to show that the only answer to Spirit-filled witnessing is utter or total dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit. Please begin with special prayer in order to accentuate the need for upper dependence on divine aid. It would be appropriate if each member of the team/study group would pray a short but earnest prayer that there would be a special awareness of this utter dependence during the study of this lesson.

Notice two special, introductory quotations;

"So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit." (Christian Service, p. 254).

"Without the co-operation of the Spirit of God, no amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light." (Gospel Workers, p. 284).

As we begin this lesson, why do you think utter or total dependence on the divine aid of the Holy Spirit is so essential? Would you agree that only as we learn to become totally dependent on this divine power will we be aware that success in His service increases in proportion to our dependence on divine power?

Oil, the Fuel for Brightly Burning Lamps

Let's turn to Zechariah 4. Notice the vivid description of the golden lampstand and olive trees, a vivid illustration of utter dependency on God's almighty power. It would be helpful in this imagery to remember two things. First, oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit throughout Scripture; and second, Zerubbabel is the inspired instrument in the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

In verses 1-6 Zechariah is shown a vision, the meaning of which is not immediately clear; there is a solid gold lampstand with seven places for it to shine with light. And then above it, there is fastened a bowl that holds the oil which flows to the lampstand, and thus supplies the fuel for the light. On either side of the lampstand two olive trees appear which apparently drip olive oil into the bowl.

According to the prophecies of Revelation we can understand these to represent the Old and New Testaments of the Bible (see The Great

Utter Dependence on Divine Aid

Controversy, p. 267). However, this advanced understanding is not fully explained here to God's workman. This is apparently why Zerubbabel is being asked if he knows what it all represents. In order to both reassure him that he would be able to finish the task that God had set before him, and to make it clear that it would only be accomplished under the specific guidance and direction of God Himself, the Lord speaks graphically:

"So he answered and said to me: 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by (your) might nor by (your) power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts" (verse 6).

There is so much here that we, the remnant church, can benefit from, and we will be greatly blessed as we, too, hear and understand the message that was so graphically given to God's servant Zerubbabel. In looking back at his experience we can see that he could very easily have felt that the success of the completion of the project depended on him and his wisdom. However, it was God and His wisdom that was indispensable, not Zerubbabel. God had certainly chosen to use him, but his usefulness would only be "useful" as long as he remembered this vivid reminder.

Notice the following words from 4 SDABC, p. 1179:

"Many human inventions are used to carry out plans after the mind and will of men with whom God is not working. But it is not boastful words nor a multitude of ceremonies (i.e., plans) that show that the Lord is working with His people. The assumed power of the human agent does not decide this question. . . .the same Spirit that has guided the Lord's work all the way through will guide it today."

The servant of the Lord thus makes it clear that both individually and as a whole we face a human, inherent danger of becoming dependent on our own plans and efforts, instead of remembering our need to seek specifically for the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit in carrying out the divine commission. And as we think on this possibility we become aware that the natural bent of the human nature is to do just this.

This poses a rather hidden dilemma: either we may attempt to do the Lord's work and neglect the power by which it is to be done, or we may not recognize the need to receive increasing amounts of this divine gift in order to be effective witnesses. The purpose then of this vision through Zechariah is that God wants to keep us aware that it is He and not we ourselves who provides this power.

What we need then is to continue to receive more and more of this holy oil of the Holy Spirit; then we will have something to share. And amazingly the supply will increase by giving it away! Notice:

"The capacity for receiving the holy oil from the two olive trees which empty themselves, is by the receiver emptying

Utter Dependence on Divine Aid

that holy oil out of himself in word and in action to supply the necessities of other souls. Work, precious, satisfying work—to be constantly receiving and constantly imparting! The capacity for receiving is only kept up by imparting." (4 SDABC, p. 1180).

Let's turn now to Matthew 25:1-13 and there study the mystery of the parable of the ten virgins. What a similarity and yet ironically, what a contrast there is here between the wise and foolish. Both have lamps and some oil, and both hear the cry of the coming bridegroom. The foolish must have thought that the wise were unduly worked up over this question of the oil. After all, are not their lamps burning too? But suddenly the lamps of the foolish begin to dim, flicker and then go out. Except for the amount of the oil, everything possessed by the wise is also possessed by the foolish. Filled with the oil alone makes the wise ready! Notice the following quotation of the servant of the Lord found in the Review & Herald, August 19, 1890:

"I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins. . . for it has a special application to this time. . . and will continue to be present truth till the close of time. . . This represents the condition of the Church. The wise and the foolish have their Bibles, and are provided with all the means of grace; but many do not appreciate the fact that they must have the heavenly unction (the Holy Spirit). . . The name 'foolish virgins' represents the character of those who have not the genuine heart-work wrought by the Spirit of God."

According to this quotation, what do the "foolish" not appreciate even though they have their Bibles? Could this possibly be a description of our own Christian experience? It helps to remember that even though such questions can sometimes be painful, the "searching" is done by the tender wooing of the Holy Spirit who loves us as much as the Son and the Father.

Let's turn to Revelation 3:17. What is the natural, human attitude depicted here in this verse? Please notice the following comments:

"Need of Nothing. The climax of the Laodiceans' boast is that their situation could not be improved. Such self-satisfaction is fatal, for the Spirit of God never enters where a need for His presence is not felt, yet without that presence newness of life is impossible." (7 SDABC, p. 762).

Conclusion

Utter dependence on divine aid—is there any other way to have the assurance of success? As we contemplate the following statements in closing, let's notice what they are saying in regard to the absolute

Utter Dependence on Divine Aid

necessity of dependence on this special gift that Christ has provided to empower us to do His work:

"The light of the glory of God must fall upon us. We need the holy unction from on high. . . . If divine power does not combine with human effort, I would not give a straw for all that the greatest man could do. The Holy Spirit is wanting (lacking) in our work. . . .

"What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. Jesus knew their destitution (lack), and told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high." (1 Selected Messages, p. 411).

"One might be able to present the letter of the word of God, he might be familiar with all its commands and promises; but unless the Holy Spirit sets home the truth, no souls will fall on the Rock and be broken. No amount of education, no advantages, however great, can make one a channel of light without the co-operation of the Spirit of God. The sowing of the gospel seed will not be a success unless the seed is quickened into life by the dew of heaven." (The Desire of Ages, p. 672).

Oh, may we each one choose to allow the Holy Spirit to accomplish this in our lives, for without Him we may accomplish a lot of "things," but we will never finish the work, neither individually nor denominationally. Heaven is ready now to fill us with this heavenly oil; are we ready to be filled? If we are willing to surrender to His control, then we will receive more and more of this very special gift until we will be so "full" that we shall overflow and touch the world and everyone around us; then shall be brought to pass the saying, "Oh death where is thy sting, oh grave where is thy victory?"

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Utter Dependence on Divine Aid

QUIZ

Question: 1. Complete the following words to Zerubbabel: "'Not by _____ nor by _____, but by My _____' says the Lord of Hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). (page 136)

Question: 2. There are two parts of a hidden dilemma mentioned in this lesson. What are they?

Answer: a. _____.
b. _____.
(page 136)

Question: 3. According to 4 SDABC, p. 1180, how is the capacity for receiving continued?

Answer: _____. (page 137)



Section D - Part 4

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing

EFFICIENCY MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Introduction

Where are we in the stream of time? As a people with a very special and important mission, we must be concerned. Nearly a century and a half has passed since God's Spirit guided us into existence for one purpose--to preach the Three Angels' Messages to all the world; yet still Jesus has not returned! As someone once said, "What's gone wrong with the harvest?"

What will it take to accomplish it? Is there more to it than simply saying, "we're not ready"? Is there an ingredient missing--at least in sufficient quantity? Surely each generation since Christ has believed that He would return in their lifetime. Why hasn't he? Well, we say, it's because the gospel has not yet gone to the whole world. But shouldn't we be so concerned that His second coming has been delayed that it would cause us to ask, "Why has it not gone to the whole world?"

Purpose of This Lesson

In this lesson we will study the issue of efficiency in relation to the work of God being completed on this earth. What do we mean by the word efficiency? In light of the marvelous history of Pentecost, can we describe God's work in the world today with this word--efficiency? They had so little in numbers and things, yet in a short while they had taken the whole gospel to the then-known world. In contrast, we have so many numbers, institutions, plans, etc., and we have been at it so long now, yet in reality we are far behind in reaching the vast unreached world.

First of all please consider what the purpose is not! It is not the purpose of this lesson to cast any doubt or blame on any person or group of people. Rather, we will search to see if we can find any possible reasons within ourselves as to why the work is not yet finished. "Lord, is it I? am I the reason? is there something I could be doing that I'm not or perhaps something I shouldn't be that I am?" Is it possible that we, a people chosen for a special task, may have overlooked something vital?

In this lesson we will take time to compare our times with Pentecost, a story that is important and helpful to search, because at the beginning of the early Christian church they had nothing of this world's

Efficiency Makes the Difference

advantages, and yet they accomplished so much in a short period of time. In contrast, we have worked under the same assignment, with so many advantages, and yet proportionately we have done so little in actually finishing the work of God on the earth!

What is the Counsel Regarding Efficiency From the Pen of Inspiration?

As it relates to the Holy Spirit, efficiency in finishing God's work on the earth is greatly emphasized. Please read carefully and thoughtfully the following quotations which illustrate God's concern for our efficiency in doing His work:

"...Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that EFFICIENCY which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost." (1 Selected Messages, pp. 234,235). (Emphasis supplied).

"Let there be more dependence upon the EFFICIENCY of the Holy Spirit, and far less upon human agencies." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 215). (Emphasis supplied).

"In consequence of this silence upon this most important theme, what promise do we know less about by its practical fulfillment than this rich promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, whereby EFFICIENCY is to be given to all our spiritual labor." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 174). (Emphasis supplied).

"The work of the Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and EFFICIENCY come to the worker for God." (Gospel Workers, p. 289). (Emphasis supplied).

"The Lord requires the human agent not to move by impulse in speaking, but to move calmly, speak slowly, and let the Holy Spirit give EFFICIENCY to the truth." (Evangelism, p. 668). (Emphasis supplied).

"The Holy Spirit is greatly needed. . . .It is the source to which we must look for EFFICIENCY in the restoration of the moral image of God in man." (Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 526). (Emphasis supplied).

After carefully reading these quotations, and remembering that almost a century and a half has passed since we began our special mission, can you see that we desperately need this source of EFFICIENCY if we really expect to see the work finished in our lifetime? Is it accurate to conclude that we must be lacking in this EFFICIENCY or else the work

Efficiency Makes the Difference

would be finished? Let's go now to a further in-depth study of:

The Amazing Efficiency of Pentecost

Please read carefully Acts 1:14,15 and 2:1-41. Note especially verses 40 and 41. Numerically, what were the results of the outpouring of the mighty power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost? 3,000 in one day, in one place, in one sermon! What kind of a number was this; in other words, was it a total from around the world? Was it the conclusion of several weeks of meetings by Peter? What was the special significance?

Looking back at the reference in chapter 1:15, before the amazing miracle of Pentecost, notice how many made up the total membership of the New Testament church (at least those who were deeply concerned regarding Christ's commission). Only one hundred and twenty people! Besides a massive illustration of the Holy Spirit's power to effect conviction and decision on one great occasion, notice also, according to Acts 2:46,47, what He was able to accomplish on a daily basis. Surely we could say, what EFFICIENCY!

The Holy Spirit did not work alone; He worked through the humble instruments that were yielded to Him, but He was their EFFICIENCY! No doubt about it, the Holy Spirit was in charge, yet He worked through the men and women who were willing to allow Him to be in control, and Bible history has graphically recorded the results. According to Acts 1:14 and 2:1, what was the common factor or bond among them? It was the beautiful bond of unity. Oh how we need to actively seek for unity among us; this we do best by praying earnestly for the Holy Spirit, Who will be the unifying agent among us. And as a result He will work through us to win others to our beloved Master.

Efficiency, then, is accomplishing the most with what God has made available, and look what we have available:

1. As Seventh-day Adventists we are described as being the fastest-growing church in the world.

2. Our work is in more countries of the world than any other Protestant body of people, literally we are almost everywhere. Through His Holy Spirit God has established His church around the world, He has put the machinery--the mechanism--in place. The stage is set for the final completion. Yet still there is so much to be done.

Try to grasp what will happen when the EFFICIENCY of the Holy Spirit really takes hold of this church. Just think, several million Adventists loyal to the Three Angels' Messages already scattered around the face of the globe! As we are daily filled with the early rain--the

Efficiency Makes the Difference

daily infilling of the Holy Spirit--we will thus be prepared for the latter rain measure, and how soon the work will then be finished!

Conclusion

Do you have a new awareness of your need for the mighty EFFICIENCY of God the Holy Spirit? Do we as a people spread all around the world have a sense of our need of this EFFICIENCY? Let us conclude this lesson by allowing the Holy Spirit to come in and bring this great conviction of our need.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Efficiency Makes the Difference

QUIZ

Question: 1. What is NOT the purpose of this lesson?

Answer: _____
(page 141)

Question: 2. Efficiency is defined near the end of the lesson as
"accomplishing _____"

(page 143)

Section D - Part 5

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for Effective Witnessing

TO BE FILLED DAILY--THE EARLY RAIN

Introduction

This is the last lesson in this section regarding witnessing and the Holy Spirit. The Great Enabler will enable us to accomplish the impossible--this gospel to the whole world in this, our generation. Hopefully we have learned one thing thus far; if we are willing to recognize our need and accept the gift of the Holy Spirit in increasing measure, then God can use us to finish the work of God on earth--now--in this, our generation!

Hence, the purpose of this lesson is to study the implications of the "latter rain," for the term clearly implies that there is also an "early rain." In addition, we will study what the early rain is and how important it is to receive it. Let's begin with this second purpose of our lesson. At first glance this lesson may seem to be out of place; however, it is placed here near the end of the entire set of lessons to reemphasize its importance. Unless we realize our great need of the Holy Spirit on a daily basis, we will not be praying for it, and thus we will not be receiving an increasing measure.

1. Agricultural meaning: Deuteronomy 11:1. "First rain" in this verse would obviously refer to much more than just one rain that would fall when the soil was first prepared and the crops were first planted. This rain needed to fall on the crops on a repeated basis in order to accomplish the most good and prepare for the final time of maturing. Also the importance of the latter rain just before the harvest of the crop must not be underestimated, because without it, all that is accomplished by the early rains would come to nothing.

2. Biblical meaning: Using the agricultural symbols that we have just studied as illustrations of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, how does the prophet Joel compare these literal definitions with a special outpouring at the end of time? (See Joel 2:23,28,29). Please turn next to Acts 2:14-18 and notice how this was confirmed by Peter on the day of Pentecost. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," he said, and then he proceeded to quote verses 28-32. Thus the term "early rain" is an illustration of the first major outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the earth to begin the work of the gospel.

To Be Filled Daily--the Early Rain

In Revelation 18:1 another special outpouring of His power upon the earth is prophesied. This special measure of His power poured out upon the earth is called the Loud Cry (see Early Writings, pp. 277-279). This Loud Cry, this final, earthshaking thrust of the Third Angel's Message is brought about by the special exhibition of the glory of God and His character throughout the whole earth, as indicated here in Revelation, and accomplished by the descent of the Holy Spirit without measure. Thus according to Joel 2, and by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and allowing the Bible to be its own interpreter, we can see that there is to be a final outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God which will lighten the earth with the final warning message.

3. Personal meaning: Is not our soul as the "garden of the Lord" which needs daily to receive the showers of His grace? It is very important that we clearly grasp this third definition of early and latter rain. How easy it would be to be so theoretical that our study would fail to be brought home to us in a personal way. We would then not tend to recognize any personal benefit.

Therefore, to us individually, the early rain is much, much more than a historical fact dating back to Pentecost, as important as that event was. For just as the agricultural symbols of the early rain were meant to indicate a continued falling of rain on a regular basis, so we each need a continued outpouring of the showers of the Holy Spirit in our personal lives. The value of these daily refreshings from heaven cannot be overestimated!

According to Isaiah 44:3,4, why do we need these showers? Because we are thirsty, even though we may not be aware of it! God is willing to pour out His Spirit on those who thirst, which sounds like the fourth beatitude: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). Yes, how very much we need daily, the refreshing showers of the Holy Spirit falling upon us.

And without this daily supply of the early rain, the latter rain will not complete the harvest of our lives and make us ready for heaven. Without the daily hunger and thirst for the righteousness of Christ, we will never desire the final sealing work of the latter rain. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to bring us the desires for both the daily and final outpourings. And according to our desire to receive it (as evidenced by our praying for it), He will abundantly supply this wonderful presence of the Lord Jesus.

Please notice the use of the agricultural symbols in Hosea 6:3, where the personal application is illustrated. Try to describe your understanding of these words in this passage, for if the latter rain

To Be Filled Daily--the Early Rain

outpouring depicted in Revelation 18:1 is to cause the whole earth to be made aware of God's last offer of mercy, what do we each need in order to be a part of that great event of the latter rain? The answer should be clear--we each need an abundant supply of the daily showers symbolized by the term early rain. Do we really grasp how very much we need them?

The Special Emphasis of Early Rain in the Spirit of Prophecy

Please take careful note of the great importance attached to this early rain experience in the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy in the quotations that now follow:

"Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 506).

"Many have in a great measure failed to receive the former (early) rain. They have not obtained all the benefits that God has thus provided for them. They expect that the lack will be supplied by the latter rain. . . . They are making a terrible mistake. . . ."

"But there must be no neglect of the grace represented by the former rain. Only those who are living up to the light they have will receive greater light. Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or receive it." (Ibid., p. 507).

"We may be sure that when the Holy Spirit is poured out those who did not receive and appreciate the early rain will not see or understand the value of the latter rain." (Ibid., p. 399).

Spiritually speaking, then, the early rain experience of daily asking for and receiving the refreshing presence of the Holy Spirit is a vital experience, a matter of life and death; for like the servant of the Lord says, "unless the early rain has done its work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection."

In your opinion, what then should we as the remnant be praying for in order that the seeds might grow in our own lives and in the rest of the "garden" as well? You are correct; we must pray on a daily basis for the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit to fill us with a desire to surrender our will to His complete control as He brings to us the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. We just must have this special guidance and leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives on a daily basis.

To Be Filled Daily--the Early Rain

Jesus said that His Father was very, very willing to give us this gift, but we must ask! And the only way I know to ask for this gift is through the special privilege of prayer, be it the devotional prayer at the beginning of the day, or the careful attitude of prayer at all times throughout the day. Notice the following two statements, which are among many in the Spirit of Prophecy which clearly indicate the necessity of earnestly praying for this wonderful gift:

"By the grace of Christ the apostles were made what they were. It was sincere devotion and humble, earnest prayer that brought them into close communion with Him. . . .By earnest, persevering prayer they obtained the endowment of the Holy Spirit, and then they went forth, weighted with the burden of saving souls, filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross. And under their labors many souls were brought from darkness to light, and many churches were raised up.

"Shall we be less earnest than were the apostles? Shall we not by living faith claim the promises that moved them to the depths of their being to call upon the Lord Jesus for the fulfillment of His word: 'Ask, and ye shall receive'? John 16:24. Is not the Spirit of God to come to-day in answer to earnest, persevering prayer, and fill men with power? . . . Why, then, is the church so weak and spiritless?" (Testimonies, Vol. 7, p. 32).

"Shall we not, . . .in the gatherings that we hold, be of one accord? Shall we not wrestle with God in prayer, asking for the Holy Spirit to come into every heart?" (Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 46).

In Conclusion--Is it Theory or Will it Impact My Life?

What will you do with Jesus and the gift He so freely offers? A little eighty-year-old lady came out of the church one Sabbath morning with tears in her eyes. Looking at the preacher who had spoken regarding the importance of praying for these daily showers, she said, "I have been an Adventist all my life. Why hasn't someone told me before that I should be praying every day for the Holy Spirit?"

Now that we have each studied and hopefully recognized the importance of receiving the outpouring of this gift in our lives on a daily basis, are we willing to seek this special gift of the Holy Spirit in earnest, persevering prayer? Are we determined to pray as earnestly as did Jacob for this mighty power which will change our lives and prepare us to be used in the final outpouring of Christ's righteousness on the earth in the latter rain?

To Be Filled Daily--the Early Rain

Do you suppose there are many who are not aware of the need to thus seek Him in prayer? How about you and me? Let us each one determine now to begin anew, praying every day for the marvelous gift of the Holy Spirit to daily control our lives, that these showers might water us each and every day, and thus prepare us for the mighty outpouring of the latter rain. Let this be our prayer.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

To Be Filled Daily--the Early Rain

QUIZ

Question: 1. The lesson lists three terms or meanings for early and latter rain; they are:

Answer: a. _____
b. _____
c. _____

(pages 147,148)

Question: 2. Personally, the daily showers of the Holy Spirit which come by request (Luke 11:13) is the early rain for us today.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐

(page 148)

Question: 3. No one would be so foolish as to think that what they have failed to receive from God on a daily basis will be supplied in the latter rain.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐

(page 149)

Question: 4. According to the last two quotations in this lesson, what kind of prayer will bring the Holy Spirit to empower us for Christ?

Answer: _____
(page 150)

Section E - Part 1

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work

ALL THE PIECES, NO POWER

This is the last section in our study together on the lessons of the Holy Spirit. And these last ones are especially written to emphasize the absolute need of conscious dependency on this complete gift; that is, if we hope to see Jesus come in our lifetime! The special work of the three angels of Revelation 14 cannot and will not be completed until we become dependent on God's mighty Holy Spirit so that He can then trust us with the last, unlimited endowment of this power. It is then that our witness for Him will tell in far greater and manifold ways, as simple means are used by the Holy Spirit to magnify the talents of every person who is already at work for Him.

In reflection, what have we learned over the past several weeks which, if needed, will bring about a finished work of God on the earth so that Jesus can then return? I am reminded of the statement that the servant of the Lord makes several times throughout her writings in regard to the timing of the Lord's return. Over and over again she says we could have been in the kingdom "long ere this."

If this is true, and surely we all believe it is, could it be that our lack of emphasis on the special mission of the Holy Spirit in our day, in our individual lives and perhaps even denominationally, has to a large extent resulted in Christ's return being long delayed? How thankful we can be that the Saviour has been so long suffering with us. But what of tomorrow as well as today? How long will probation linger? Oh let us pray that we shall never forget what Jesus has taught us in these lessons!

Once again let us begin this section by especially emphasizing the two quotations which have portrayed to us the very special concern that God holds for His people to recognize the power that awaits their asking. Let us also add a third one which underscores its importance:

"During the night of the first Sabbath of the Newcastle (Australia) meeting, I seemed to be in meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor—the opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit. . . . In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building and asked every one who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building." (1 Selected Messages, p. 109).

All the Pieces, No Power

"Christ, the Great Teacher, had an infinite variety of subjects from which to choose, but the one upon which He dwelt most largely was the endowment of the Holy Spirit. What great things He predicted for the church because of this endowment. Yet what subject is less dwelt upon now? What promise is less fulfilled? An occasional discourse is given upon the Holy Spirit, and then the subject is left for after consideration." (Ibid., pp. 156,157).

"In the teachings of Christ, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is made prominent. . . .From a large field of subjects, He chose the theme of the Holy Spirit. . . .And yet, though Christ made much of this theme concerning the Holy Spirit, how little it is dwelt upon in the churches." (EGW, Bible Echo, November 15, 1893).

Please pause here for a few moments to very carefully consider these quotations. Do they help to illustrate the special importance that the Lord places on this subject? After looking at this quoted counsel so many times, why do you think it is so important to focus on the work and the receiving of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our churches? Try to answer this question in reference to comprehending the fact that the work can actually be finished in our lifetime!

If ever there was a time to pray earnestly, every day, for the mighty outpouring of His Spirit in latter rain measure, it surely is today. More than one hundred and forty years is too long, far too long, for the second coming of Jesus to be delayed; especially after our study, when we now have a new awareness of the power and its availability.

As we begin this last section, I want to take a moment to invite you to become an "Early Morning Prayer Partner" who will covenant with the Lord to pray every day at approximately 6:15 a.m. for an ever-increasing measure of God's Holy Spirit. We would thus ask this gift to be poured out on ourselves, our pastors and conference leaders, on our local congregations, and then finally on our world! Jesus is just waiting to see this kind of earnestness, desiring this "greatest of gifts," and then He will send this power to us in measures that we cannot now fully grasp.

Following is a selection of inspired quotations which emphasize the necessity and validity of praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. At the end of these quotations is a place for you personally to sign such a covenant, after you have prayerfully considered the personal and worldwide impact of such a decision. Consider, there are 24 time zones around the world. Relatively soon the Lord will surely have people in every time zone praying unitedly and perseveringly not only for the daily infilling that we individually need, but also for

All the Pieces, No Power

the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. Then the work will be finished in a blaze of glory! You might be interested to know that as of this writing (1988), there are now more than two thousand faithful Seventh-day Adventists who have thus covenanted with the Lord to pray for this mighty outpouring in the Eastern, Central, Mountain, Pacific, Yukon and Hawaii time zones. In addition, there are prayer partners in the countries of Canada, Mexico, Colombia, Nigeria, and Germany. Prayerfully consider what will be your response.

Praying for the Holy Spirit

1. "Let us, with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace (Holy Spirit) may fall upon us. . . .If we pray for the blessing in faith, we shall receive it as God has promised." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 509).

2. "Seasons of prayer should be held for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." (EGW, Letter 292, 1907).

3. "By earnest, persevering prayer they (the apostles) obtained the endowment of the Holy Spirit, . . .Is not the Spirit of God to come to-day in answer to earnest, persevering prayer, . . .?" (Testimonies, Vol. 7, p. 32).

4. "Shall we not wrestle with God in prayer, asking for the Holy Spirit to come into every heart?" (Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 46).

5. . . . "why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? . . .For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer His petition to God." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 50).

6. "One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit." (Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 251).

7. "The descent of the Holy Spirit upon the church is looked forward to as in the future; but it is the privilege of the church to have it now. Seek for it, pray for it, believe for it. We must have it, and Heaven is waiting to bestow it." (Evangelism, p. 701).

8. "A chain of earnest, praying believers should encircle the world. . . .to pray for the Holy Spirit." (Review and Herald, January 3, 1907).

All the Pieces, No Power

Consider Now This Possible Covenant:

"I really do want Jesus to return, and I realize that in order for this to happen, an unlimited measure of the Holy Spirit must be poured out in my life and in my church. By God's grace, I am willing to make a covenant with my Saviour to pray at approximately 6:15 **every morning until Jesus returns**, for an increasing measure of the Holy Spirit to fall especially on 1. myself; 2. our pastors and conference leaders; 3. upon my local congregation; and then through us, 4. on all the world!

My name is _____ Today's date _____

Introduction

If a dedicated Seventh-day Adventist were to write a general description of God's remnant church in terms of facilities, etc., and include the approximate number of church members, also a description of some of the "nicer" church buildings, and if they were to tell about the worldwide extent of our medical work and our educational system, what would the description be like? It would most likely be something like a super "Mission Spotlight" in which we would want to give all the glory to our God for what He has wrought!

In thinking of all that we could report, however, try to think of it in the context of the overwhelming task that is still to be finished. Try to think of the multiplied millions and millions of people who have never even heard of the saving grace of Jesus, much less of the special importance of those Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14.

In comparison or contrast, try to imagine a similar written description of the early Christian church at the time of Pentecost, also in the context of their humanly impossible task--that of taking the saving story of the gospel to the then uncharted and virtually unknown world. Imagine the great contrast between their gigantic task and the one we face. They had absolutely nothing of those "things" which could be thought of as enabling them to accomplish the commission they had been given.

And so, in contrast, we as God's remnant church have so very much of the things that it would humanly take to actually complete the task. We have the same great commission. But as you look at our worldwide work and the countries to which it has gone, as you consider all the tools or things which God has so wonderfully given to His people--numbers, methods, techniques and awards--why haven't we finished the task?

Is it accomplishment that God needs before He can move in a mighty way among His people and actually finish the work? Why was it that with

All the Pieces, No Power

apparently so little the early Christians accomplished so much? According to Acts 2:1-4, the Holy Spirit was poured out in powerful measure when they were of "one accord." Unity prevailed; however, this is not to suggest that there were not varying opinions or ideas. But rather to suggest that their purpose and desire was the same--to finish the task that had been given to them--the gospel to the whole world so Jesus could return.

This, they recognized, could not be accomplished as long as there were any problems among them; there must be no feelings of "professional" jealousy in their midst, no bias of "my idea is better than yours," no attitudes of superiority or "I'm better than you." Instead, theirs was the opportunity to consider all of the others as better than themselves. Self was to be fully surrendered, and a "bonding" was to develop as a result of much prayer and soul-searching. And an amazing unity of purpose, similar to the perfect unity that exists between the three members of the Godhead took place, and mighty were the results. All this as a result of simply confessing their sins one to another and praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that they had been promised.

Consider this: Had His people been thus desirous and concerned before His first advent, the way would have been prepared to receive Him. In fact, God foretold this very condition in prophecy long before. In the days of Ezekiel He saw the true condition of His people and His marvelous heart of love yearned over them as He anticipated what they could become--"like a mighty army."

Ezekiel's Vivid Description

Please turn in your Bible to Ezekiel 37. There in verse 11 whom did the Lord say those bones represented? All Israel! Do you think that this could possibly mean "spiritual" Israel as well? Literal Israel would be obvious, but what about the Apostle Paul's larger concept of God's people since the cross; in other words, spiritual Israel? And even more importantly, as a result of what He says He will do for them in verses 12-14, what did the Lord say He would make of all those bones as indicated in verse 10? What a picture and all the result of a mighty revival and reformation!

Just think of it, God sees His people becoming an exceeding great army! Yet in the days before and after the first advent of Jesus, it never happened. Israel never allowed this prophecy to be fulfilled in them. Therefore it rests with God's people of today to ask and allow the Lord Jesus Christ to so fill them with the transforming and empowering presence of His Holy Spirit that today we may become this mighty army for God, going forth conquering and to conquer under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel.

All the Pieces, No Power

Let's go back now to the first part of this prophecy to better discern the message He has for us so that we, being grafted into the Vine, shall not become like the original branches. Turn to verses 3-5. Before showing how He would accomplish it, what did the Lord say would cause the "bones" to live? Notice that the key ingredient is His breath. Without it they would be little more than lovely corpses--nice but still dead!

This is further illustrated in verses 7 and 8. After the conversion process of connecting bone to bone and covering it with all the muscles and skin, why was there still a problem? Because there was no life. And so it is today with each one of us. Even when we put on the outward adornment of activity for the Lord, even when we outwardly show that there has been a change, unless the Holy Spirit breathes life into our soul, we will be nothing more than "nice, spiritual corpses."

It's really not a very pretty picture, but God loves His people so very, very much that He allows us to painfully see what He sees. This prophecy is the Old Testament version of the condition of the church of Laodicea. So the question is this: What do we need and what does this picture help us to desire? The mighty breath of God breathed on us, that we may live! Then we shall become the witnesses that He saw in Acts 1:8.

Then we shall become this exceedingly great army. Please notice that the special emphasis in verse 9 is on what the "breath" would do; and in the Hebrew language, the word for breath is "ruach," which can be translated wind, air, or spirit. Therefore, what does the symbolism of "breath" represent? It represents God, the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

In observing what God has accomplished in His church around the world today, surely we can say, "What God Hath Wrought!" According to the American Bible Society and our own church statistics:

1. We are in more countries than any other Protestant church,
2. We are a rapidly growing denomination, more than 1,000 a day,
3. We have a vast and extensive medical work,
4. We have the largest Protestant educational system.

But is This Enough?

How long has it taken us to arrive at where we are today? Over one hundred and forty years, and still we are far from finishing the work of God on earth! Is it possible that we alone will never accomplish the task? Is it possible that we could have all the pieces, and yet have only a little power, at least in comparison to Pentecost? Is it

All the Pieces, No Power

the task? Is it possible that we could have all the pieces, and yet have only a little power, at least in comparison to Pentecost? Is it probable that we have been contented with a little measure of His mighty power? Do you believe that it is God's plan that we should have been over one hundred and forty years in preaching the Three Angels' Messages and still the end really not be in sight? Could we be as the dry bones in God's sight?

Please notice very soberly the quotation that follows and realize that the church is not just an institution, but rather it is made up of people like you and me--we are the church!

"The church has long been contented with little of the blessing of God (the Holy Spirit); they have not felt the need of reaching up to the exalted privileges purchased for them at infinite cost. Their spiritual strength has been feeble, their experience of a dwarfed and crippled character, and they are disqualified for the work the Lord would have them to do. They are not able to present the great and glorious truths of God's Holy Word that would convict and convert souls through the agency of the Holy Spirit. (And yet, notice) The power of God awaits their demand and reception." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 175).

Oh that we would fall on our knees in humble repentance because of taking this very special gift for granted, a gift which the Saviour has provided for us at such infinite cost. Let us now with submissive contrition bow at His feet, asking in faith, believing that He is able to do what He has promised! May we earnestly plead, even as Jacob wrestled with the angel, for the "breath of God" to be breathed on us. Then we shall be the spontaneous witnesses that are so desperately needed.

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

All the Pieces, No Power

QUIZ



Question: 1. What chapter in the book of Ezekiel vividly portrays what God sees His people can become?

Answer: _____. (page 157)

Question: 2. In this chapter of Ezekiel, what four-word phrase describes God's prophetic view of His people?

Answer: _____ (page 157)

Question: 3. Even after the "bones" were connected, and flesh covered them, what was lacking?

Answer: _____. (page 158)



Question: 4. What did the symbolic breath represent?

Answer: _____ (page 158)



Section E - Part 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work

THAT OTHER ANGEL - REVELATION 18:1

Introduction

It is usually quite difficult for the human mind to be free from self-justification when it involves accepting a spiritual lack on our part. Please consider thoughtfully the following:

The Census Bureau is said to have published the fact that the world has now reached the point where five million people are being added to the world population every week! When we think of such astounding numbers in light of our commission to take the gospel to the whole world, does it not cause us to be overwhelmed with such an astounding and awesome responsibility?

On the other hand, are you aware that God is now blessing this church with an average of more than one thousand people a day who are being baptized, resulting in eight thousand or so per week in membership gain? And it continues week after week after week! Praise the Lord, how we thank Him for each one. But remember, without the convicting and converting work of His Holy Spirit we would be helpless to accomplish this. And so we can thank Him not only for the results but also for this indispensable power that brings men and women to such decisions.

The following analytical question is in no way meant to be critical of the church when we ask: How long will it take us to finish the work at this rate, even if we were baptizing double our present amount? Though it may be difficult to really analyze such a probing question, surely we must be willing to do so if we really expect to see Jesus come in our lifetime. Unless we are willing to ask, Is it I, Lord? we will be unprepared, our lamps will be out of oil; **we must have this extra oil!**

Several years ago someone asked the question, What's gone wrong with the harvest? That too ends up being a very searching question. Do you think this question is valid to God's remnant church today? Even though we are experiencing phenomenal growth, how long would it take us, realistically, to finish the work of God on earth at our current rate, wonderful as it is? If we are gaining eight to ten thousand per week while the population is increasing at five million per week, even with accounting for disasters and deaths of large numbers, we would statistically be going backward! Even if the Census Bureau's estimate were five times too high, it would be the same.

That Other Angel - Revelation 18:1

However, in this lesson, instead of focusing on what may appear to be the problem, we want to spend the time positively studying the solution.

That Other Angel

Let's turn to Revelation 18:1 and read there the special function of the fourth angel. Please read it now.

We commonly refer to the event pictured here as the Loud Cry or the Latter Rain. And how we need this mighty power poured out upon the remnant church and through us to the whole earth. For when His work of preparing us is thus completed, that which occurred at Pentecost will look very small in comparison! Notice carefully the following quotation:

"Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was lightened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere, as he cried mightily, with a strong voice. . . .The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry." (Early Writings, p. 277.

Power and force--that's exactly what we need to complete the assignment that we have been given. If they needed it at Pentecost when the influence of Christ's physical presence was still very strongly felt, how very much more we need this power today. Notice another quotation:

"We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more to-day. Moral darkness, like a funeral pall, covers the earth. All manner of false doctrines, heresies, and Satanic deceptions, are misleading the minds of men. Without the Spirit and power of God, it will be in vain that we labor to present the truth." (Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 158).

Could it be that the work has not yet been finished because we have not really felt the need for the descent of the fourth angel? Allow me to repeat another quotation which addresses this very issue of complacency so vitally connected with the message to the church of Laodicea. Speaking specifically of the power of the Holy Spirit:

"The church has long been contented with little of the blessing of God. . . .Their spiritual strength has been feeble, their experience of a dwarfed and crippled character, . . ." (Testimonies to Ministers, p. 175).

Then this paragraph concludes that because of this indifference or lack, the church is **"disqualified for the work the Lord would have them do."** However, following this apparent indictment are the most amazing words: **"The power of God awaits their demand and reception."**

Can you imagine demanding to receive anything of God, especially the special gift of the Holy Spirit? Such a thought causes us to shudder with a measure of fear. It seems almost irreverent or even blasphemous to consider such a possibility. Yet this phrase is used by the servant of the Lord in several places in her writings. What could it possibly mean?

First of all, it definitely shows us how very willing God is to give us this gift, which is based, of course, on His infinite love and our great need. Secondly, it is also meant to help us understand that the gift is very, very important. The very fact that we are told that He awaits our demand is a clear indication that if we really desire His abiding presence for the purpose of allowing Him to control us and to bring the much-needed, sweet presence of Jesus, **then** we can safely ask with a sense of commitment and faith befitting such a demand. To say the least, it is surely an awesome and deeply contemplative thought!

Let us take a different direction in the next part of our lesson as we consider that other angel of Revelation 18. As you think about this, consider the following question:

Is Revelation 18:1 a "New" Prophecy in the New Testament?

Turn, if you will, to Isaiah 60, and pause with the first two verses. Do you see any possible resemblance or correlation in this passage to Revelation 18:1? Notice in the first two verses of this Old Testament chapter that it is dealing with light or glory, which, according to verse 2 is obviously the Lord's glory, not our's. Further, consider that this glory as well as that in the book of Revelation is really God's character of infinite love as revealed to the world and which He longs to reproduce in each of us, and finally through us to the world around us.

Let's take just a moment here to consider what this "glory" is that is mentioned in both places. In the next two quotations more is revealed: **"Through the Holy Spirit, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory--His character--is to shine forth in His followers. Thus they are to glorify God. . . ." (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 414).**

That Other Angel - Revelation 18:1

"Satan is seeking to veil Jesus from our sight, to eclipse His light; for when we get even a glimpse of His glory, we are attracted to Him. . . . Oh, if we would by faith draw nigh to God, He would reveal to us His glory, which is His character, and the praise of God would flow forth from human hearts and be sounded by human voices." (6 SDABC, p. 1097).

Hence, "glory" is referring to much more than an awesome amount of literal light or brightness. This glory is the very character of God which He longs to reveal to the world. He has, therefore, chosen a people on earth to reflect His character and His love to a world of sinners who must have a chance to acknowledge and accept this love before it will be forever too late.

After a very special promise to parents as to the work of the latter rain in verse 4, what does the next verse in Isaiah 60 give as a reason why God's people will become radiant and their hearts will swell with joy? What an exciting promise of a great harvest of souls--the promise is that multitudes will respond to this mighty revelation. "The abundance of the sea," which according to Revelation 17:15 is "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Just think what a harvest this will be for the Lord.

However, this prophecy of Isaiah 60 was never fulfilled to literal Israel, and so its application is passed on to spiritual Israel. The same is true of that amazing prophecy of the second chapter of Joel which was originally given to literal Israel. Let's turn to Joel 2:28,29 and read this prophecy regarding the promise of God to pour out His Spirit upon His people. Notice this gift is promised not just to those who might be considered deserving; He is also promised to the "servants and the handmaids," those considered in their day as perhaps the lowest in society.

We have long considered this prophecy fulfilled in its immediate sense at Pentecost as Peter preached and God's Spirit impacted those lives so abundantly. In Acts 2:16 Peter himself stated that what the people were witnessing there that day was a fulfillment of this prophecy of Joel. Note the following quotation from the Spirit of Prophecy:

"If this prophecy of Joel met a partial fulfillment in the days of the apostles, we are living in a time when it is to be even more evidently manifest to the people of God. He will so bestow His Spirit upon His people that they will become a light amid the moral darkness; and great light will be reflected in all parts of the world. O that our faith might be increased, that the Lord might work mightily with His people." (4 SDABC, p. 1175).

That Other Angel - Revelation 18:1

What an assurance and promise is this to us as a church! God is ready to work through us. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves: do we really want the work to go with a blaze of God's glory bringing it to the attention of all upon the earth? Do we perseveringly pray for the fulfillment of that prophecy of the other angel as pictured in Revelation 18? These are not meant to be simply thought-provoking questions; they are to be prayerful, searching questions. We just must be concerned!

Why do we so desperately need the mighty latter rain measure of the Spirit of God in order to accomplish a finished work? Because only then will the world be alerted to these testing truths. Speaking of that time of the mighty outpouring, as seeing it in progress, the servant of the Lord saw the following:

"Everywhere they (those who are filled) are seen going forth to communicate to others the light they have received as they did after the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. And as they let their light shine, they receive more and more of the Spirit's power. The earth is lighted with the glory of God." (My Life Today, p. 63).

Notice all that this mighty gift will accomplish:

"Souls that were scattered all through the religious bodies answered to the call, and the precious were hurried out of the doomed churches, as Lot was hurried out of Sodom before her destruction." (Early Writings, p. 279).

"Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side." (The Great Controversy, p. 612).

Conclusion

Hence we can see that in order to complete the divine task that has been assigned to us, we surely do need that other angel of Revelation 18. However, there is one very important question that we have not yet addressed--are we prepared for this mighty gift? We may not be aware how very important it is. Therefore, in order to adequately cover this necessary preparation, we must expand this lesson.

We are on the very verge of the latter rain, and we must be prepared for this event. In the next lesson we will discuss the specific preparation that is needed.

That Other Angel - Revelation 18:1

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

That Other Angel - Revelation 18:1

QUIZ

Question: 1. According to Early Writings, p. 277, what two things will be given to the Three Angels' Messages when the work of that "other angel" of Revelation 18:1 becomes a reality?

Answer: a. _____ (page 162)
b. _____

Question: 2. Complete the following sentence: "The power of God awaits _____." (page 163)

Question: 3. What chapter in the Old Testament appears to be a possible original prophecy of Revelation 18?

Answer: _____. (page 163)

Question: 4. According to Joel 2:28,29, what portion of the world's inhabitants will be impacted by God's Holy Spirit at the end of time?

Answer: _____. (page 164)



Section E - Part 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work

PREPARING FOR THAT OTHER ANGEL

Introduction

The special emphasis of this lesson of study is to understand how we can each individually be prepared for the work of this other angel; in other words, to be prepared to receive the latter rain. It is essential that we carefully consider this preparation, for soon this power will descend from heaven and will cause a loud cry appeal to the world. And unless we are prepared, we shall not receive it nor be a part of these closing scenes. Notice the following quotation illustrating the necessity of thorough preparation:

"The message of truth that we bear must go to nations, tongues, and peoples. Soon it will go with a loud voice, and the earth will be lightened with its glory. Are we preparing for this great outpouring of the Spirit of God?"
(Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 383).

As God's people we must be prepared for this special manifestation of the power of heaven. The latter rain measure of the Holy Spirit is not simply something that will happen sometime near the end, whenever God gets ready to send it, but rather heaven is waiting to send it. Therefore let us focus on the counsel that has been revealed to us regarding this necessary preparation. The question is:

How are We to Prepare; What is Our Need?

"When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God. God cannot pour out His spirit when selfishness and self-indulgence are so manifest; when a spirit prevails that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain,--Am I my brother's keeper?" (Counsels on Stewardship, p. 52).

This statement from the Spirit of Prophecy is specific, almost to being pointed. Notice that "selfishness and self-indulgence" are the problem, and this is manifested in the church by the lack of being "laborers together with God." If this attitude were put into words, it would reveal the very spirit of Cain, and/or Satan! Such a possibility that we might be included in a role like this should bring horror to our consciousness!

Preparing for That Other Angel

Oh how we each need an ever-increasing burden for souls. If only we were laboring for souls "as ones that must give an account." Soul winning is a serious, life-saving experience. But first we must have an ever-increasing supply of the holy oil, more and more of Christ's righteousness; for without this we will be like "whited sepulchres," dry as the hills of Gilboa. There would be nothing to share!

How Can We Specifically Prepare for the Latter Rain?

Let us say it simply. Preparation is the key, and to prepare is really the theme of the entire Bible. Prepare to meet thy God, was God's message through Amos. To prepare was the message of Elijah and John the Baptist.

However, nearly all of our thoughts of preparation center around the general theme of the second coming of Jesus. But is there any special preparation necessary in order to receive the latter rain? In other words, is it possible to be so general in considering the necessary preparation for the second coming of Jesus that we would fail to be prepared for the prior falling of the latter rain? Notice a specific quotation on the importance of seeking this necessary preparation:

"There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, . . . because we are unprepared to receive it." (1 Selected Messages, p. 121).

If you read the context of this statement, it clearly indicates that the term, "blessing of the Lord," is referring to the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain measure. Specific preparation then is vital in order to receive the Holy Spirit in latter rain abundance.

The Four-fold Preparation Process

In 1 Selected Messages, page 126, there appears to be three or four steps that, if taken seriously, would prepare us for this climactic event:

"The church must arouse to action. The Spirit of God can never come in until she prepares the way. There should be (1) earnest searching of heart. There should be (2) united, persevering prayer, and through faith (3) a claiming of the promises of God. There should be, . . . (4) deep humiliation of soul. . . . O my brethren, will you grieve the Holy Spirit, and cause it to depart? Will you shut out the blessed Saviour, because you are unprepared for His presence?" (Numbers supplied).

Let us look at this process step by step. First of all--"**earnest searching of heart.**" It is significant to note that the first and the

Preparing for That Other Angel

last step cannot really be accomplished in a group of people. In other words, they are individual concerns, to be individually completed under the searching of the Holy Spirit and our submissiveness to His conviction.

In Psalm 139:23,24 the psalmist David realized that he could not trust himself to search his own heart. Instead he needed a power outside of himself in order to really be thorough. Jesus told His disciples in John 16:7,8 that this would be the very work of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps from experience is why the psalmist asked "and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." Oh how very important this work is, and it is most effective when we request this gift on a daily basis. Let us take seriously this searching process.

The next thing that is mentioned in regard to being prepared for the latter rain is **"united, persevering prayer."** How would you define this kind of prayer? Would it not be praying together indefinitely? Do you think that heaven could trust us with the latter rain if we would learn to pray together with this kind of determination? Just think what a force this would be! If we would band together in praying, either in a daily prayer chain or in small prayer groups, we would then move heaven with our prayers.

Notice some of the counsel we have regarding praying together:

"We should pray as earnestly for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost." (Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 158).

"Brethren, move high heaven with your prayers. . . .We need to cry to God as did Jacob for a fuller baptism of the Holy Spirit." (Historical Sketches, p. 294).

In this next statement, notice what we are promised when even one member begins to plead for this promised power:

"The time has come for a thorough reformation to take place. When this reformation begins, the spirit of prayer will actuate every believer, and will banish from the church the spirit of discord and strife. Those who have not been living in Christian fellowship will draw close to one another. One member working in right lines will lead other members to unite with him in making intercession for the revelation of the Holy Spirit. . . .The barriers separating believer from believer will be broken down, . . ." (Testimonies, Vol. 8, p. 251).

If ever we needed this kind of revitalizing reformation, it is now. Do we sense our need of these very changes in our lives and in our churches? Oh for the spirit of discord and strife to be banished from among us; to draw close to one another in Christian fellowship; for the

Preparing for That Other Angel

breaking down of the barriers of self and selfish pride that often separate us. To accomplish this is the work of God's Holy Spirit. Let our hearts cry out, as it were, for this kind of thorough reformation to take place, and as we are thus made aware of our need, we will then cry to God as did Jacob for the mighty, life-changing power of His Spirit. We will not be denied! It is the very work He longs to do.

Surely there is at least one person in every congregation who will catch this vision of praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on their life, their home, their congregation, and on their pastor and conference leaders. And what did the quotation say would be the result? Not only will others join them in thus praying, but a transformation in the congregation will result.

Please permit the sharing again of that specific quotation from the Spirit of Prophecy as found in Review and Herald, January 3, 1907:

"The members of our churches need to be converted, to become more spiritual-minded. A chain of earnest, praying believers should encircle the world. A few neighbors may meet together to pray for the Holy Spirit. Let those who can not leave home gather in their children, and unite in learning to pray together. . . . Through daily prayer and consecration all may so relate themselves to their Heavenly Father that he can bestow upon them rich blessings."

How thrilling it is to again be reminded that over two thousand faithful Seventh-day Adventist Christians have already covenanted with the Lord to do exactly this. Yes, God is preparing His people for the latter rain and the loud cry!

The third thing emphasized in terms of being prepared for the latter rain was: **"claiming the promises of God."** There is a little chorus that says, "God said it, I believe it, and that settles it for me!" Would that our faith could be that childlike and simple. What is the purpose of claiming God's promises? What is the effect on us? Would you agree that the more we depend on and claim the promises of God, the more our faith is strengthened? Of course, His promises are true whether or not we believe them to be. But our believing them is really indicating our faith and trust in the promise-Giver! This faith, this trust, is the characteristic that God prizes most in His children. Let us by faith trust in the promises.

In 2 Peter 1:4 the apostle tells us that because of these "exceeding great and precious promises" we can actually become partakers of the divine nature. No wonder the Lord is so concerned that we learn by faith to lean on these wonderful assurances that He has provided. Notice the next quotation which illustrates how desirous God is for us to have this kind of trusting relationship with Him.

"Nestle in the sheltering arms of Jesus, and do not wrestle

Preparing for That Other Angel

yourself out of His arms. . . .Bear your whole weight on the promises of God." (This Day With God, p. 9).

What a beautiful and inviting offer is this! Yes, by trusting completely in His promises of love we are in effect nestling ourselves in His arms. How much more would be available if we really believed! In the Signs of the Times, February 10, 1890, the servant of the Lord indicated that the falling of the latter rain was to a large degree dependent on how earnestly we pray and believe in His promise to give it to us. Notice:

"We may have pentecostal seasons even now, if the people will pray fervently and believe in the promises of God."

Are you and I willing to claim the promise of the latter rain, even before God supplies the fact?

The last step emphasized in this preparation process is: **"deep humiliation of soul."** What does it mean, deep humiliation of soul? It means all of Him and none of me. Have you ever tried to be humble? It's hard to do, isn't it? In fact, we cannot make ourselves humble, for trying to do so ourselves only makes one "proud" of being humble. In contrast, deep humiliation of soul indicates a reaching out after God as Jacob did in the night of wrestling. He recognized that he was absolutely helpless against the strength of his apparent adversary. And as he clung to Him in his helplessness, his faith and trust gave him the victory!

Do you recall that classic statement in The Desire of Ages, pp. 250,251, that says:

"There is no limit to the usefulness of one who, by putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, and lives a life wholly consecrated to God."

In Conclusion

Oh how much we need this holy, heavenly oil of the Holy Spirit to be poured out, first on us, and then, through us to a world which is in such desperate need of Jesus and His righteousness. To bring this robe of Christ's righteousness to those who ask is the special work of that wonderful Person, the Holy Spirit. Yes, we must be prepared for Him to use us to do this final work on earth that is our commission. Just as soon as we fully submit and allow Him to fully prepare us, then He will be able to work through His own remnant church to bring about a completed work. As the beloved Apostle John, under inspiration, exclaimed, "Even so, come Lord Jesus!" may this be the prayer of every one of us!

"The Spirit of God will be poured out upon the church just as soon as the vessels are prepared to receive it." (That I May Know Him, p. 330).

Preparing for That Other Angel

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

Preparing for That Other Angel

QUIZ

Question: 1. According to this lesson, what searching question is asked in the quotation from Testimonies, Vol. 5., p. 383?

Answer: _____
_____. (page 169)

Question: 2. According to 1SM, p. 121, why must there be earnest effort in order to obtain this mighty blessing?

Answer: _____
(page 170)

Question: 3. According to 1SM, p. 126, what is the four-fold preparation process?

Answer: a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
(page 170)

Question: According to the Review and Herald, January 3, 1907, what should encircle the world?

Answer: _____
(page 172)



Section E - Part 4

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work

GOD WILL USE SIMPLE MEANS

Introduction

There is something in the human mind that naturally resists an answer or solution that is simple, and as formal education increases, this appears to be increasingly true. Therefore, as we consider the finishing of the work of God on earth, it is not natural for the human mind to look for simple means to accomplish the task that still lies unfinished before us. However, throughout Scripture and especially as illustrated in the life of Jesus, the simple method or approach is the one chosen by God to best illustrate His way.

What could be more simple in concept than to simply believe by faith that the Saviour is planning to send His personal representative--the Holy Spirit--in increased measure with unlimited power to direct the work of God in its grand conclusion? The simplicity of it is both the simple instruments that the Holy Spirit will work through as well as their decision to simply believe that what God has promised He will do.

Some might consider that the simplest concept for the accomplishment of this task would be for the Holy Spirit to do it all, while we stood by and watched. And in one sense the conclusion may almost appear that way to us, because when the latter rain falls, we will not take any of the credit to ourselves. But if the Holy Spirit actually did it all Himself without any cooperation on our part, then the work of God would have already been finished. Notice the following, rather startling quotation which speaks of our involvement in God's work:

"Human agencies are to be employed in this work. Zeal and energy must be intensified; talents that are rusting and inaction must be pressed into service. The voice that would say, 'Wait; do not allow yourself to have burdens imposed upon you,' is the voice of the cowardly spies." (Referring to the 10 spies). (Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 383).

One thing is clear--the simplicity of it must involve you and me, and we must allow Him to involve us! And God will use each one of us if we will simply allow His Spirit to be in complete control of our will. This means submission and dedication. Are we really willing to do the task that lies nearest to the door of service? Let us determine that it shall be so as we study this concept of simple means directed by the mighty power of His Spirit.

God Will Use Simple Means

Biblical Illustrations of Simple Methods

Moses. Let us begin this portion by looking again at the training and life of Moses. After Moses finished his formal education in the university of Egypt, the Bible indicates in Exodus 2:11,12 that he thought he was ready. Yes, he would deliver his people; they had been oppressed by their Egyptian taskmasters. He had learned the power of martial arts under the finest teachers, and he simply had to do what he had to do! And yet as Moses thought he was ready to be used, he was the farthest from it. This is such a common, human reaction. In contrast, another common, human reaction is to say, "I can't do that." And Satan really doesn't care which attitude we have as long as we show lack of dependence on divine power.

It appears to have taken forty years of retraining Moses in the simple ways of the Lord before God was ready to use him. This is not to indicate that we necessarily need many years to be trained; instead, it shows that the lesson of importance which humanity must learn is that of simple, absolute dependence on the power and presence of the Lord. And what a lesson book and classroom God chose for Moses. Learning the patience of caring for the needs of helpless sheep taught Moses more than all of the wisdom of Egypt previously gained. In fact, it probably took those forty years working with the sheep in the wilderness in order to unlearn what the pagan philosophy had taught him.

God is so patient. He does not focus on what we are, but on what we can become, and He loves us on that basis. He did with Moses. Notice in Exodus 3:11 that when God was ready to use him, Moses was clearly changed from his previous attitude. Who am I, he said, to go before Pharaoh, or lead the children of Israel out of Egypt? Quite a change from his previous attitude when years earlier he "helped" his Hebrew brother. What does this contrast say to us? Perhaps we could all say just now, "please, Lord, make me willing for the Holy Spirit to effect such a total change in me."

Please take a few minutes right here to read the first 12 verses in the next chapter of Exodus, chapter 4. In these verses God illustrates to Moses that He is able to use the simple things at hand to accomplish the seemingly impossible. First it was the burning bush, that which was close at hand. Next, it was Moses' walking stick when God impressed upon Moses that even his hands could be under God's direction. And as if that were not enough, he was told that plain water from the nearby river would also be an effective means of communicating the will of God. Oh how patient God was to bear with Moses, for He desired to indicate His willingness to use whatever was available in order to carry out His plans through Moses, if only Moses would depend entirely on Him.

God Will Use Simple Means

From our perspective we might wonder why Moses was so reluctant to see God's enablings in these first three simple means. Perhaps the story best illustrates that God is willing to take even our reluctance if we will surrender it to Him; then He can accomplish the impossible with whatever we lay at His feet.

Is the Saviour just as willing today to use whatever lies nearest to us and make us the channels through which His Holy Spirit, the agency by which we are to reach the souls of those around us, can flow out to a world in need? Should His power be filling us in order to make us the witnesses He so desperately needs? Won't you just now in the middle of this study decide to surrender everything at your disposal for the winning of souls so that there will be sufficient laborers for the harvest?

Jehoshaphat. The story of Jehoshaphat is another illustration that God is able to take the simple things and accomplish that which seems impossible. Yes, we must first surrender all to be used at His command. Jehoshaphat had a well-trained army and yet in 2 Chronicles 20:12, as he realizes that the surrounding heathen nations have allied themselves together in offense against Judah, he cries out in reliance on the omnipotent arm of the Almighty: "O our God. . .we have no power against this great multitude. . .nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You."

Oh what a lesson in utter dependency on divine power is this. It is when we human beings realize and accept our helplessness that God is then able to do the impossible. And God did it for Jehoshaphat. In verse 15, when the Holy Spirit came upon Jahaziel, notice how God answered Jehoshaphat's petition and cry for help. "Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's."

In verse 17 the Spirit of the Lord continued to speak through Jahaziel and said, "You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, . . ." And then He repeats again, "Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you." Think of it; no need to fight with man's armaments. God would fight the battle. Their part was to trust in the providence of the Lord, that what He had promised He would perform.

Then Jehoshaphat, being the man of faith that he was, accepted the message from the Lord and said to his people, "Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper." Notice, interestingly, that these words are found in chapter 20, verse 20--spiritual 20/20 vision! Therefore when God through His servant tells us that the work of God will be finished by His Spirit through simple means, then let us believe His prophets!

God Will Use Simple Means

Zerubbabel. Let's look briefly at the story of Zerubbabel who for a dozen years labored with the people in the task of rebuilding the temple, yet still it lay only half completed. Zechariah the prophet is given the apparently dismal task of trying to convince the people to begin again, for God is able! Speaking through the angel, notice the words God used to once again illustrate that it would be the **simple means, under His direction**, that would accomplish the task. In Zechariah 4:6 we read again those words which we have heard so many times before: "Not by might, nor by power, (in other words, not by your own wisdom and planning) but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."

Another aspect of simple means in the experience of Zerubbabel, is indicated in the rebuilding of the temple. And that is the aspect of the apparently insurmountable difficulties that seem to so often hound us as we attempt to do the work of God. When such things occur, we are tempted to look for big solutions to the needs. And as we approach the final days when difficulties increase and we may be looking for "big" solutions, let us look up and live! God really is able to use simple means to accomplish the impossible, when not all the resources of human devising can ever accomplish it.

The Lord Jesus. Surely the very best example of the power of God to take simple means and accomplish His work is that of the earthly experience of Jesus. Even before He officially began His earthly ministry there was evidence that simple means was in a sense the motto of Jesus. Speaking of the scribes in the temple, Luke 2:47 says, "And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers." Jesus had received nothing of what His day considered essential to becoming a great spiritual teacher. And yet when in the presence of those who had received education, he, through the simple medium of asking sincere questions, confounded the wise!

"From one to another passed the inquiry, How hath this youth knowledge, having never learned?" (The Desire of Ages, p. 80).

We can be sure that Jesus was well educated, but not in the self-seeking position or philosophy of most of the so-called education of His day. In the next quotation notice the following description of what was wrong with this system in Jesus' day. Notice how it turned from the simple things of God:

"The experience which is obtained through a personal acceptance of God's word had no place in the educational system. Absorbed in the round of externals, the students found no quiet hours to spend with God. They did not hear His voice speaking to the heart. In their search for knowledge, they turned away from the Source of wisdom. The great essentials of the service of God were neglected." (The Desire of Ages, p. 69).

God Will Use Simple Means

Not one of us will ever be prepared to be used by God in the final scenes of His cause unless, like Jesus, we desire and seek for this kind of relationship with Him. We must become more and more dependent on Him and less and less upon ourselves. Where we might come up with one or two possible ways to accomplish the will of God, He "has a thousand ways to provide for us (and, if you please, for the accomplishment of His work through us) of which we know nothing." (The Desire of Ages, p. 330).

Have you wondered just why God is emphasizing the simple means? Try to project the following in your mind. Suppose the Saviour were to send the latter rain upon us and then through us to the world, before we realized our need of absolute dependency on this mighty Power. If we were busy working for God in our own strength, what would we probably conclude, that what was happening was a result of what? Our own ability! We would naturally take the credit to ourselves. Oh friend, can we see, all the credit and all the glory must go to Him!

According to the First Angel's Message found in Revelation 14:7, Who is to receive the glory and honor? Not us, but God Himself is to receive it because of His fair judgment of the world. However, in the natural heart of mankind there is not this willingness to give all the credit to Him. The selfish heart of the human race tends to take the credit for any success, even in spiritual lines. We tend to pat ourselves on the back.

This is why He cannot entrust us with the mighty, awesome power of the latter rain unless we are prepared. Oh let us fall at the foot of the cross. Let us look up by faith to His worthiness and plead for His righteousness to cleanse us and cover the nakedness of our own selfishness. May we long to be a channel through which His character of love and forgiveness flows out to a world in need. May the holiness of His character and the requirements of His law be boldly presented to the world, that with fear and trembling they, too, might fall at the foot of the cross, confessing their sins and pleading for His robe of righteousness. But remember, God needs you and me to recognize that without His indwelling Spirit, we can never accomplish the overwhelming task that lies before us.

Yes, God is simply waiting for us to come to the point where we will have learned that in our efforts and plans alone the work will never be finished. Surely over 140 years of preaching these Three Angels' Messages, while the work is not yet finished, is proof enough.

In Conclusion: Promises of Simple Means

As we come to the conclusion of this extremely important topic, let us close with a series of specific quotations which show just how awesome it is to be living in these very last days:

God Will Use Simple Means

"Representations have been made to me, showing that the Lord will carry out His plans through a variety of ways and instruments. It is not alone the most talented, not alone those who hold high positions of trust, or are the most highly educated from a worldly point of view, whom the Lord uses to do His grand and holy work of soulsaving. He will use simple means. . ." (1 Selected Messages, p. 128).

"Under the showers of the latter rain the inventions of man, the human machinery, will at times be swept away, the boundary of man's authority will be as broken reeds, and the Holy Spirit will speak through the living, human agent, with convincing power. No one then will watch to see if the sentences are well rounded off, if the grammar is faultless." (2 Selected Messages, pp. 58,59).

"God often uses the simplest means to accomplish the greatest results. . . .The humblest worker, moved by the Holy Spirit, will touch invisible chords, whose vibrations will ring to the ends of the earth, and make melody through eternal ages." (The Desire of Ages, pp. 822,823).

Notice, too, how the children will be specially used!

"In the closing scenes of this earth's history, many. . . children and youth (who receive a true Christian education) will astonish people by their witness to the truth, which will be borne in simplicity, yet with spirit and power. . . In the near future many children will be endued with the Spirit of God, and will do a work proclaiming the truth to the world. . . .They will do a work in the world that not all the powers of evil can counteract." (My Life Today, p. 62).

"When heavenly intelligences see that men are no longer permitted to present the truth, the Spirit of God will come upon the children, and they will do a work in the proclamation of the truth which the older workers cannot do because their way will be hedged up." (The Adventist Home, p. 489).

The decision is ours. What will we do with this simple truth of the Lord working through us by simple methods? Let us respond with the simplicity of a little child, for without Him we can do nothing. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will make us willing to accept any simple means that He might choose.

God Will Use Simple Means

Benediction

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

God Will Use Simple Means

QUIZ

Question: 1. When Moses "thought" he was ready to work in behalf of his people, was he "ready" in God's eyes?

Answer: _____. (page 178)

Question: 2. When he had been humbled by God, did Moses then think that he was ready?

Answer: _____. (page 178)

Question: 3. To Jehoshaphat's cry to God for help, God responded through Jahaziel; in His answer, what did God say regarding the battle before them?

Answer: _____.
(page 179)

Question: 4. What is the message of Zechariah 4:6:

Answer: _____
_____. (page 180)

Section E - Part 5

THE HOLY SPIRIT - God's Answer for a Finished Work

THE GRAND CONCLUSION

Finally over! Can you imagine it--by His Holy Spirit working through His people, God's mission on earth will finally be over. Even after all that the human race has put the Saviour through, His work on earth will be finished. Then there will be just one pulse beat throughout the entire universe. Heaven will ring with joy unsurpassed as the Saviour welcomes His children home. I surely want to be there, don't you? Oh, what a day that will be when the final reward becomes visible to our very eyes.

Consider, however, what scenes precede this wonderful beginning of eternity. The seven last plagues, including those fifty-pound hailstones, have wreaked havoc on the earth. Satan has worked feverishly in every imaginable way to hinder the work of God and to prevent God's people from taking the Three Angels' Messages to their final conclusion. But it is to no avail, for Jesus the mighty Conquerer has come to claim His own. Amen and Amen!

In this series of twenty-six studies, we first focused on the mission, the role, and the work of God's Holy Spirit. We considered not only who He is in person, but also in the next section, how He is God's answer for the spiritual needs of my life. In the third section we considered the utter importance of His presence in our home relationships, both between husband and wife and also the sacred obligation of dedicated, saving relationships between parents and children. For remember, the Holy Spirit brings to us the lifesaving presence of Jesus, enabling us to live His life and reflect His character.

In the fourth section we dealt with the importance of the indispensable aid of the Holy Spirit in personal witnessing to the love of God, even outside our own circles of comfortable relationships. We learned a very simple but essential truth: witnessing is a lifestyle, witnessing is what we are, not only what we do. Then in the final section we have endeavored to focus on a key point in the final harvest of this earth, though it is too often overlooked--that the Holy Spirit is God's special answer for the completion of His work.

And in this last part we want to focus on the results of the final work of revival and reformation that will not only prepare us for this grand conclusion of God's work on earth, but through us will spread to the whole world. Let us observe first a most wonderful and glorious truth, the certainty that:

The Grand Conclusion

God's Word Will Triumph in This Grand Conclusion

Even to the very end it will appear as though Satan may triumph. But praise the Lord, he will not, for he is already a defeated foe; he knows this very well, hence he is attempting to deceive the very elect. How grateful we can be that God's Word will be fulfilled. Notice how Isaiah 55:11 is so descriptive of God's assurance as His Holy Spirit works through those who will surrender to His pleading. "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

Sadly, however, there is a Scripture which shows that some will wait too long. Found in Amos 8:11,12, it says that a day of spiritual famine is coming, a famine of "hearing the words of the Lord." Could anything be worse than to want to know God's will but discover that one has waited too long to find it? This passage indicates that the whole world will be searched, and with great haste; and yet the Bible says that they "shall not find it."

Special Assurances of Victory

However, during this special closing time, as at Pentecost, there will be much intercessory prayer. As we consider the following quotation found in Testimonies, Vol. 9, p. 126, let's notice several important points. First, what is it that appears to be their most immediate concern or emphasis?

"A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost."

Yes, earnestly they are interceding with God and pleading with Him to pour out this special manifestation of His power even as He did at Pentecost. Don't you think that we should even now begin to know what such intercessory prayer means, pleading as never before for the Holy Spirit to do a mightier work for our own soul, and the souls of those around us? Notice what else they did besides pray:

"Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God." (Ibid.)

I want to get started now for if I wait until then to get started, it will be too late. Also notice what the effect will be of the working of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of these who were visited in their homes.

"Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest." (Ibid.)

Also notice how extensive the success of this witnessing will be:

"On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of

The Grand Conclusion

the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence." (Ibid.).

In our study of this section, probably no other verse has held such importance to our understanding than Revelation 18:1. Have you ever wondered just what was meant in that Scripture where it so graphically says that the prophetic angel will lighten the earth? The book The Great Controversy, p. 611, gives us some insight on this point. It says:

"The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel's message, is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted (or extraordinary) power is here foretold."

Extraordinary power, that is exactly what we need if this earth is to be thoroughly warned of its impending doom. Remember again, for almost a century and a half we have been preaching these wonderful Three Angels' Messages and still the work is not done. We have gone worldwide and yet there are millions of people who do not know about the theme of these special messages of love. The heart of Jesus aches for them, and He is waiting for us to come to the realization that we will never be able to complete the task which He has assigned to us until we are completely possessed and equipped with this "unwonted," or extraordinary, power.

Let's take a few minutes and compare the foretold great extent of the latter rain at the end of time with the mighty outpouring of the Midnight Cry in the days of William Miller. As we do so, we want to address several questions which will be helpful in accurately analyzing what is yet ahead of us in this grand conclusion.

The Latter Rain Compared to the 1840-44 Revival

It is a strange fact that as God's people we often forget our wonderful heritage; especially is this true of the beginning of our church in the 1840's. Therefore let's look at several questions which will aid us in really grasping the magnitude of the Midnight Cry of William Miller's time.

Question One: How extensive was this earlier revival?

"The Advent Movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel's message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century. . . ." (The Great Controversy, p. 611).

The Grand Conclusion

Question Two: How much greater will the latter rain be than the manifestation of the power of God's Spirit during the 1840-44 time?

"...but these (events) are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel."
(Ibid.).

Question Three: What will be the effect on the honest in heart in the other churches?

"Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides." (Ibid., p. 612).

Question Four: How many will join God's family during the latter rain?

"Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side." (Ibid., p. 612).

Do You Remember Pentecost?

Oh friend, just think of what these promises of assurance mean to us, especially when they are compared to the results of Pentecost. Consider this: at Pentecost, three thousand precious people were baptized in one day. And when you divide those three thousand by the number of the faithful who were praying in the upper room for the power of the Holy Spirit to descend upon them, it seems clear that God entrusted twenty-five new believers to each one of the faithful.

Look for a moment at a hypothetical comparison between His church at Pentecost and today. If only two million Seventh-day Adventists among us were active, and the same proportion occurred during the latter rain, how many would change? And what if that proportion occurred in one day as it did then? The result would be an overwhelming total of fifty million people! Let us hasten to be aware that no one is predicting this number specifically. It is just that we may safely raise our sights by faith and behold them; this very moment the Holy Spirit and the ministering spirits, or angels, are preparing them to "Come out from among them," even as Christ earnestly desires us to be prepared to receive them.

Let's take a moment to notice a couple of promises of what it will take, however, before they will come in large numbers. Notice this first one from Christian Service, p. 253:

"The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God."

The Grand Conclusion

This is very significant. We have learned the great importance of the outpouring of the latter rain. We must have it! However, this mighty event that closes the gospel cannot occur until we understand what it means to be laborers together with God. And this must be much more than only an occasional Sabbath afternoon of door-to-door work. Surely that is a part of it, but again, witnessing for Christ is the very lifestyle we live, not something that is occasionally "tacked on."

There is yet another point that must be emphasized. Satan is not so concerned which way we "swing," in other words, putting too much emphasis on the need for the latter rain or on some particular form of witnessing. His greatest fear is that we shall become aware that the "twain shall meet." For when we as a people grasp the simple yet all-important concept that we are to focus on the Holy Spirit's role of bringing the presence and power of Christ into our daily lives in order to enable us to be those "laborers together with Christ," then the work of God on earth shall be finished and He can come.

Notice how effective and essential is the moving of His Spirit:

"The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God." (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 54).

How our hearts should cry out to our God for more and still more of this mighty heaven-sent power. We must have it and "heaven is waiting to bestow it," as we are told in the book Evangelism, p. 701. Yes, when this gracious gift of heaven is poured out upon us without measure, no one, not relatives, nor friends, nor angry ministers, will hold these precious souls back.

Notice too how these unbelievers will be affected by this latter rain in the book Evangelism. It says:

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. . . . Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. . . . a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side." (Evangelism, p. 701).

The Grand Conclusion

Conclusion

If you were to write a short paragraph describing why you would want to be a part of the latter rain experience, contemplate how you might respond. Or if perchance you would rather be laid to rest before this experience and the seven last plagues, how do you think you might respond?

It is very difficult to conclude these studies or lessons. The heart of the writer is very heavy. What will we do, what are we doing with what God has so graciously shown to us? Could it be that the lessons and their application should be restudied? Surely it is something to carefully consider.

One day when the servant of the Lord came to the end of a very serious meeting, she made a particularly earnest appeal. Please carefully consider it; but first the dramatic quotation which we have considered before in earlier lessons.

"During the night of the first Sabbath of the Newcastle (Australia) meeting, I seemed to be in a meeting, presenting the necessity and importance of our receiving the Spirit. This was the burden of my labor—the opening of our hearts to the Holy Spirit. . . .In my dream a sentinel stood at the door of an important building and asked everyone who came for entrance, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost?' A measuring-line was in his hand, and only very, very few were admitted into the building." (1 Selected Messages, p. 109).

"When this meeting shall close, will you go from here and forget the earnest appeals that have been made to you? Will the messages of warning be left unheeded, and the truth you have heard leak out of your heart as water leaks out of a broken vessel?" (1 Selected Messages, p. 190).

"May it not be so," is the prayer for each one of us! And now, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

The Grand Conclusion

QUIZ

Question: 1. To the very end it may appear that Satan, not God, will triumph.

Answer: True ☐
False ☐ (page 186)

Question: 2. What kind of power is indicated in The Great Controversy, p. 611?

Answer: _____. (page 187)

Question: 3. How many will join God's family during the latter rain?

Answer: _____. (page 188)

