

BT  
767  
.TS42

C.13

Brengle Memorial Library  
The Salvation Army  
School for Officers' Training  
Suffern, N. Y.

# LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

(A Bible Study Series For  
Salvationists)

By Major Bramwell Tillsley



Reproduced and Distributed by  
Eastern Territory (U.S.A.)  
Evangelism and Adult Services Department

# PREFACE

The following series of lessons originally appeared in the "Bible School," a weekly feature of the Canadian War Cry. They were written to provide a basis of thought for Salvationists engaged in small study groups.

This series is a sincere attempt to reemphasize the doctrine of The Holy Spirit in relationship to everyday Christian living. The Holy Spirit has justly been described as "the displaced person in the Godhead." The presence in some quarters of strange and distorted views about the Spirit's operation is regrettable, but much more regrettable is the widespread absence of true teaching concerning the Divine Third Person of the Trinity.

Samuel Chadwick once wrote: "To run an organization needs no God. Man can supply the energy, the enterprise, the enthusiasm for things human. But the real work of the Church depends upon the power of the Spirit." My prayer is that this series of lessons will aid us in rediscovering the presence and power of The Holy Spirit, for whatever work is initiated by the Spirit has the glorious tendency and capacity to spread. May it spread far and wide.

*Major Bramwell Tillsley*

## LESSON ONE

# The personality of the Spirit

IN this series of studies, we will attempt to come to grips with the biblical doctrine of holiness. By the very nature of our subject, it will be necessary to make continuous reference to the third Person in the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit. Perhaps we should commence by meeting Him in the pages of Scripture.

Our third article of faith states: *We believe that there are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.* Yet, how many of us think of the Spirit as an influence, a force or a power? No doubt much of our confusion springs from the fact that we so often think of a person in terms of a body: hands, legs, arms. But surely there are deeper qualities which change this lump of clay into a person! Let us then examine the New Testament and seek to discover some of the characteristics or attributes of the Holy Spirit which give Him personality.

(a) Intelligence: *The Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God* (1 Cor. 2:10). In Romans 8:27, Paul speaks of the *mind* of the Spirit. Thus it is through the Holy Spirit that we know God's truth. He knows the truth and reveals it to us in the Scripture.

(b) Feeling: *Grieve not the Spirit* (Eph. 4:30). Some years ago there was a popular song which contained these significant words: "You always hurt the one you love." The Scriptures reveal that, just as a parent is hurt by the disobedience of a child, so the Spirit is hurt by our disobedience. He knows our every thought, word and deed, and is grieved when in any of these areas we reveal an unchristlike spirit.

(c) Will: In another lesson we are going to consider the "gifts of the Spirit" and in this connection will examine 1 Cor. 12:11: *But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.* The Holy Spirit distributes gifts among the believers as He desires, and not as we choose.

(d) He can be lied to: Recall, for example, the story of Ananias and Sapphira as recorded in Acts 5. Instead of giving their all, they kept back part of the price, but pretended to give all. And Peter said: *Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to*

*the Holy Ghost?* (Acts 5:3).

(e) Personal acts belong to the Spirit: I wonder if you have ever noticed the verbs in John 16:13-14 and John 14:26 — *guide — speak — hear — show — glorify — receive — teach — bring to your remembrance.* These verbs would not be linked with an influence or force, but are rather the expression of personality.

(f) Prays: *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered* (Rom. 8:26). He does not simply impel us to pray: He prays for us. Every believer in Christ has two divine persons praying for him every day. First, the Son, our advocate with the Father who ever liveth to make intercession for us at the right hand of God in glory (1 John 2:1; Heb. 7:25). Then we have the Spirit who prays through us down here on earth.

(g) Described by personal pronouns: I would remind you that the word *Spirit* in the Greek is neuter in gender. Thus to be grammatically correct, the New Testament writers should have referred to the Spirit as *it*, (Hence Romans 8:16, 26 — *the Spirit itself*). In these cases, the Spirit's personality is not being denied, for the work ascribed to Him in each instance is personal. Here the writer was simply following the requirements of correct grammar. In contrast to this, however, are the large number of references where the personal pronoun is employed. For example, John 14:16, 26 and John 16:8 use the personal pronoun *He* to refer to the Spirit.

(h) The Spirit is often associated with the Father and Son:

1: In the great commission: *Go ye — in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* (Matt. 28:19).

2: Pauline benediction: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all* (2 Cor. 13:14). On occasion, He is equated with God. Referring again to the incident in Acts 5 when Ananias lied to the Holy Spirit, Peter added *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God* (Acts 5:4). Like God, He is eternal (Heb. 9:14); omnipresent or everywhere present (Psalm 139:7-10);

omnipotent or all-powerful (Luke 1:35); omniscient or all-knowing (John 14:26).

(i) Loves: *For the love of the Spirit* (Romans 15:30). He not only influences us to love, but loves us Himself. The Father so loved that He gave (John 3:16); the Son so loved that He gave (John 10:18). But it was the Spirit who in love sought us out and led us to the place of availing ourselves of this great gift. Thus our salvation depends as much upon the love of the Spirit as upon the love of the Father and Son.

But let me now move from the classroom to the conflict. It could be that, to some, all we have suggested sounds rather technical, academic or theological. Others may go further and ask if it really matters very much whether the Spirit is regarded as an influence or power rather than as a person. Is the question really related to life? Why is it so important?

Well, of course, a child sustains a very different relationship to his parents than he does to electricity. And our relationship to the Spirit differs drastically depending upon whether or not we think of It as a power or Him as a person. Let me remind you of just two areas of life where this distinction becomes important.

(a) Necessary to our worship: Love reaching downward is grace; outward is fellowship; upward is worship. Do we really worship the Holy Spirit? I suppose we do so theoretically, for we sing:

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;*

*Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*

(Thomas Ken)

Yet, if we think of the Spirit merely as an impersonal influence or power, we rob Him of the worship, the love, the faith, the surrender, the obedience which are His due, for we worship a person, not a power.

(b) Necessary to our witness: If we think of the Holy Spirit as a power, we may ask: "How can I get more of the Spirit and use it?" If, however, we think of the Holy Spirit as a person, we may ask: "How can the Spirit get more of me and use me?" This distinction is deeply significant, for throughout our studies we are going to find that it isn't a case of getting more and more of the Spirit, but rather the Spirit getting more and more of us. Because the Spirit is a person, He isn't given out piecemeal. He is either in our lives or He isn't.

If we own Christ as Saviour, the Holy Spirit is residing in our lives (Romans 8:9). However, it is one thing to be residing and quite another to be ruling. For example, there are some homes into which I can enter and feel quite comfortable. However, I would not feel at liberty to go moving the furniture around to suit my own tastes. I certainly would not feel free to go to the refrigerator and help myself to what was there. In my own home, I feel perfectly free to do both of these things. But the fact remains, I am equally in both homes. So God is in my life or He isn't. In many hearts He is "resident" but longs to be "president."

## LESSON TWO

# The Spirit and regeneration

THE Spirit is either in your life or He isn't; thus it is not a case of getting more and more of the Spirit, but rather the Spirit getting more and more of us. Now our task will be to see when and how He comes to the individual life.

A number of New Testament passages suggest that, prior to conversion, we are dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13). This means that, prior to the new birth, there must be an awakening. This awakening is the work of the Spirit. The impulse to turn to God depends upon the impact of the Spirit upon the human spirit.

This awakening is not regeneration, but rather a preparation for it by prevenient grace, the grace that goes before and prepares for salvation. Awakened by the Spirit, the individual is soon led to a sense of guilt and condemnation because of sin. Conviction is not the same as conversion but is also a preparation for it. Conviction is the work of the Spirit for Jesus said: *When He (the Spirit) is come, He will reprove (convict) the world of sin* (John 16:8).

Perhaps we should pause to remind ourselves that this process does not take place in a vacuum. I have often heard it said

that we can convince the mind but only the Spirit can convict the man. Now it is true that there is a work which belongs uniquely to the Spirit. Most people believe in the general law of retribution; that is, if we have done wrong, we will ultimately have to pay for it. However, to convince a morally upright man (though unconverted) that he already stands condemned is the work of the Spirit. Thus there is an element of truth in the statement that we can convince the mind, but only the Spirit can convict the man, but the two experiences should not be separated. For example, I wonder if we realize that every conversion in the Acts of the Apostles was through human instrumentality. This was true, even in the exceptional cases: In Acts 10, God spoke to Cornelius through an angel, but the angel didn't tell him how to be converted: *Send men to Joppa . . . Simon shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved* (Acts 11:13, 14). In Acts 9, God broke into the life of Saul of Tarsus in a miraculous way, but He didn't tell him how to be saved: *Arise and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do* (Acts 9:6 — told through Ananias). Thus we can see that although conviction is the work of the Spirit, He works in conjunction with human co-operation.

At this point, a decision is required from the individual. The Spirit has done His work in bringing about both an awakening and conviction. We must now turn to God in repentance and faith. Repentance is the sincere desire and determination to forsake sin and obey God. It is a change of mind that leads to a change of direction. It includes such experiences as: hatred of sin, sorrow for sin, renunciation of sin, confession of sin, desire for forgiveness, willingness to make restitution. Repentance must, of course, be accompanied by saving faith. This faith is that act of personal heart trust by which the sinner commits himself to God, and accepts as his own the salvation which God so freely offers.

When man is willing to meet these conditions, God the Holy Spirit enters his life and regeneration takes place. Regeneration is the communication of life by the Spirit to a soul dead in trespasses and sins. The experience has been described by such terms as *born again* (John 3:3), *born of God* (John 1:13), *born of the Spirit* (John 3:5, 6), *passed from death unto life* (John 5:24). It issues in a new mind (1 Cor. 2:14), a new will (1 John 5:3; 2 Cor. 5:14-15), and new affections — Thomas Chalmers called regeneration the “expulsive power of a new affection.”

At the moment of regeneration, the individual also experiences the forgiveness of sins and adoption into the family of God. The Apostle Paul refers to the former by using the broader term of justification (Romans 5:1). Justification implies that God not only forgives but also forgets. He treats me “just as if” I had never sinned. Lincoln was once asked how he was going to treat the rebellious southerners after they had been subdued and brought back into the union. Said Lincoln, “I will treat them just as if they had never been away.” That attitude expresses more than forgiveness, for Lincoln was willing not only to forgive but also to forget. That is justification.

At the moment of regeneration, we are adopted into the family of God. We hear a great deal these days of the “universal Fatherhood of God” which suggests that God is the Father of all men. It is true that by creation we are the children of God, but only by recreation (regeneration) do we become his adopted sons. The difference can be seen by examining two closely related words. “Paternity,” for example, suggests a relationship in which the father is responsible for the physical existence of the child. There may be little other connection between father and son. “Fatherhood,” on the other hand, suggests an intimate relationship in which father and son grow closer to each other with the passing of the days. In the former sense, all are the children of God through creation. We are adopted only when we respond to the gracious invitation to commit our lives to Christ.

What we have described thus far is the work of the Spirit in conversion. It is important for us to realize that it is at this point the Holy Spirit enters the life. He does not come to our lives at the time of the “second blessing” or when we are “sanctified.” He enters our lives when we are “saved.” Romans 8:9 suggests *if any man have not the Spirit . . . he is none of his*. Of course, this is when initial holiness begins. For example, such words as “holy,” “sanctified” and “saint” all come from the same root *Hagios*. The word “saint,” however, describes our position in Christ rather than our attainment in grace.

Any man who is “saved” is by the New Testament definition a saint (though he may not be very “saintly”). However, although “saint” and “holy” come from the same root, we must be careful not to equate “sainthood” with what we choose to call the state of being “entirely sanctified.” Let me illustrate from Paul's letter to the Church at

Corinth. In the opening chapter, he addresses himself to *the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints* (1 Cor. 1:2). But as early as chapter 3, we begin to realize many of these people were not enjoying the life of holiness. *And I brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. . . for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* (1 Cor. 3:1, 3).

Thus there is a sense in which at con-

version, we experience initial holiness but this is not the experience spoken of in our tenth Article of Faith: *We believe it is the privilege of all believers to be "wholly sanctified" and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* In our next lesson we will consider the difference in the Spirit residing and ruling, for it is one thing to realize the presence of the Spirit, but quite another to experience the "fullness of the Spirit."

## LESSON THREE

# The fullness of the Spirit

WE have considered the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. We now move on to the experience of sanctification. Let us briefly review what takes place when we are "born again."

The Scriptures indicate that we are born in sin (singular) and because of this condition, commit acts of sin (sins). This means we have a twofold need; namely, cleansing from sin and the forgiveness of sins.

For example, at conversion God the Holy Spirit enters my life, and thus that which was dead becomes alive (Romans 8:9; Eph. 2:1). At the same time, God forgives me of my sins (Romans 5:1) and adopts me into the family of God (John 1:12). However, as wonderful as this experience is, it has not dealt with the cause of my problem, namely sin.

In fact, at this point I become increasingly aware of my need, for not only is there the pull to higher and nobler things, but also the pull downward due to my sinful nature. No doubt this is the experience of the man described in Romans 7:15, 20: *My own behaviour baffles me. For I find myself not doing what I really want to do but doing what I really loathe* (Phillips). *Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me* (A. V.). Thus the experience of sanctification provides the remedy for sin.

Romans 6:6 gives us the clue as to how we can enter this experience. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.* The

meaning of "destroyed" (*katargeo*) is very important here. It does not mean to annihilate or exterminate, but rather to "deprive of power." Because sin is robbed of its power, we no longer serve sin. However, because we become dead to sin does not mean that sin becomes dead to us.

For this reason, there must be a continual yielding to God if we are to know real victory. Though the power of sin has been broken, this does not mean that it can no longer regain control. This need not happen, but it can happen, and sometimes does happen.

The meaning of *katargeo* could be illustrated by a simple reference to the law of gravity. If a person holds a book in his hand and then releases his grip on it, it will immediately fall to the ground. The reason is quite obvious, for we are all familiar with the law of gravity. If on the other hand, this same person continues to hold the book tightly, the law of gravity is rendered inoperative and the book will not fall. Now, of course, the law of gravity has not been done away with; it has simply been robbed of its power, at least as far as the book is concerned.

So it is with man's relationship to sin. When I am *crucified with Christ*, I become dead to sin.

Unfortunately, all Christians are not living at this level of victory. Louis Talbot reminds us: "It is a blessed experience to kneel in wonder and adoration at the Cross, the place of salvation; it is another thing to see yourself on the Cross beside your Lord."

To enter the experience of sanctification, we need to cry with Paul: *I am crucified with Christ* (Gal. 2:20). Dr. Roy Laurin adds: "If self is on the cross, then Christ is on the throne, but if self is on the throne, Christ is still on the cross." This means that although God is the agent of sanctification, man has a twofold part to play:

(a) We must face up to sin: At this point, I am not thinking of what we choose to call the grosser sins such as murder and adultery. The question we must constantly ask is this: Is there anything in our lives which is causing controversy? Perhaps it is something that to others would be perfectly legitimate, but with us it is causing a conflict. According to Romans 14: 23, if it is causing controversy, it is sin for *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*. There is no such thing as a small sin, though there may be sins about small things. Thus in order to know the fullness of the Spirit, there must be nothing in the life that would grieve the Spirit. Otherwise, instead of working through the believer, the Spirit must plead with the believer.

(b) We must yield to God: This, of course, must be a moment by moment experience. A beautiful summary of this principle is found in Romans 6:13 where it suggests surrender:

- To a person — *yield yourselves unto God.*
- At a price — *as those that are alive from the dead.*
- For a purpose — *your members as instruments of righteousness.*

What we have seen thus far would indicate that sanctification is both a process and a crisis. Before the crisis of personal crucifixion, there must be a growing period in which we become aware of our need (a process). The destruction (*katargeo*) of sin is certainly a crisis experience, but this is again followed by a state of growth. The verb tenses in the description of Romans 6 would indicate both a crisis and a process: for example, verses 17 and 18: *Ye have obeyed — ye became*. These verbs suggest a completed act in the past. Verse 22, however, indicates a present experience: *ye have your fruit*.

Thus sanctification is the outcome of a past transaction which results in a present,

fruitful life. Perhaps we should remind ourselves that such a text as Ephesians 5:18: *Be ye filled with the Spirit* is in the present, continuous tense, and thus could read *Be ye continuously filled with the Spirit*.

Every moment in a spiritual life is one of unmeasured need and superhuman demand; thus the supply of grace and power must be constantly received and employed. Having said this, let us keep in mind we are not talking of getting more and more of God, but rather God getting more and more of us.

Perhaps it is again time to move from the classroom to the conflict. What are some of the practical results of this experience? What is the evidence of the fullness of the Spirit? How can we know we are filled?

In answering such questions, we face the danger of trying to make everyone fit into a mould by suggesting that, if we don't respond in a certain manner, we are not filled. But that just isn't so. God has a plan for every life and the filling of the Spirit is to enable us to accomplish what He would have us do.

Having said this, there are certain characteristics which will be seen in every Spirit-filled life. Perhaps the most obvious sign is that we will begin to produce the "fruit of the Spirit."

Now let us not confuse "gifts" with "fruit." So often we covet the gifts of the Spirit: wisdom, knowledge, healing, tongues and prophecy. But gifts are given as God wills and not as we choose (1 Cor. 12:11).

Furthermore, gifts are not always a sign of great spirituality for a man can be gifted and remain terribly carnal. This becomes evident in Paul's letter to the Corinthians. In 1 Cor. 1:7 Paul states that the Corinthians came behind in no gifts. However, his description of these same people in chapter 3 would indicate that their spiritual lives left much to be desired: *Whereas there is among you envying, and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* (1 Cor. 3:3).

Fruit, however, is for all and is a good indicator of spiritual life. "Fruitage" in the Spirit, however, requires "rootage" in the Spirit.

## LESSON FOUR

# The fruit of the Spirit

WE have suggested the most obvious evidence of the Spirit-filled life is that we begin to produce the "fruit of the Spirit." This quality of life is described for us in Gal. 5:22-23 — *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.* You will notice it is *fruit* (singular). This has led many to feel that the fruit of the Spirit is love, the other eight qualities simply forming a description of love. Let us then examine in detail, these descriptive words.

### JOY

The fruit of the Spirit is joy. Just a cursory glance at the New Testament would indicate that it is a book of joy. The verb *chairein* which means "to rejoice" occurs seventy-two times, and the word *chara* which means "joy" occurs sixty times.

It is a joy that is not dependent upon our circumstances but is rather found "in the Lord." This is why Jesus could say *your joy no man taketh from you* (John 16:22). It also helps explain the discourse of Jesus in the Upper Room. Though very much aware of His approaching death, He eight times employed the words *joy* and *rejoice*. Either He had gone mad, or else He had fallen back on resources of joy about which the world knew nothing.

Certainly joy ought to be the distinguishing atmosphere of the Christian life. Philipians has been referred to as the Epistle of Joy. Here *joy* and *rejoice* occur no less than fifteen times: *And now friends, farewell; I wish you joy in the Lord* (Phil. 3:1—N.E.B.). *Farewell; I wish you all joy in the Lord. I will say it again: all joy be yours* (Phil. 4:4—N.E.B.).

Someone facetiously defined Puritanism as "the haunting fear that someone, somewhere may be happy." This concept ought never to be linked with the Christian faith. It has been said that "Rejoice!" is the standing order of the Christian. Again, just a superficial glance at the gospel narrative would indicate that it begins and ends with joy. It was *tidings of great joy* that the angels brought to the shepherds (Luke 2:10); and the Wise Men *rejoiced* when they saw the star which told them of the birth of the king (Matt. 2:10).

Then, on the resurrection morning, the

women returned from the tomb and from their encounter with the Risen Christ in *fear and great joy* (Matt. 28:8). As Luke records the story of the Ascension, he indicates the disciples returned to Jerusalem *with great joy* (Luke 24:52).

Of course there is the joy of receiving the gospel (Luke 19:6; 1 Thess. 1:6; Acts 8:8) and the joy of sharing the gospel with others (Luke 10:17; Acts 11:23; Acts 15:3). Paul often referred to the people he had introduced to Christ as his joy. For example, to the Philipians he wrote: *Therefore my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown . . .* (4:1).

Perhaps it should be added that joy and affliction often walk hand in hand. In spite of persecution, the Christians in Antioch are filled with the Holy Spirit and with joy (Acts 13:52). Is there not a significant link here — the Holy Spirit and joy? Why was the writer to the Hebrews able to say of Jesus: *who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God* (Heb. 12:2)?

Against the background of His coming death, why did Jesus pray for the disciples: *And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves* (John 17:13)? The answer is simple. To Jesus, there was no joy in the world compared with that of obedience to the Father's will. It is as the Holy Spirit is allowed to control our every thought, word and deed that we begin to experience this joy, for the fruit of the Spirit — not a human achievement but a gift of God — is joy.

### PEACE

Of course, very closely allied with joy is peace.

There were very few things for which the ancient world longed so wistfully as it longed for peace. In speaking of war and peace, Philo, the Jewish philosopher once said: "Consider the continual war which prevails among men even in times of peace, and which exists not only between nations and countries, but is present in every individual man. Observe the unspeakable raging storm in men's souls that is excited by the violent rush of the affairs of life, and

you may well wonder whether anyone can enjoy tranquility in such a storm and maintain calm amidst the surge of this billowing sea."

Many of the Greek philosophers answered this query with rather negative solutions. Epicurus, for example, suggested peace can only come with the elimination of desire. It is suggested that if we wish to make man happy, we add not to his possessions, but take away from his desires. Others have suggested we become totally indifferent to situations over which we have no control. Still others have taught a philosophy of self-sufficiency. Man must not in any sense become dependent upon anything outside himself. He must be entirely self-contained. Thus these men saw peace in terms of detachment or insulation against life.

In the New Testament, however, peace is not simply a negative concept. It does not describe merely the absence of trouble and hardship and distress. Christian peace is something which is quite independent of outward circumstances. The word peace (*eirene*) occurs eighty-eight times in the New Testament and is found in every book. It appears most often in greetings. On numerous occasions we find the phrase, *Grace to you and peace* (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3).

Peace is clearly a gift of Christ. James Stewart has referred to it as the last will and testament of Christ: *Peace is my parting gift to you, my own peace, such as the world cannot give* (John 14:27 — N.E.B.). It is not something a man achieves, but something he receives. It is important to keep in mind that nowhere in the Bible is peace put first as the chief good, end or goal of existence. Peace is the fruit or the consequence of something else. The verb form of *eirene* means "to bind together" and thus speaks of right relationships.

#### A GIFT OF CHRIST

Peace involves a new relationship between man and God. We have peace with God because through Christ we have entered into a new relationship with Him (Rom. 5:1; Col. 1:20). This should result in a good relationship between man and man. The Christian must strive for peace with all men (Heb. 12:14; 2 Peter 3:14).

Again we remind ourselves that this peace is a gift of God, for in the New Testament God is called the *God of peace* no fewer than six times (Romans 15:33; 16:20; Phil. 4:9; 2 Cor. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20, 21).

Like joy, peace can be found in only one

source; that is, the will of God. It is the natural outcome of the man possessed by the Spirit of God:

*Peace perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?*

*To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.*

#### LONG-SUFFERING

We often speak of a person having a short temper or of being short-tempered. We do not use the phrase "long-tempered," but if we did, we would come close to describing the word "long-suffering." The noun is *makrothumia* and the verb is *makrothumein*. *Makros* means long and *thumos* means temper.

For this reason, Kenneth Wuest suggests the word speaks of the steadfastness of the soul under provocation. It includes the idea of forbearance and patient endurance of wrong under ill-treatment without anger or thought of revenge. Trench suggests that it describes "a long holding out of the mind, before it gives room to action or to passion." T. K. Abbott says it is "the self-restraint which does not hastily retaliate a wrong."

In other words, it describes the man who has been wronged, and has it in his power to avenge himself, but refuses to do so. It can thus be seen that we are not simply speaking of a passive quality. In the New Testament the word describes three areas of life.

(a) It speaks of the patience of God: Think of the words of Romans 2:4 — *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Here we see that God's patience is not a sign of His weakness. He is longsuffering in order to lead man to repentance. Zangwill used to say that the patience of God, not His power, passed his understanding. "If the world had treated me like it has treated God," said Luther "I would long ago have kicked the wretched thing to pieces." God had it in His power to wipe out the whole world, but because of His long-suffering did not do so.

(b) It speaks of the patience of man with his fellow man: *I . . . beseech you . . . walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love* (Eph. 4:1, 2). Alan Cole suggests it is the quality of "putting up with other people even when patience is sorely tried." "Putting up" may not adequately express the idea in mind; nevertheless, however unsatisfactory men may be, the Christian must

be patient with them all (1 Thess. 5:14).

The man of the world may lose his temper and his patience and his belief in men; the Christian must never do so. In our Christian warfare, we will be hurt at some time or other. We will find ourselves in situations when, perhaps rightfully, we could be resentful and even have it in our power to do something about it, but, as Christians, shouldn't we pray "My desire to be like Jesus?" *When he was abused he did not retort with abuse, when he suffered he uttered no threats, but committed his cause to the One who judges justly* (1 Peter 2:23 N.E.B.).

(c) It speaks of the patience of man with respect to his circumstances: It does not indicate a grim, bleak acceptance of life, for this patience is saturated with joy (Col. 1:11; 2 Cor. 6:4, 6 — *But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God . . . by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned*).

George Matheson, author of the songs "Make me a captive, Lord" and "O Love that wilt not let me go," lost his eyesight and was disappointed in love, yet wrote in one of his prayers: "Help me to accept God's providence, not with dumb resignation but with holy joy; not only with the absence of murmur, but with a song of praise."

Carlyle somewhere says that "the strong man is not he who, in a sudden frenzy, can lift an immense weight, but he who can carry the heaviest weights the longest distance." Thus the disappointments which are the lot of all who serve God are overcome through the quality of long-suffering.

#### GENTLENESS

We are here dealing with the word *chrestotes* which in other places in the A.V. is translated by *kindness* (2 Cor. 6:6; Eph. 2:7; Col. 3:12; Titus 3:4). Not only are we exhorted to be "long-suffering," but to be long-suffering in a spirit that is marked for kindness. Epictetus once stated: "A man has lost the very essence of manhood, the distinguishing quality which makes him a man, when he has lost his kindness and fidelity." He then added: "We know a coin and we know to whom a coin belongs by the imprint on it; and so we know that a man belongs to God when he has on him the imprint of gentleness, generosity, patience and affection." Plummer has described this gentleness as "the sympathetic kindness or sweetness of temper which puts others at ease, and shrinks from giving pain."

It is rather interesting to observe that

when the A.V. calls God "good," again and again the meaning is not moral goodness but kindness (*chrestos*). The kindness of God is a universal thing, for God is kind even to the unthankful and to the evil (Luke 6:35). Thus Christian kindness is a lovely thing for it means treating others in the way in which God has treated us (Eph. 4:32).

In 1 Cor. 13, the great love chapter, we find that long-suffering and kindness are seen side by side: *Charity suffereth long, and is kind* (1 Cor. 13:4). Kindness, of course, indicates the active side; for to simply endure wrong could be little more than a triumph of our stubbornness. In kindness, however, we are taken a step further.

Perhaps we can illustrate from an incident in American history. Historians tell us that no one treated Lincoln with more contempt than did Stanton. He referred to Lincoln as a "low, cunning clown" or the "original gorilla." Lincoln said nothing but continued to treat Stanton with every courtesy. Eventually he made him his Minister of War because he was the best man he could find for the job. When, some years later, the assassin's bullet murdered Lincoln, Stanton stood in the little room to which the body had been taken and was heard to whisper: "There lies the greatest ruler of men the world has ever seen." Stanton had been won through kindness being added to long-suffering.

It is encouraging to find these two qualities listed in the "fruit of the Spirit," for what we are not by nature we can be through God's grace.

#### GOODNESS

Of the nine qualities of the "fruit of the Spirit," goodness is perhaps the most difficult to define — for the simple reason that it takes its meaning from the context and from the sphere in which it is used. For example, we say of someone: "He is a good hockey player." Do we mean he is a fine goal scorer; or he is an excellent defensive player; or he is the "policeman" on the team?

Even within this context, "good" carries with it a wide range of meaning. A further difficulty in defining this word, "goodness" (*Agathosune*), is accentuated by the fact that it is not a common word. It does not occur in secular Greek at all and only appears on three other occasions in the New Testament (2 Thess. 1:11, Eph. 5:9; Romans 15:14). Let us attempt to further define this added quality which the Spirit produces in

the lives of all who will submit to His control.

We examined the word "kindness," earlier. We will now see that goodness is closely related. Dr. Lightfoot suggests that kindness is a quality of heart and emotion whereas goodness is a quality of conduct and action. According to this definition, goodness would be kindness in action. Although the noun appears only four times in the New Testament, the adjective *agathos* is employed one hundred times. For example, we speak of a *good* tree (Matt. 7:17), a *good* man (Matt. 12:35), a *good* servant (Matt. 25:21), a *good* teacher (Mark 10:17). Thus goodness takes its meaning from the context in which it is used.

In Greek thought, goodness was often linked with justice. Justice is the quality which gives to a man that which is due him. Goodness, however, goes far beyond this concept and gives a man all that he needs, whether it is due him or not. William Barclay beautifully illustrates this principle by a reference to the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. He does so by making a comparison of the concepts of evil (*poneros*) and good (*agathos*).

It is the parable which describes workmen being hired at different times during the day. Some were hired early; some at the third hour; others at the sixth and ninth hours. However, when it came time to pay them, the owner paid all the same wage. Those who had worked all through the day were angry and felt they should have received more. It is at this point we come to the significant words of the owner: *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil (poneros) because I am good (agathos)?* Clearly *poneros* means niggardly, while *agathos* means liberal or generous. Thus justice gives a man what is his due, whereas goodness goes far beyond this concept.

General Coutts described goodness as "love with her sleeves rolled up." The *good* Samaritan did something about the need; the *good* Shepherd sought the sheep that was lost; the *good* and faithful servant did something about the talents that had been given him. Thus when the Spirit takes control of our lives, there will be in evidence *joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness* (Gal. 5:22). But the apostle has not finished for he adds *faith*.

#### FAITH

Here we come to one of the commonest words in the New Testament for faith (*pistis*) is the foundation of all else. *But*

*without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is . . .* (Heb. 11:6). In most instances, faith indicates absolute confidence or trust. Intellectual faith is believing with the mind; that is, being convinced that something is true. Faith in action does more than this, for it acts upon that conviction. Faith which is "saving faith" is that act of personal trust by which the sinner commits himself to God and accepts as his own the salvation which God so freely offers. It is in this sense that faith is so often employed in the New Testament.

However, when we come to a study of the "fruit of the Spirit," this basic meaning can be a little misleading, for the virtues listed thus far in our study are more ethical than theological; they are not simply concerned with our relationship to God but with our relationship to our fellow man.

Thus in the context of the "fruit of the Spirit," *pistis* means not so much faith as faithfulness. It suggests reliability or trustworthiness. Thus the R.V., R.S.V., *Good News for Modern Man*, translate it *faithfulness*. The N.E.B., Moffatt and Phillips employ the word *fidelity*. The Jerusalem Bible suggests *trustfulness*. *Pistis* thus describes the one on whom we can utterly rely. Perhaps we could pause to see how it is thus used in the New Testament.

(a) Faithful is used to describe God: 1 Cor. 1:9 — *God is faithful*; 2 Thess. 3:3 — *But the Lord is faithful*.

(b) to describe Jesus: Rev. 1:5 — *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness*; Heb. 2:17 — *that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest*; 2 Tim. 2:13 — *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself*.

(c) to describe man: 1 Cor. 4:2 — *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful*; Matt. 24:45 — *Who then is a faithful and wise servant*; 2 Tim. 2:2 — *the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*; 1 Tim. 1:12 — *for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry*.

*Pistis* thus describes the man on whose faithful service we can rely. General Coutts has reminded us: "In a dozen daily matters, we need no fresh revelation of truth; just grace to be faithful to the light already given." It surely comes as an encouragement to many of us to realize that God does not require brilliance, but faithfulness.

A. J. Cronin tells of a district nurse he knew when he was in practice as a doctor. For twenty years, single-handed, she had

served a ten-mile district. "I marvelled" he says "at her patience, her fortitude and her cheerfulness. She was never too tired to rise at night for an urgent call. Her salary was most inadequate, and late one night, after a particularly strenuous day, I ventured to protest to her 'Nurse, why don't you make them pay you more? God knows you are worth it.' 'If God knows I'm worth it,' she answered, 'that's all that matters to me.'" You see, she was working for God and not for men, and realized that God's ultimate standard of judgement is "faithfulness."

It could be that some of us are living with a sense of disappointment. We have not achieved all that we had hoped to achieve for God and the Kingdom. From outward appearances, we do not seem to have accomplished a great deal. Perhaps we should remember some words of Thomas a Kempis: "Man" he said "sees the deed, but God knows the intention."

Men can judge us only by our actions, but God can judge us by the longings which never became deeds, and the dreams which never came true. When Solomon was dedicating the Temple, he spoke of how David had wished to build a house for God, and how that privilege had been denied him. *It was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart* (1 Kings 8:17, 18). Again we are made to realize that faithfulness, not accomplishment, is the ultimate standard of judgement as far as God is concerned.

The challenge to the Church at Smyrna was *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life* (Rev. 2:10). In the parable of the talents we have *Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord* (Matt. 25:21). Do we need to remind ourselves again that the "fruit of the Spirit" is faithfulness?

I shall not need for man to say,  
Of my closed work, that this or that  
Was born of pure sincerity,  
And fitted for eternity;  
If, by God's grace, before I die,  
The voice within shall testify:

COUNTED FAITHFUL.

O God, for light and sight each day,  
For strength to do my sacred task;

A patient heart in my great quest  
For truth and Thee. And then the rest—  
The cheaper things — were nought  
for me,  
So I am gathered unto Thee—  
COUNTED FAITHFUL.

—Albert Orsborn

### MEEKNESS

In modern thought, meekness is not an admirable quality. It conjures up a picture of some timid soul shrinking in the shadows of life, never standing up for his rights, always apologizing, too terrified to speak his own mind. It has in it the suggestion of spinelessness.

But this is not the meaning as it is employed in the Bible. Moses, for example, is described as being meek, but not weak. No spineless character could have brought Israel out of Egypt, nor have led a band of ex-slaves through their years of desert wanderings. The meek man may be the strongest man in the company, but his meekness resides in the fact that he does not make a show of his strength. Thus, in its simplest terms, meekness could be described as "controlled strength."

We do gain some insight into the meaning of "meekness" by an examination of secular Greek. For example, meekness is used to describe persons that have something in them of a soothing quality. It describes the one who is able to soothe another who is in a state of bitterness or anger. It describes the effect of ointment which brings a soothing effect to a wound.

Of course, the natural extension of this meaning would be to portray the right attitude and atmosphere which should prevail in an argument in which questions are being posed and answers demanded. This, of course, means the art of discussing things without losing one's temper. The word was regularly used of an animal which had been trained and had thus learned to accept discipline.

In contrast to contemporary thought, the meek man of the Old Testament occupied a place of special favour. *The meek will he guide in judgements and the meek will he teach his way* (Psalm 25:9). *The meek shall inherit the earth* (Psalm 37:11). *The Lord . . . will beautify the meek with salvation* (Psalm 149:4). Moses, one of the outstanding men of the Old Testament, was described as meek beyond all men that were on the earth (Numbers 12:3).

In the New Testament, the noun *prautes* occurs eleven times, and the adjective *praus* four times. On occasion, *prautes* or meek-

ness keeps company with *epieikeia* which means gentleness. In this context, gentleness means that which is just and which is sometimes better than justice.

There are times when decisions have to be taken, not as the rules and regulations lay down, but in a spirit which transcends law. There are circumstances which make the strict application of law unjust. There are occasions in which loyalty to the spirit of the law requires a violation of its letter; for example, Jesus and the woman taken in adultery — John 8. Thus adherence to the letter of the law for its own sake could be dehumanizing.

The Greek would use the word "gentle" to describe the man who acted as did Jesus. Thus passages such as 2 Cor. 10:1 speak of the *gentleness and meekness of Christ*. Here, of course, it is speaking of strength in control. It is a spirit which is prepared to be flexible not because of weakness, but because of love.

*Prautes* is the spirit in which men learn. James exhorts us to *receive with meekness the engrafted word* (James 1:21). It is the spirit in which a man knows his own ignorance, which in turn opens his mind to truth. There is an old proverb which reads "He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not, is a fool. Avoid him. But, he who knows not, and knows that he knows not, is a wise man. Teach him." The latter of course describes the man with the spirit of meekness.

*Prautes* also describes the spirit in which disciplines should be administered. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted* (Gal. 6:1).

*Prautes* is the spirit in which opposition must be met. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves . . .* (2 Tim. 2:25). This applies to our relationship with people who disagree with us. We must not try to batter or bludgeon them into thinking as we do. This is, of course, linked with the spirit in which we make our Christian witness: *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear* (1 Peter 3:15). There must be nothing discourteous in our manner.

It is quite obvious that we are describing qualities which marked the life of our Lord. On three separate occasions, the word "meekness" is directly linked with Jesus. Said Jesus, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in*

*heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls* (Matt. 11:29). Matthew quotes Zechariah in 21:5 *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass*. We have already quoted the passage from 2 Cor. 10:1 — *Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ . . .* Thus we might say that meekness makes a man king among men: *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth* (Matt. 5:5).

Perhaps a word from the pen of Aristotle would be useful in helping us to summarize our definition of meekness. For Aristotle, every virtue is the mean between two extremes. Meekness is the mean between excessive anger and excessive "angerlessness." Thus the man who is meek is the man who feels anger on the right grounds, and against the right persons, and in the right manner, and at the right moment. It is thus not to be equated with weakness, but is rather strength in control.

O arm me with the mind,  
Meek Lamb, which was in Thee,  
And let my earnest zeal be found  
With perfect charity!  
With calm and tempered zeal,  
Let me enforce Thy call,  
And vindicate Thy gracious will  
Which offers life to all.

—Charles Wesley

### SELF-CONTROL

In the New Testament there is very little material through which to work out the meaning of this word. The noun occurs only on two other occasions. In Acts 24:25 Paul *reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgement to come*. Then, in 2 Peter 1:6, Peter reminds his readers to add to knowledge *temperance*. The corresponding verb occurs only twice (1 Cor. 7:9; 1 Cor. 9:25 — *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things*).

Apart from these few references, there is little biblical content to help us arrive at an adequate definition. We can again receive some help from the writings of Aristotle. In *On Virtues and Vices* he states: "To temperance belongs the ability to restrain desire by reason. The man who is self-controlled has strong desires which seek to lure and force him from the way of reason, but he has them under control."

To the Christian, it is that quality which makes a man able to live and to walk in the world, and yet to keep his garments unspotted from the world. The Christian

would speak of "God-control" rather than "self-control." This is because the "fruit of the Spirit" is temperance. Perhaps we need to pray with Francis Bottome:

Fill all my thoughts, my passions fill,  
Fill every chamber of my soul;  
Till under Thy supreme control  
Submissive rests my cheerful will.

Let me then summarize the qualities we have been examining as recorded in the Amplified New Testament: (*But the fruit of the Holy Spirit, (the work which His presence within accomplishes) — is love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness, faithfulness; (meekness, humility) gentleness, self-control (self-restraint) (Gal. 5:22, 23). Is this the picture of your life?*

## LESSON FIVE

# Jesus is Lord

WE have been dealing with the first evidence of the Spirit-filled life, that is, the production of the "fruit of the Spirit." Now we move to the second characteristic and consider what it means to acknowledge Jesus as Lord (*kurios*). *Kurios* is a word which carried deep significance for both the Jew and the gentile. It is now almost commonplace to speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, but this title did not come to Jesus easily. For example, in Mark's Gospel, Jesus is referred to as Lord in the full theological sense on only one or two occasions (11:3; 12:37). The same is true of Matthew's Gospel. Luke utilizes the term about seventeen times. It was, however, a favourite with Paul who refers to Jesus as Lord at least 130 times in his Epistles. It ultimately became the first Christian creed: Jesus is the Lord.

*Kurios* was the word employed to describe the Roman Emperor, who was considered supreme. The one demand the Romans made upon the people they conquered was that they must acknowledge Caesar as Lord — supreme or without rival. It was at this point the clash came between the Christians and the Romans, for the Christian would acknowledge no one but God as supreme. In fact, in the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, the word "Jehovah" (the One who is considered supreme) was translated *Kurios*.

Thus, to refer to Jesus as Lord means that He is without a rival as far as we are concerned. Even the great heathen thinkers conceived of God as having this absolute claim upon them. For example, Epictetus said to God, as he knew Him: "Do with me henceforth as Thou wilt. I am of one mind

with Thee; I am Thine. I decline nothing that seems good to Thee. Send me whither Thou wilt. Wilt Thou that I take office or live a private life, remain at home or go into exile, be poor or rich, I will defend Thy purpose with me in respect of all these." Do we dare say less?

Perhaps we should go to the Scriptures to see the development of the concept of Jesus as King or Lord. The *kingdom of God* was certainly at the heart or the centre of Jesus' message (Mark 1:14, 15). In one form or other, it appears all through the Gospels (forty-nine times in Matthew, sixteen times in Mark and thirty-eight times in Luke; in Matthew, however, the reference is nearly always to the *kingdom of heaven*).

When we use the phrase the *kingdom of God*, we mean the rule of God in men's hearts and minds. This is brought out in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray: *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*. This is a case of parallelism; that is, the second phrase repeats or interprets the first. Thus the *kingdom of God* is a society or a state of things where God's will is as perfectly done on earth as it is in heaven. To Jesus, this was an experience that encompassed the past, the present and the future. For example, He speaks of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as being in the *kingdom of heaven* (Matt. 8:11 — past). In Luke 17:21 He says the *kingdom of God is within you* (present). Then in the prayer mentioned above, He bids us to pray *Thy kingdom come* (future).

Without question, Jesus is the supreme example of kingship. We have suggested the *kingdom of God* exists when God's will is as perfectly done on earth as it is in heaven. Was this true of the life of Jesus?

Listen to Him as He speaks through the Word. *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work* (John 4:34). He added *I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me* (John 5:30). *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me* (John 6:38).

Of course, the classic illustration would be the spiritual battle in Gethsemane: *O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done* (Matt. 26:42). Thus, in a very real sense, it could be said that Jesus came to demonstrate just what we mean by the Kingdom. No wonder the Wise Men asked *Where is he that is born king . . . ?* (Matt. 2:2).

In our view of Jesus as King, there is a paradox, for not only was He born to reign (*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . Phil. 2:10*) but He was also born to die. This was made very clear at his baptism. The voice He heard said *Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (Mark 1:11).

This saying is composed of two texts from the Old Testament. *Thou art my beloved Son* is from Psalm 2:7 and was a text which every Jew took as referring to the Messiah, the conquering King who was to come. *In whom I am well pleased* was from Isaiah 42:1 and is a description of the Servant of the Lord — a portrait which culminates in Isaiah 53, and tells of the one wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.

Thus, in one sense, He became King through death. So it is in our lives, for He only becomes King when we too are prepared to die. Someone has suggested "When self is on the cross, Christ is on the throne; but when self is on the throne, Christ is still on the cross."

Of course, the concept of Christ as King gives us confidence for the future. It means that history has purpose and direction, and will consummate in Christ. The Christian view of history is that the world is on its way to a final goal when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord.

After hearing a minister preach on the coming again of our Lord, Queen Victoria said "I wish He would come during my lifetime so that I could take my crown and lay it at His feet."

A group of English authors sat one day

discussing what they would do if certain heroes of the past were suddenly to appear in the room — a Dante, a Cicero or a Shakespeare. Finally the conversation centered around Jesus Christ and the same question was asked. Charles Lamb was a member of the group and very quickly responded, "If Shakespeare entered the room, I should rise up to do him honour, but if Jesus Christ entered, I would fall down and give Him worship."

At Thy feet I bow adoring,  
Bending lower, lower still;  
Giving up my all to follow,  
Just to do my Master's will.

This song certainly expresses the spirit of Philippians 2:9-11 — *Therefore God raised him to the heights and bestowed on him the name above all names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow — in heaven, on earth, and in the depths — and every tongue confess Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (N.E.B.).

Having defined what it means to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, we again remind ourselves that this is a mark of the Spirit-filled life, *for no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost* (1 Cor. 12:3). Jesus occupies one of three places in the life of every believer. He is PRESENT the moment we are born again of the Spirit (Rom. 8:9). He becomes PROMINENT when our initial faith expresses itself through works or service. He becomes PRE-EMINENT when we recognize Him as Lord — supreme or without a rival. This experience is the outcome of the Spirit-filled life.

At this point we can truly say Jesus is Lord!

Dr. Jowett speaks of being present at the coronation of Edward VII. As the dukes, the earls, the princes entered, there was much bowing and respect shown. But when the king entered, all eyes were focused upon him.

The Lord is King, I own His power,  
His right to rule each day and hour;  
I own His claim on heart and will,  
And His demands I would fulfill.

O Lord, my King, I turn to Thee,  
Thy loyal service makes me free;  
My daily task Thou shalt assign,  
For heart and will and life are Thine.

—Darley Terry

## LESSON SIX

# Ye shall receive power

THE third quality which marks every Spirit-filled life is that of power. Even a cursory glance at the New Testament reveals the close link between the Spirit and power. This link is illustrated by the following references: *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you* (Acts 1:8); *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost... and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus* (Acts 4:31,33); *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power* (Acts 10:38); *That he would grant you... to be strengthened with might by his Spirit* (Eph. 3:16); *For our gospel came... in power, and in the Holy Ghost* (1 Thess. 1:5).

Thus we see that when the Holy Spirit is present, power is present. In speaking of the coming of the Comforter, Jesus added: *And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high* (Luke 24:49). Yes, the power of the Spirit is inseparable from His Person. In our praying for power, is there not often more desire for IT than for the "SPIR-IT" of power? Is it not possible to be more anxious for the achievements of power than for HIM?

Undoubtedly all of us are aware of the need for power and this should make us aware of our need of Him. Speaking of the challenging days in which we are living, the late Dr. S. M. Shoemaker echoed the feeling of many when he wrote: "I think there was never a more widespread feeling in the Church that, in spite of staggering opportunities, we are singularly unable to give the world the faith, the hope and the love it needs."

It was Dr. F. B. Meyer who gave us the solution when he said: "Many ministers and Christian workers are breaking down working for God instead of yielding themselves to Him so that He might do His work through them."

When we receive Him, we obtain the power to be effective witnesses. Of course, this does not suggest we will all become fiery evangelists, but as Dr. Wm. Great-house has added: "The Holy Spirit would anoint parents with power to set a godly

example before their children and to train them for the service of God. He would anoint the Sunday school teacher with a compassionate heart and the power to lead the class to Christ. He would enable the young people's president to make the youth a spiritual force in the local church." Yes, the presence of the Spirit will make each one an influential witness for Christ in the field where God has called him to live and to work.

Perhaps we need to be reminded that the power of the Holy Spirit is not stored up in our little batteries; it flows in and through us only as we maintain contact with God. We are not generators, but transmitters of spiritual power.

Holy Ghost, we bid Thee welcome,  
Source of life and Power Thou art,  
Promise of our heavenly Father,  
Now thrice welcome in our heart.

—Mrs. C. H. Morris

Having discussed three of the qualities that mark out the Spirit-filled man, namely, the production of the fruit of the Spirit, the acknowledgement of Jesus as Lord and the presence of power, let us now move to the work of the Spirit.

In John's Gospel, chapter 14, is recorded the narrative of Jesus meeting with the men who had journeyed with Him for just over three years. Knowing that the time of His death was rapidly approaching, He felt it necessary to give them some final instructions. In the midst of His last words, He uttered a most challenging statement: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father* (John 14:12).

Greater works! It must have left them gasping until He added: *I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter* (John 14:16). Do we not in our generation need to rediscover the significance of that promise? Like so many other great truths, we have here an experience that to many is veiled or hidden because of the poverty of language. The key to our understanding centers around the word "Comforter."

## DISTINCTIVE TITLE

Here we have John's distinctive title for the Holy Spirit. The title "Comforter" appears four times in his Gospel and once in his epistle, but is found nowhere else in the New Testament; hence, it is a Johnine term. With the passing of time it has lost some of the strength of its original use as employed by Wycliffe to translate the Latin *fortis* (to make one brave).

Just a brief glance at the various translations available indicates how difficult *fortis* is to translate: R.S.V. — *counsellor*, Phillips — *someone to stand by you*, Knox — *he who is to befriend you*, Moffatt — *helper*, N.E.B. — *advocate*.

Perhaps we can discover something of the Comforter's work by examining the references to Him. John 14:16, 17 — *Comforter . . . shall be in you*. In a previous lesson we noted the fact that He dwells within the life of every believer. *If any man have not the Spirit . . . he is none of his* (Romans 8:9b). He enters our lives when we are saved or born again. At this point He resides, but longs to rule. The tragedy is that most of us believe in a sovereign God, but seldom allow Him to be sovereign.

However, when He is ruling, we can claim the following promises: John 14:26 — *Comforter . . . teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance*. In an age of confused standards, how we need to cling to this promise!

No wonder there is confusion. At meetings with young people's groups, a recurring question which is asked is "How can I discover the will of God for my life?" Many have added "If only God would reveal His will, I would gladly follow." But that is really reversing God's order. The N.E.B. translation of Romans 12:1, 2 helps us at this point: *I implore you by God's mercy to offer your very selves to him . . . Then you will be able to discern the will of God and to know what is good, acceptable, and perfect*. Why? for then we are allowing the Comforter to do the work Jesus said He would accomplish: *teach you all things*.

Even with Christians, every impulse is not of the Spirit. For example, on his second missionary journey, Paul wanted to preach in Asia and Bythina but *the Spirit suffered them not* for God had a greater work in mind (Acts 16:7).

Then, He will *bring all things to your remembrance . . .* How often this promise has been claimed when one has endeavored to point someone to Christ! Could it be that some of us hesitate to get personally in-

involved with others because we are afraid we would not know just what to say?

One word of caution must be added. We cannot substitute the Spirit for learning, for we cannot remember what we have never learned. The promise is for the one who has done his spiritual homework. Thus, if we allow the Spirit to control our lives, He will illuminate the pages of Scripture and teach us all things. Then He will bring these things to our remembrance.

The third reference to the Comforter is recorded in John 15:26: *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father . . . he shall testify of me*. It thus becomes clear that a further work of the Comforter is to make Christ real to the believer. This is the biblical test of determining whether or not a movement or an individual is led of the Spirit. Any movement which purports to be led of the Spirit and focuses attention on the phenomena (tongues, etc.) rather than on the Person of Christ, belies its claim for, said Jesus, *He (the Comforter) shall testify of me*.

The verse we are examining is located in a section which speaks of the rejection of Christ by the world. There will always be those who, like Nicodemus, will recognize Jesus as a *teacher come from God* (John 3:2). Others will speak of Him as *One who went about doing good* (Acts 10:38). However, only those possessed of the Spirit will recognize and acknowledge Him for who He really is, that is, *very God of very God*. In the first chapter of Hebrews, the writer gives us some insight into His personage:

(a) *Heir of all things* (Heb. 1:2). Here Christ is pictured as the sovereign Lord of the universe.

(b) *By whom also he made the worlds* (Heb. 1:2). Christ is the instrumental cause of creation, for God, through Him, made the worlds (John 1:3; Col. 1:16).

(c) *The brightness of his (God's) glory, and the express image of his person* (Heb. 1:3). (Phillips: *flawless expression of the nature of God*.) Westcott adds "He brings the divine before us at once, perfectly and definitely according to the measure of our powers."

(d) *Upholding all things by the word of his power* (Heb. 1:3). The early Christians strongly believed in the doctrine of divine providence and purpose. The view that God created the world, and yet did not make its continued existence assured, was unknown among them.

(e) *By himself purged our sins* (Heb. 1:3).

Here we see that Jesus was not only the revealer of God but the redeemer of man.

(f) *Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high* (Heb. 1:3). He takes the place of authority and power.

In Heb. 1:8 we read *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*. Here we have an obvious identification of Father and Son. Jesus is the Son of God, not by creation, nor by adoption, but by nature, for He is the eternal Son of God who *in the beginning . . . was with God, and . . . was God* (John 1:1). It is the work of the Comforter to thus reveal Christ, for, said Jesus, *He shall testify of me*. No wonder Paul added *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost* (1 Cor. 12:3).

The fourth reference to the Comforter is recorded in John 16:7, 8: *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*. In a previous lesson, we examined the role of the Spirit as He *convicts of sin*. Our present reference suggests the Comforter will also convince of righteousness.

In order to define sin, there must be some standard, and that standard is Jesus (the reason we need the "word" and not simply "conscience"). It is the righteousness of Christ that is here in question. Righteousness is not established in a code of ethics, or a pattern of conduct, but in Christ. The return of Jesus to the Father was the ultimate proof that He was the perfect pattern for righteousness, accepted by the Father. It is thus in Jesus that we discover our standard for conduct.

Of course, whenever sin and righteousness meet, there must be judgement, and it is the Holy Spirit who convinces men that they cannot do as they like and get away with it. It is significant to note that in convicting men of sin, and righteousness and judgement, the Spirit is simply continuing the work of Christ (sin — John 15:22; righteousness — John 7:24; judgement — John 8:16). Thus the work of the Spirit as it relates to the world can be summed up as follows: the Spirit convinces man of his own sin, of the unique perfection of Christ, and of the fact that in the end he must meet God.

#### THE SPIRIT AND GUIDANCE

*When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth* (John 16:13).

We cannot read the Acts of the Apostles without becoming very much aware of the guidance of the Spirit. It was at the direct leading of the Spirit that Paul and Barnabas set out on their first missionary journey: *The Holy Spirit said "Set Barnabas and Saul apart for me, to do the work to which I have called them."* . . . *So these two, sent out on their mission by the Holy Spirit . . .* (Acts 13:2, 4 NEB). It was the Holy Spirit who chose their field of operation: *They travelled through the Phrygian and Galatian region, because they were prevented by the Holy Spirit from delivering the message in the province of Asia* (Acts 16:6 NEB).

In giving his farewell address to the elders in Ephesus, Paul recorded: *And now, as you see, I am on my way to Jerusalem, under the constraint of the Spirit. Of what will befall me there I know nothing, except that in city after city the Holy Spirit assures me that imprisonment and hardships await me* (Acts 20:22, 23 NEB). In making his defence before the Church at Jerusalem, Peter replied: *At that moment three men, who had been sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where I was staying; and the Spirit told me to go with them* (Acts 11:12 NEB). So dominant is the guidance and the leadership of the Spirit, that many have referred to the Acts as "the Acts of the Holy Spirit."

Thus we have the promise that the Spirit will guide into all truth. This should put us on our guard against the arrogant spirit that assumes it has grasped all truth, and that there is nothing further to learn. Beware of people or groups who feel they have a monopoly on truth. Truth does not change but our grasp of it does; thus we should never be afraid of "new light." We often speak of a developing revelation, when perhaps we would do better to speak of a developing apprehension of God's revelation which was complete in Christ (this is important when dealing with members of some of the cults).

Because this is the work of the Spirit, we find that strenuous thinking on its own can lead to frustration, and produce more problems than answers. This is surely the spirit of such passages as 1 Cor. 1:21 — *The world by wisdom knew not God* — or Job 11:7 — *Canst thou by searching find out God?* One of the distinguishing marks of the Gospel as opposed to religion is that while religion comes as a product of the human mind, the Gospel is the revelation of the divine mind. Man does not intellectually discover God: God reveals himself (Gal. 1:11, 12). Thus the Gospel sets forth

thoughts that man would not have dared to dream, nor have been bold enough to proclaim.

Because Jesus is Truth, the Spirit will not teach anything absolutely new, but only what is present in Christ. This fact will help us guard against the subjective "vision" which does not coincide with the objective truth of the word of God; that is, guard against confusing "feeling" with the guidance of the word. Of course the two can be related. Dr. O. Wiley has ably linked

them by suggesting "Feeling apart from truth leads into dangerous fanaticism, but truth which gives rise to strong emotion becomes the supreme power in the life of holiness."

A Latin proverb reads "Whatever is received, is received in proportion as the receiver can receive it." It is only as we know the presence of the Spirit in our lives, that we can claim the promise of being led into all truth.

## LESSON SEVEN

# Gifts of the Spirit

WITHOUT question, the clearest exposition on the subject of spiritual gifts is recorded for us in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, which commences, *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.* In this passage, the apostle makes three significant statements concerning gifts. The first is recorded in verse 4:

(a) *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.* All men do not have the same gifts; thus God works through different men in different ways. The following question is often asked: "Is there a difference in natural ability and spiritual gifts?" Perhaps we should not make this an "either/or" question, for these gifts are related to, but distinguished from, natural endowments.

In speaking of gifts, Jesus suggested they were given to *every man according to his several ability* (Matt. 25:15). This would indicate that God bestows gifts according to our natural aptitudes.

(b) *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man...* (verse 7). Every man has some gift. Perhaps we have erred in too narrowly defining these gifts. We have thought of gifts solely in terms of teaching, preaching, writing — intellectual or academic gifts — but gifts can also be of the heart and the hand. "I cannot teach a Sunday school class," a good woman once testified at a prayer meeting "but I enjoy knocking on doors and inviting people to the meetings."

A mother of ten children once wrote to Gypsy Smith to tell him God had called her to preach. "You are to be congratulated",

Smith wrote in reply to her letter, "first, that He has called you to preach; secondly, that He has furnished you with a congregation." This woman probably had too narrow a concept of gifts.

(c) *Dividing to every man severally, as he will* (verse 11). Gifts are given as God wills and not as we choose. For example, I do not possess the intellect of the late C. S. Lewis, or the voice of a Jerome Hines, or the fluency of a J. S. Stewart. Unless I properly understand Scripture, these are gifts I would no doubt covet, but I must realize that God has given me some other gift, not as I will but as He wills. This principle should save us from envying the gifts of others. Thus we see that there are many gifts that are given as God wills. No individual possesses all the gifts; neither is there any man who has no gift.

The purpose behind the gifts is recorded in Eph. 4:12: *And these were his gifts... to equip God's people for work in his service, to the building up of the body of Christ* (NEB).

In his book *What is a Christian?* Leonard Griffith beautifully illustrates this principle. He says "I once heard it said flatteringly to a successful minister that he might have succeeded in any one of a number of callings. With marvellous humility he replied 'You are wrong. My gifts are spiritual gifts (He called them *charismatic* gifts). God gave them to me for use within His Church. I should not possess them otherwise.'" No wonder Peter wrote *Whatever gift each of you may have received, use it in service to one another, like good stewards dispensing the grace of God in its varied forms* (1 Peter

4:10 NEB). Gifts are not to be employed selfishly, but rather used for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

Perhaps we should again remind ourselves that gifts are not necessarily a sign of great spirituality. To the very people to whom this lesson of gifts was addressed, Paul had to say *For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?* (1 Cor. 3:3). Yet he had previously said *Ye come behind in no gift* (1 Cor. 1:7). The same tragedy is revealed in Matt. 7:22-23: *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Gifted, but lacking in spirituality.

It may be a little out of season to speak of the Wise Men of old, but a most significant phrase occurs in Matt. 2:11. They had set out in search of the Child with the express purpose of presenting Him with gifts. But, *when . . . they saw the young child with Mary his mother . . . (they) fell down and worshipped him . . . (then) they opened their treasures . . . (and) presented unto him gifts. . . .* The order here is significant. They fell down and worshipped and then gave Him their gifts.

What then is the significance of this study as far as we are concerned?

In the first place, it should lead us to make an honest appraisal of ourselves. For some it may mean ridding ourselves of delusions of grandeur; acknowledging and accepting the fact that we don't have first-class minds; that in the ultimate we are quite ordinary people. This should not disturb us, for surely the bulk of the work of the world is done by ordinary people.

This is certainly true of the church. *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence* (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Was it not Lincoln who said God must love the common man, for He made so many of them? We should keep in mind that our

ability is the measure of our responsibility. Edward Hale declared

I am only one,  
But still I am one.  
I cannot do everything  
But still I can do something.  
And because I cannot do everything  
I will not refuse to do the something  
that I can.

How often our Lord commended those who were faithful in the little things: the cup of cold water given in His name, those who fed the hungry and cared for the sick and the lonely. One of the finest tributes ever paid to anyone could be summarized in six short words: *She hath done what she could* (Mark 14:8).

Perhaps a word of caution should be included at this point. We have noted that gifts are given to every man severally as He (God) wills. How utterly false, therefore, to make one's particular experience the inviolable pattern for everyone else's experience, and even to condemn those who have had a totally different experience. The point of the whole of 1 Cor. 12 is that we are responsible to God for our own particular gifts, and we are to leave the judgement of others entirely in the hands of God. To claim, therefore, that because we do not have a particular gift, including the gift of tongues, we do not have the presence of the Spirit, is contrary to the plain teaching of Scripture.

Oh, that we might learn the lesson of knowing our own gift and our own place, and our own service without looking at, or judging, others or even making our experience the pattern for someone else. The beautiful harmony of colours playing on the falling waters of Niagara Falls is produced by the variegated screens through which the one and same light is filtered. In the same way the Holy Spirit is God's gift to all His children. The varied manifestations are but His workings through their varied personalities. May we be prepared to say with S. Dryden Phelps:

All that I am and have,  
Thy gifts so free,  
In joy, in grief, through life,  
I yield to Thee.  
And when Thy face I see,  
My ransomed soul shall be  
Through all eternity  
All, all for Thee.

Then our gifts will be used for the building of God's Kingdom.

## LESSON EIGHT

# Grieve not the Spirit

PAUL reminds us that the Spirit is a person who can be grieved by our un-Christlike manner (*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption*—Eph. 4:30). We may cause anger to an enemy or a stranger, but it is a friend who is grieved. Thus a key question presents itself to us: "How can we grieve the Spirit?" In this case, the context of our text supplies us with the answer.

*Wherefore putting away lying . . .* (Eph. 4:25). Of course there is more than one kind of lie or falsehood. There is the lie of speech but also the lie of silence. Andre Maurois, in a memorable phrase, spoke of the "menace of things unsaid." It is possible to keep silent when we know we should speak, and thus by our silence give our approval to something we know to be wrong.

*Be ye angry, and sin not* (Eph. 4:26). Such a phrase indicates there is a place for anger in the Christian life. Selfish anger, that is, anger at what happens to oneself, is always wrong. Bad temper and irritability are without excuse. However, the world would have lost much without the blazing anger of a Wilberforce against the slave trade and of a Shaftesbury against the conditions in which men, women and children worked in the nineteenth century.

We must learn to distinguish between selfish anger and righteous indignation. It was Dr. Charles Jefferson of Broadway Tabernacle fame who wrote "We become indignant over trifles. Ravellings and shavings can set us blazing. But in the presence of gigantic outrages perpetuated on the helpless and weak, some of us remain as calm as summer morning." It is this passive spirit which grieves the Spirit of God.

*Let not the sun go down upon your wrath* (Eph. 4:26). Plutarch wrote that the disciples of Pythagoras, the philosopher, had a rule of their society: if, during the day, anger had made them speak insultingly to each other, before the sun set they shook hands, kissed each other and were reconciled. Dare we do anything less?

Bishop Moule once wisely remarked "And where there has been failure of patience, be prompt to return to love; let not the sun set upon your exasperation; lay feeling of all grievances at the Lord's feet absolutely

before you part for the night. Dare not to refuse your 'neighbour' a farewell." If we have been in the wrong, we must pray to God to give us the graciousness which will enable us to take the first step to put matters right.

These principles are reiterated in Eph. 4:31, 32, for we must put an end to all *bitterness*. The Greeks defined this term as long-standing resentment. The opposite quality is found in 1 Cor. 13:5 — *Love keeps no score of wrongs* (NEB). Love keeps a record of kindnesses (Phil. 1:3 — *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you*), but has the amazing power to forgive and forget.

We must also deal with *wrath and anger* (Eph. 4:31). Wrath was defined as being like a flame which comes from a straw. It quickly blazes up but just as quickly subsides. Anger, on the other hand, is that which has become habitual. Either of these qualities grieves the Spirit.

We must also avoid clamour and evil speaking (Eph. 4:31). If we have nothing good to say about a person, it would be better to say nothing at all.

The very names given to the Holy Spirit also teach us how we may grieve Him. For example, He is the *spirit of holiness* (Romans 1:4). Thus all impurity and filthiness become a source of grief to Him. He is the *spirit of wisdom and understanding . . . the spirit of knowledge* (Isaiah 11:2). This means that while we remain ignorant of spiritual truths, and lack zeal in the reading and study of the Bible, we grieve Him. Could the writer to the Hebrews be speaking to some of us when in 5:12 he recorded *At a time when you should be teaching others, you need teachers yourselves to repeat to you the ABC of God's revelation to men* (Phillips)?

He is also the Spirit of life and power (Romans 8:2; 2 Tim. 1:7). Thus arrested spiritual development and lack of power in our testimony become a further source of grief. Since He is the *Spirit of truth* (John 14:17) all false appearances and attitudes hurt Him.

2 Cor. 4:13 speaks of the *spirit of faith*. Surely, then, our doubts, our anxieties, our constant querying grieve Him. Listen to the

words of Jesus: *So don't worry and don't keep saying, "What shall we eat, what shall we drink or what shall we wear?"! That is what pagans are always looking for; your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Set your heart on his kingdom and his goodness, and all these things will come to you as a matter of course* (Matt. 6:31-33 — Phillips). To mistrust such a promise is to grieve the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of love and grace (2 Tim. 1:7; Heb. 10:29). If there is in us the refusal to forgive, or any hardness of heart, or the spirit of criticism which is of a destructive nature, the Spirit is grieved.

In our Christian warfare we'll be hurt at some time or other. We will find ourselves in situations when perhaps rightfully we could be resentful, and perhaps even have it in our power to do something about the hurt. But all we have to remember is the song "My desire to be like Jesus." *When he was abused he did not retort with abuse, when he suffered he uttered no threats, but committed his cause to the One who judges justly* (1 Peter 2:23 NEB).

Thus we can see with what ease we can grieve the Spirit. That which does not bear the mark of the spirit of Christ, be it a sin of commission or omission, is a source of grief to the Spirit. There is no such thing as a small sin, though there may be sins about small things. The New Testament clearly indicates that what is doubtful is wrong (*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin* — Rom.

14:23). It is not necessary to blot the sun out of the heavens to keep the sunlight out of our house. We simply close the blinds or draw the drapes. So, too, we do not need to commit some gross act of sin to grieve the Spirit.

Of course the greater danger in continuously grieving the Spirit is that such action will lead to quenching the Spirit (*Quench not the Spirit* — 1 Thess. 5:19). What does this word *quench* mean? The use of the same word in Matt. 25:8 may shed some light on the subject. There we read that *the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out* (literally, have been quenched). Thus we see the Spirit may be quenched by carelessness and neglect, by failure to watch and pray, by being content with a shallow experience instead of tarrying until our hearts are filled with the Holy Spirit. (Oil is a symbol of the Spirit.)

We can consciously quench the Spirit by persisting in grieving the Spirit. 1 Thess. 5:19 literally means "Stop putting out the fire of the Spirit."

When the Spirit has been grieved, what must be done? We must first confess our sins and ask for His forgiveness. We may weep, and pray, and work for God, but none of these will restore to us the peace that comes from being within the will of God (1 John 1:9). It is then necessary to exercise faith in God's pardon (1 John 1:7, 9). Finally, with God's help, we must do something about that which has caused the grief.

## LESSON NINE

# What about temptation?

MANY appear to have difficulty in reconciling the Spirit-filled life and temptation. How can a man that is *dead to sin* be tempted? What is there in the sanctified personality to respond to the solicitations of evil?

Actually, we are speaking of an experience that antedates the creation of man. Before the foundations of the world were laid, temptation came to the inner circle of God's elect, and many yielded and fell. Thus we must examine the concept of temptation in its widest sense before attempting to show the place of temptation in the Spirit-filled life.

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil* (Matt. 6:13). It would surely be true to say that this is the most instinctive and most natural petition contained in this prayer. However, when instinct gives place to reason, we are faced with one or two puzzling questions. For example, how can we reasonably pray not to be led into temptation when in point of fact temptation is such an integral part of human experience? Then, can we imagine God being responsible for the attempt to seduce man into sin? Such questions lead us to a closer examination of the word "temptation."

In Greek, the word for trial and temptation is the same (*peirasmos*). It literally means to test or prove. It was employed with reference to the quality of a metal or the genuineness of a coin. Thus in the Bible it is often used of God testing to see if the faith of a man is genuine. Perhaps two examples would be helpful: *for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul* (Deut. 13:3); *and it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham* (Gen. 22:1). Here the word is obviously used in the sense of test or prove. Of course, it is also employed in the sense of seduction: *the Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him (Jesus) that he would shew them a sign from heaven* (Matt. 16:1); *the Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him . . .* (Matt. 19:3). Thus we can see the word, "temptation," carries with it a twofold idea: (a) that of proving or testing the quality of a person or thing, (b) that of a deliberate invitation and seduction to sin. It is in the latter sense that some have difficulty in reconciling it with the Spirit-filled experience.

Perhaps we should remind ourselves that temptation was an integral part of the life of Jesus: *for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted* (Heb. 2:18). *Suffered* here indicates a real conflict. *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin* (Heb. 4:15).

Man is not dehumanized when sanctified, for grace destroys nothing but sin. The "old man" is replaced by the "new man," but he is still "man." The appetites remain in the new man though their order is restored, their direction rectified and their desires purified. This means that gratification is not sought in forbidden ways. Temptation may remain but temptation is not sin; it is consent that makes it sin. We must remember that attack is not synonymous with surrender.

Why, then, does God allow us to be tempted? Temptation may not bring happiness but God's main thought for man is not immediate happiness, but moral excellence. Thus, if the struggle with temptation aids in this object, He naturally allows it (virtues to be virtues must be proven). Of course, the fight with temptation has many side-effects: it drives us to increased prayer and watchfulness, develops sympathy for those who are likewise tempted and have

perhaps fallen, develops in us a sense of humility.

When temptation has been endured, resisted and overcome, it results in increased spiritual strength: *blessed is the man that endureth temptation* (James 1:12); *my brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations: knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience* (James 1:2).

Though the strength of the temptation does not vary with the possession of the Spirit (some would suggest the temptation is greater, for we are more spiritually sensitive), the arena in which the "fight" takes place is different. The un sanctified battle with a carnal nature; the sanctified are involved with an outer fight of faith — *for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers . . .* (Eph. 6:12). Satan's chief weapon is to involve us in doubt: to doubt the Father's love, to doubt the cleansing Blood of Christ, to doubt the sanctifying and keeping power of the Spirit. When we begin to lose out in these areas, our prayer life loses much of its blessedness; passion for souls grows dull; the joy of testimony loses some of its sparkle; Bible study is not undertaken with diligence. Thus we can see that the Spirit-filled life ends some temptations, moderates many others; but also opens the way for others which may never have been experienced before.

What do we do about temptation? Some, of course, take a defeatist attitude. It was Oscar Wilde who said "I can resist everything but temptation. The only way to get rid of it is to yield to it." The Bible, however, refuses to follow this escapist route: *resist the devil, and he will flee from you* (James 4:7); *above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked* (Eph. 6:16); *this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith* (1 John 5:4); *who are kept by the power of God through faith . . .* (1 Peter 1:5). Then, too, there is the promise of 1 Cor. 10:13 — *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* This promise means that we do not have to do battle alone.

In this connection, there is a most suggestive fact in the language which Peter employed (and who knew more about temptation than Peter?). He reminded us

that the Christian may have to undergo the heaviness of *manifold temptations* (1 Peter 1:6). In Greek, the word for manifold is *poikilos* which literally means "many-coloured." Now Peter uses the word *poikilos* on only one other occasion, and that is to describe the grace of God: *as good stewards of the manifold grace of God* (1 Peter 4:10). Thus our trials may be many-coloured, but so also is the grace of God.

There is no colour in the human situation which the grace of God cannot match. In one of his books, Guy King suggests we let our left hand represent manifold temptations, and our right hand manifold grace. As we bring them together, we notice that not only does the one cover the other, but the shape and the style of the one matches the shape and style of the other. Thus the

"shape and style" of God's grace exactly matches the shape and style of our need.

A pair of little arms were one day stretched out while a father piled up goods for his small son to carry to the other end of the shop. As the lad waited for more, an onlooker said "You can't carry any more," to which the answer came "Father knows how much I can carry." So it is with our Father.

*When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character with the right sort of independence* (James 1:2-4 — Phillips).

## LESSON TEN

# Christian perfection

ON occasion, the Spirit-filled life has been referred to as a life of perfection, and to most people, this is rather frightening. That such a concept is biblical cannot be questioned. *Perfect* occurs no fewer than 138 times in Scripture, and in more than fifty instances, refers to human character under the operation of grace.

For example, God said to Abram *I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect* (Gen. 17:1). Jehoshaphat said *Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart* (2 Chron. 19:9). The writer to the Hebrews added *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection* (Heb. 6:1). Then we have the challenge of Jesus *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect* (Matt. 5:48).

Our problem lies in the ambiguity of the term, for it has various meanings, both in and out of Scripture. A classic example of this is recorded in Philippians, chapter 3. In verse 12, the apostle clearly indicates that he has not as yet reached a state of perfection *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect. . . .* However, in verse 15, he includes himself with those who have reached this stage *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded. . . .* Paul is obviously employing the

word in two different senses.

The basic Greek word for perfect is *teleios*. Generally speaking, it suggests adequacy for some given purpose. For example, a sacrificial animal is *teleios* if it is fit to offer to God. A boat is *teleios* if it is able to carry out the function for which it was made. It also suggests the idea of maturity. It describes a full-grown man in contrast to an undeveloped youth, a mature mind in contrast to an immature one, one who is qualified in a subject in contrast to a mere learner. This usage of the word can be seen in the following examples: *Till we all attain . . . unto a fullgrown man* (Eph. 4:13; RV), *Therefore let us . . . go on to maturity* (Heb. 6:1; RSV).

In spiritual matters, this process of maturation should be going on in all our lives, for perfection in growth requires not only grace but time. Sometimes the question is asked: "How can that which is perfect admit to increase?" A circle of twenty-four inches in diameter is a perfect circle but so also is one of twelve inches. Both are perfect, though one is larger. Thus, if perfection implies maturity, we would say with Paul that we are not as yet perfect: *Yet, my brothers, I do not consider myself to have "arrived," spiritually, nor do I consider myself already perfect* (Phil. 3:12; Phillips).

This, of course, does not fully explain the

challenge of Jesus in Matt. 5:48: *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* When we keep in mind the context of such a statement, it is obvious that Jesus is speaking of a perfection of love. This love is not a natural endowment, but a gift of God: *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us* (Rom. 5:5). This speaks of a miracle of God's grace within us. John Wesley described this love as "a heart and life entirely devoted to God." Perfection in love does not necessarily mean perfection in performance. Let me illustrate:

Mary, a six year old, wished to please her uncle who was coming to visit. Some time before his arrival, she took a pair of slippers and placed them in her mother's oven to warm them. Then she forgot them until a strange aroma began to fill the house. Although the slippers were ruined, her uncle did not punish her. Instead, he took her on his knee and loved her, for he was fully aware that, in spite of an error in judgement, Mary's love for him was absolutely pure. We, too, can arrive at a place of pure love, and yet fall far short in performance.

#### THE IMPERFECTIONS OF THE PERFECT

To some, this heading may appear to be a contradiction; actually it is but a paradox (a statement that is seemingly contradictory or opposed to common sense and yet is true). Anyone familiar with biblical truth is well aware of paradox (e.g., the Trinity: one God in three Persons; the Incarnation: Jesus, who was truly and properly man, yet truly and properly God). So it is with the concept of perfection. When we lay claim to Christian perfection, that is, a perfection of love, we should also be keenly aware of the limitations of the body through which this love is to be expressed for, without this awareness, we find ourselves in a dangerous position, both as it relates to ourselves and to others.

The perfection we have described is not that of angels whose ceaseless praise and perfect service are beyond man's weak powers. Neither is it the perfection of Adam who possessed an unfallen nature (sometimes called "sinless perfection"). Our fifth article of faith suggests that all men, because of the Fall of our first parents, have

become sinners, "totally depraved. . . ." The words "total depravity" are not to be taken as teaching that, as sinners, men are completely evil. The depravity of the sinner is total in the sense that every part of his being is affected by the corruption of sin.

While moral depravity is taken care of by sanctification, physical depravity remains. Physical depravity has been described as the "impairment of the substance of the mind or body, resulting from the Fall." It is a weakness from which proceed many errors of judgement and blunders in the outer life. Here we are faced with a weakness that is a potential source of trouble all our lives. Doctors can improve our health; training can sharpen our minds; discipline may lessen our mistakes; but we must always be aware of a basic weakness in our nature.

The depravity of the spiritual nature may be removed by the baptism of the Spirit, but the infirmities of the flesh will be removed only in the resurrection and glorification of the body. Man has no great difficulty in distinguishing between the soul and the body, but the exact boundary between the spiritual and the physical cannot always be determined.

We do not always know whether certain manifestations have their seat in the carnal nature of man or are the result of physical infirmities. For example, mental strain often weakens the body and physical weakness may in turn becloud the mind and spirit of man. The lack of proper rest and food may lead to periods of excessive irritability or abnormal depression. In view of the fact that the line between the physical and spiritual is not always clear, charity toward all men is ever needful.

Dr. Orton Wiley, however, adds an important word of caution: "At the same time, every person should be realistic and honest concerning his own spiritual condition. He should resolutely face the facts in his own life and should thrust aside any temptations to rationalize away carnal manifestations as mere 'physical weaknesses.'"

Thus, though we will have to wait for the resurrection and glorification of the body to be "perfect" in the physical sense, we pray with Charles Wesley:

Come, Saviour, come and make me whole,  
Entirely all my sins remove;  
To perfect health restore my soul,  
To perfect holiness and love.

Brengle Memorial Library  
The Salvation Army  
School for Officers' Training  
Suffern, N. Y.

## LESSON ELEVEN

# Earnest of the Spirit

ON several occasions in the Bible, the work of the Spirit is described in terms of symbols. Some of these are foreign to the modern reader. One such expression is the *earnest* of the Spirit. Paul is the only New Testament writer to use this phrase, and he employs it three times: *Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts* (2 Cor. 1:22); *... who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit* (2 Cor. 5:5); *... ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance...* (Eph. 1:13, 14). In each case in the Authorized Version the word *arrabon* is translated *earnest*. Moffatt translates it *pledge* or *instalment* while the American RSV employs the word *guarantee*.

In classical Greek the *arrabon* described the down payment or deposit that was made when a bargain was struck. It was the first instalment and guarantee that the rest would follow. Thus Paul suggests the Holy Spirit is given as the first instalment or an advance foretaste of the life the Christian will some day live in the presence of God. He was, of course, speaking out of a Jewish background.

### TO KNOW THE SPIRIT

To the Jew, the Spirit of God had two great functions: (a) it was through the Holy Spirit that God spoke to man; (b) it was God's Holy Spirit in his heart which enabled a man to recognize God's truth when he heard it. Thus the Spirit operated from without, bringing men the truth; and from within, enabling them to recognize it as truth.

Thus the *arrabon* of the Spirit, that is, the imperfect knowledge that men now possess, is the first instalment of the full knowledge they will one day possess: *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known* (1 Cor. 13:12). An excellent example of the *arrabon* of the Spirit is recorded in 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

Unfortunately, many people in quoting from this section stop after verse 9 and thus miss what Paul is trying to reveal concerning the work of the Spirit. Let me quote the two verses: *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things*

*which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

Here Paul suggests that through the *earnest of the Spirit* we have, in this life, a "foretaste of glory divine." It helps answer the question "What will heaven be like?" It will be the fulfilment of the love, joy, peace that we experience in Christ, lifted to infinity. Heaven is not essentially jasper walls and golden streets, for these expressions are but symbols of the spiritual realities of heaven.

As we have indicated, the glories of the heavenly realm will be infinite love, joy and peace. There, faith will be turned to sight, prayer to praise and hope to realization. Thus heaven is like the Holy Spirit's presence in our hearts, without any restrictions or restraints from the infirmities of the flesh. It will be the fulfilment of the deepest longings of the Spirit-filled soul: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent* (John 17:3). To know Christ is to experience a foretaste of heaven. Paul calls this the *earnest of the Spirit*.

Dr. Ralph Earle has one further thought regarding the *arrabon* of the Spirit. He suggests that in modern Greek *arrabon* is used of an engagement ring, and what a wealth of thought this opens for us. Christ has betrothed us unto Himself. He has gone to prepare a home for us but has given us an engagement ring to keep until He returns. Now what fiancée does not treasure an engagement ring? It is a constant reminder of the love of her friend and of the fact that she belongs to him. She is bound to him but it is a bondage of love. So the Holy Spirit is a constant reminder of the fact that we belong to Christ and that He belongs to us.

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!

Closely related to the concept of the *arrabon* is that of the *seal*: *Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts* (2 Cor. 1:22); *... in whom also after that ye believed, ye were*

sealed with that holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13); And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30).

In the ancient world, when a sack or crate was dispatched, it was sealed in order to guarantee that it came from the sender and that it was intact. Letters and documents were sealed with wax. A warm blob was placed upon the letter or document. The sender then pressed his signet into the wax, making an official seal.

The Holy Spirit in the believer's life is the divine seal of approval upon that life. It is the sign which indicates that a man belongs to God: . . . *the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity* (2 Tim. 2:19). The submissive heart is the warm wax; the Holy Spirit is the sealer; the image of Christ is the visible mark of identification. Thus the seal is at once an assurance to the believer, and a sign to the world.

Only those who trust in Christ are thus sealed. To the Jews, sealing spoke of the completion of a transaction. It indicated ownership; thus the cattleman would put his brand (seal) upon his cattle to signify that they were his. So the Holy Spirit places a divine stamp upon the sons of God, thus marking them out as God's property.

#### SEALED BY THE SPIRIT

Perhaps this is why so many biblical characters were proud to embrace the title "servants of God" or "servants of Jesus Christ." For example, Moses, the great leader and law-giver, was the servant of God (Psalm 105:26). Joshua, the great commander, was the servant of God (Judges 2:8). David, the greatest of the kings, was the servant of God (2 Sam. 3:18). In the New Testament Paul is the servant of Jesus

Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1). This is a title both James and Jude proudly claim (James 1:1; Jude 1).

The word "servant" (*doulos*) would more accurately be translated "slave." A servant would possess some rights of his own, but this would not be the case with the slave. To call a Christian a *doulos* indicates that he is absolutely at the disposal of God. It means that he owes unquestioning obedience to God. It suggests that he is the absolute possession of God. In the ancient world, the slave had no time of his own for all his time belonged to the master.

#### SERVANTS OF GOD

Those who are "sealed" by the Spirit likewise belong to God. How grieved God must be to hear a Christian say "It's my life and thus I'll do with it as I want." Having been sealed by the Spirit our lives are no longer our own: *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's* (1 Cor. 6:19,20).

Not my own, but saved by Jesus,  
Who redeemed me by His Blood;  
Gladly I accept the message,  
I belong to Christ the Lord.

—Daniel Whittle

Perhaps we can best link the "earnest" and the "sealing" by a direct reference to the Scriptures: *And you too, when you had heard the message of the truth, the good news of your salvation, and had believed it, became incorporate in Christ and received the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; and that Spirit is the pledge that we shall enter upon our heritage, when God has redeemed what is his own, to his praise and glory* (Eph. 1:13, 14; NEB).

## LESSON TWELVE

# Fatherhood and God

ONE of the deepest longings of the human spirit is the yearning to be accepted. Life becomes almost intolerable unless we know the security of love. God has made provision for this need of security by describing our relationship to Him in terms of Fatherhood: *But as many as received him*

*(Jesus), to them gave he power to become the sons of God* (John 1:12); *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby ye cry, Abba, Father* (Romans 8:14, 15).

Perhaps we should pause to consider the ways in which this word "father" can be employed. For example, we sometimes use it in the sense of paternity. Here the father is responsible for the physical existence of the child, but there may be no further relationship between them. It could be that the father has never set eyes on the child; nevertheless, because he is responsible for the birth of the child, he is the father.

In this sense, all men are the children of God for He is our Father by means of creation. In speaking of this relationship, Paul said *Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth . . .* (Acts 17:25, 26). *And God said, Let us make man . . .* (Gen. 1:26). Thus, in this general manner, God is the Father of all mankind for we are His by creation.

However, God longs to be our Father in a much deeper sense. He desires to have close, intimate fellowship with His children, and this fellowship is made possible to all who acknowledge Jesus as Saviour: *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God . . .* (John 1:12).

At this moment, we are "adopted" into the family of God: *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ* (Gal. 4:7); *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ* (Gal. 3:26); *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons* (Gal. 4:4, 5).

To the people to whom the apostle was writing, adoption was a very serious matter. In Roman law, the adopted person lost all rights in his old family, and gained all the rights of a fully legitimate son in his new family. He thus became heir, along with the blood brothers, to his new father's estate. In law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out. All debts were legally cancelled. The adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of his new father.

*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not* (1 John 3:1). It is only when we recognize the Fatherhood of God in this deeper sense, that we can talk intelligently of the brother-

hood of man.

When Egerton Young first preached the gospel to the Indians in Saskatchewan, the idea of the Fatherhood of God fascinated the men who had hitherto seen God only in the thunder and the lightning and the storm blast. An old chief asked Young "Did I hear you say to God 'our Father'?" "I did", replied Young. Asked the chief "God is your Father and he is my Father?" "He certainly is" added Young. Suddenly the chief's face lit up with a new radiance. His hand went out and, like a man making a dazzling discovery, he stated "Then you and I are brothers."

A midwestern school teacher tells of two small boys in his class who had the same last name but who were very different in appearance. When asked if they were brothers, one said "Yes, but one of us is adopted, and I forget which." The parents of those two boys had obviously demonstrated the real meaning of love. So God has demonstrated His love to us in receiving us in this unique sense as His children. But more than this, He has given to us the assurance that this is so. This assurance is threefold, namely, the *work of Christ*, the *word of God*, the *witness of the Spirit*.

(a) *Work of Christ*: Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse once said: "It is not presumption for me to say that I am just as sure that I shall be in heaven as I am sure Jesus Christ will be there. If any percentage of my doings had a part in it, then it would be presumption; but when I say that my doings, the two per cent or the fifty per cent or the eighty per cent — all are set aside, and God's one hundred per cent of righteousness is my salvation, then surely boasting is excluded."

*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast* (Eph. 2:8, 9). *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us . . .* (Titus 3:5). Thus our entry into the family of God is the direct result of the work of Christ.

(b) *Word of God*: Again and again the Scriptures make it clear that we can know: *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God* (1 John 5:13); *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments* (1 John 2:3); *And hereby we know that we are of the truth . . .* (1 John 3:19).

Writing in his *Journal* on May 24th, 1738, John Wesley reminds us of the power of the word to bring assurance: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." This testimony has become classic for it indicates something of the nature of Christian assurance.

(c) Witness of the Spirit: *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God* (Romans 8:16). *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father* (Gal. 4:6). By the witness of the Spirit is meant the inward evidence of acceptance which God reveals directly to the consciousness of the believer. It is dif-

ficult to explain to one who has not experienced it just what we mean by the witness of the Spirit. Bernard of Clairvaux put it poetically: "The love of Jesus what it is, none but His loved ones know."

John Wesley described it as "an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God, that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given Himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God." This, of course, is the direct witness of the Spirit.

To this is added the indirect witness of our own spirit: *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit...* (Rom. 8:16). Luther was asked if he always felt converted. "No," he replied "but I know I am, for I have met God's conditions as outlined in His word." This was the indirect witness of his own spirit.

Yes, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, we can know the security of God's love.

## LESSON THIRTEEN

# The Spirit of Love

IN our study of the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22, 23), we purposely left out the quality of love. The Scriptures read *The fruit (singular) of the Spirit is love...* Perhaps the other eight qualities listed are simply an attempt to define what we mean by love.

At any rate, when Jesus summarized the whole of the law in two phrases — *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind* and *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself* — He made it imperative that we come to grips with the meaning of the word.

This is particularly so in our age when love seems to range all the way from "Hollywood to heaven." How often have we heard such clichés as "All that you need is love" or "Do the loving thing in every situation." The question is what we mean by "love" and "loving."

In English we use one word to describe a variety of meanings. For example, we say "I love your new hat," or "I love to hear her sing," or "My Jesus I love Thee." The Greek was much more specific in defining his

terms. He employed several words which we in English translate "love."

(a) *EROS*: On occasion this word was used to describe our love for our country, but was more often employed to picture love between the sexes. Gregory Nazianzen described *eros* as "hot and unendurable desire." In English we should perhaps substitute the word "lust." It certainly describes love at the Hollywood end of the scale. Very often this word describes a one-way experience where we "use" the other person to gratify our own lust. *Eros* does not appear in the New Testament.

(b) *STORGE*: This term was specifically linked with family affection. It describes the love of parents for children and children for parents. Plato writes "A child loves (*stergein*) and is loved by those who begat him." Any who have close family ties will appreciate the depth of this word. Again, this particular word is not employed in the New Testament.

(c) *PHILIA*: Here we have a very common Greek noun for love (the verb is *philein* and means to look on someone with affectionate regard). It can be used for the love of friendship (David and Jonathan) or the love that exists between husband and wife. It includes physical love but is actually much wider in meaning. The verb is perhaps best translated "to cherish." It is used on numerous occasions in the New Testament (Matt. 10:37; John 11:3, 36; John 20:2).

(d) *AGAPE*: This is by far the most common New Testament word for love. It appears at least 120 times as a noun and 130 times as a verb. It brings into play not only our neighbour and our family, but even our enemy: Jesus said *But I say unto you, Love your enemies . . .* (Matt. 5:44). *Agape* also encompasses the whole man. *Eros*, *storge* and *philia* are closely related to the heart or the emotions, but *agape* indicates a deliberate principle of the mind, and achievement of the will. It includes the power to love the unlovable.

Before we attempt to describe it further, we should perhaps remind ourselves that *agape* is the product of the Spirit. It actually means treating men as God treats them, and this means always seeking their highest good. What a challenge we find in such verses as: *For God so loved the world that he gave . . .* (John 3:16); *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us* (Rom. 5:8); *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood* (Rev. 1:5). In each case love is a translation of *agape*.

In his book on New Testament words William Barclay reveals something of the scope of this love by the following observations: he suggests it is a universal love (John 3:16), a sacrificial love (1 John 4:9, 10), an undeserved love (Rom. 5:8), a merciful love (Eph. 2:4), a strengthening love (Rom. 8:37), an inseparable love (Rom. 8:39), a rewarding love (James 1:12), a chastening love (Heb. 12:6).

### THE LOVE CHAPTER

Without doubt, the most comprehensive definition of this love is found in the great love chapter of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13. Harnack described this passage as "the greatest, strongest, deepest thing Paul ever wrote." Leon Morris added "The commentator cannot finish this chapter without a sense that clumsy hands have touched a thing of exquisite beauty and holiness."

The chapter quite naturally divides itself

into three main divisions. Verses 1 - 3 speak of the *values* of love; verses 4 - 7 describe the *virtues* of love; verses 8 - 13 picture the *victory* of love. Our concern is with the middle section, namely, the virtues of love.

In the AV (King James) the word *agape* is translated *charity*. This section actually paints a word picture of Jesus, for *Jesus* could easily be substituted for *charity*. Thus, when we pray "My desire to be like Jesus," or "Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me," we are actually praying for the qualities suggested by the following:

(a) Suffereth long (v. 4): This word (*makrothumein*) indicates patience with people rather than patience with circumstances (employed twenty-four times in the New Testament). It describes the man who has been wronged and has it in his power to do something about it, but refrains. It does not refer to a passive experience, that is, refraining because we have to. Paul employed it in Romans 2:4 — *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* God had it in His power to wipe us all out, but because of His patience and longsuffering, He did not do so.

(b) And is kind (v. 4): Here we come to the active side of love for simply to endure wrong could be a triumph of our stubbornness. Here, however, we are taken a step further in the demonstration of positive grace and kindness toward the person responsible.

(c) Envieth not (v. 4): We should not resent the greater gifts and privileges of others. Only love can see all the inequalities of life and remain content. Perhaps envy springs from a misunderstanding of, or a refusal to accept, the manner in which God gives gifts (see lesson 7 — "Gifts of the Spirit").

Peter must have caught this vision for he writes: *Whatever gift each of you may have received, use it in service to one another, like good stewards dispensing the grace of God in its varied forms* (1 Peter 4:10 NEB).

Discontent is surely the price we pay for not being grateful for what we have. Euripedes once wrote "Envy is the greatest of diseases among men." Certainly it can poison our very being and indicate a lack of love for *charity envieth not*. Again we remind ourselves that these are not natural attributes but rather the "fruit of the Spirit."

In an earlier lesson, we examined some of the qualities of love recorded in 1 Corinthians 13. We saw that *charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not. We now move on to find that charity:*

(a) Vaunteth not itself (v. 4): Moffatt translates the phrase *love makes no parade*. A life dominated by love is not motivated to win the applause and praise of men. Of course we must be realistic here, for most people like to hear when they have done well. Someone has said there are two kinds of egotists: those who admit it, and the rest of us. Psychologists cannot explain man's behaviour without constant reference to the ego. It's at the heart of life. However, when the *love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost* (Rom. 5:5), we can say "Not I, but Christ."

The reverse is found in Matt. 6:2, 5, 16. Here men go through religious ceremonies (alms, prayers, fastings) to be *seen of men*. Jesus very quickly adds *They have their reward*. Love, in contrast, *makes no parade*.

(b) Is not puffed up (v. 4): Phillips translates this phrase *does not cherish inflated ideas of its own importance*.

Carey was one of the world's greatest missionaries and linguists. During the early days of his ministry, there were some who were determined to humiliate him. Knowing he had come from a very humble background, one of them jeeringly said "I suppose you once worked as a shoemaker," to which he replied "No, sir, only a cobbler." He refused to cherish inflated ideas of his own importance. In contrast, the state of being *puffed up* was one of the persistent sins of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4:6; 4:18, 19; 5:2).

(c) Doth not behave itself unseemly (v. 5): Love is *never rude* (Moffatt). A life dominated by love is not ill-mannered but respectful. This love reveals itself in the everyday affairs of life. There is nothing unattractive here. There is always a "please" and a "thank you." How often we hear the phrase "He's a real Christian gentleman." We shouldn't need to add "gentleman," for every Christian should possess the implied qualities (in Greek "grace" and "charm" stem from the same word, *charis*). Thus the man who claims to be touched by the grace of God should also reveal something of the charm of God, for love is *never rude*.

(d) Is not easily provoked (v. 5): *Is not touchy* (Phillips). Of course we should be angry in the presence of sin. One of the

reasons the world is passing us by is that we have given the impression that either we have nothing to say or we are afraid to say it. This, however, was not the spirit of the Master. We have only to think of the cleansing of the Temple when God's house of prayer and praise had been turned to man's house of purchase and profit. Here Jesus blazed with indignation.

Said Dr. Charles Jefferson of Broadway Tabernacle fame: "We become indignant over trifles; ravellings and shavings can set us blazing. But in the presence of gigantic outrages perpetrated on the helpless and weak, some of us are as calm as summer morning." Yes, we need to be angry in the presence of sin, but this is vastly different from being touchy. Drummond once wrote: "No form of vice, nor worldliness, nor greed, nor drunkenness itself does more to unChristianize society than does evil temper." Love, however, is *not touchy*.

(e) Thinketh no evil (v. 5): *Love keeps no score on wrongs* (NEB). Here we have an accountant's word for the noting of things in a book. It indicates the "I won't forget" attitude. Natives in some parts of the world still hang articles from the roof to remind them of wrongs, real or imaginary. Do we sometimes nurse our wrongs, brood over them until they become impossible to forget? This is not the spirit of love, for though love keeps a record of kindnesses (Phil. 1:3) it has the amazing power to forget.

(f) Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth (v. 6): Moffatt translates this phrase *Love is never glad when others go wrong; love is gladdened by goodness*. Love does not delight in exposing the weaknesses of other people. One of the queer traits of human nature is that we prefer to hear of the misfortunes of others rather than of their good points. This makes good headline material for our newspapers. Love, however, yearns to cover and protect the one who has fallen.

(g) Beareth all things (v. 7): Love not only suffers wrong without retaliation, but gets under the load of life and bears it to the limit. It catches the spirit of the Master who not only said *Father, forgive them*, but went on to get under the load of sin.

(h) Believeth all things (v. 7): This does not mean that charity (love) is gullible or ready to believe anything, but rather, as Moffatt suggests, that it is *always eager to believe the best*. It doesn't refer to a love that is

blind, but to a love which is basically not suspicious. It always considers the motive and makes every allowance for failure. This love looks for that spark of goodness in everyone. It endeavours to see people not only as they are, but as they might be (*Thou art . . . thou shalt be . . .* John 1:42).

(i) Hopeth all things (v. 7). Love never despairs of anyone. Of course it does not persuade itself that a thief is honest or a criminal innocent. It is not an unreasoning optimism which fails to take account of reality. It is not like the boy who, having failed to study for his examination, felt he could get a pass by humouring the teacher. He thus put on his Christmas paper: "John knows nothing; God knows everything; Merry Christmas." The reply quickly came from the teacher: "John gets nothing; God gets 100; Happy New Year." No, it is not an unreasoning optimism which fails to take account of reality. However, this hope is a refusal to take failure as final.

(j) Endureth all things (v. 7): Love cannot be conquered. I think of George Matheson, author of the songs "Make me a captive

Lord" and "O Love that will not let me go." He lost his eyesight and yet wrote in one of his prayers: "Help me to accept God's providence, not with dumb resignation, but with holy joy; not only with the absence of murmur, but with a song of praise." He did not minimize his difficulties, but magnified his God. Someone once said "Suffering colours the whole of life." "Yes," said the sufferer "but I propose to choose the colour." Love cannot be conquered.

The "fruit of the Spirit" is LOVE. How far can we say: I suffer long and am kind; I envy not; I vaunt not myself; I am not puffed up; I do not behave myself unseemly; I seek not my own; I am not easily provoked; I think no evil; I rejoice not in iniquity but I rejoice in the truth; I bear all things; I believe all things; I hope all things; I endure all things? Such considerations surely lead us to pray:

Refining fire, go through my heart,  
Illuminate my soul;  
Scatter Thy life through every part,  
And sanctify the whole.

—Charles Wesley

## LESSON FOURTEEN

# Spirit of Compassion

WITHOUT doubt, one of our greatest needs is the possession of a heart of compassion. In the conditions of twentieth century life, it is easy to lose the cutting edge of "love in action." We can read of hundreds of casualties on the road with no reaction at all within our hearts, forgetting that each one of them means a broken body and a broken heart for someone. How unlike Jesus we are in this regard!

Someone has suggested there is no uniform picture of Christ in the New Testament. Each of the Gospel writers interprets Christ in his own way. Yet from all the New Testament portraits of Jesus, there is one common feature: His compassion. When Jesus looked at people's faces, sometimes emotionless, hard and even hostile, His X-ray vision probed deeply into the secret agonies and anxieties of their souls, and then his great, loving heart went out to them in compassion.

In the New Testament the word "compassion" never occurs outside the Synoptic

Gospels and, except for three references in the parables, it is always used of Jesus. In the parables it is employed in the story of the master who had compassion on the servant who was unable to pay his debt: *Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt* (Matt. 18:27). The word appears in the midst of what has been referred to as the "greatest short story in the world," the Parable of the Prodigal Son. *But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him* (Luke 15:20).

The third reference to compassion is in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, to which we will return later. *But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him* (Luke 10:33).

When we turn to the life and ministry of Jesus, compassion becomes the dominant theme. He was moved with compassion

when he saw the crowd like sheep without a shepherd. He was not annoyed with their foolishness or angry at their shiftlessness. *When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them . . . were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd* (Matt. 9:36; Mark 6:34). Jesus was moved with compassion when he saw their hunger as they followed him out to a desert place. *I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat* (Matt. 15:32; Matt. 14:14; Mark 8:2).

Compassion is used of Jesus' reaction to the leper (Mark 1:41) and to the two blind men (Matt. 20:34). Jesus entered into human sorrow with the spirit of compassion. Think of his response to the widow of Nain, on her way to bury her only son. *And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not* (Luke 7:13). Again and again in the Gospel narrative, we see that Jesus was moved with compassion.

"Compassion" literally means "to suffer with." It is infinitely more than a feeling of pity. It is that which moves a man to the very depths of his being. The greatness of Jesus was His willingness to enter into the human situation, and be so moved that He was compelled to help and heal.

The Saviour of men came to seek and to save

The souls who were lost to the good;  
His spirit was moved for the world  
which He loved

With the boundless compassion of  
God.

—Albert Orsborn

Some years ago, an American in Liberia talked with an official about Liberia's head, President Tubman. He had noted the tremendous influence that the president wielded, and he asked for the secret of it. This was the reply he received: "We have a saying here that if a little boy out in the bush stubs his toe, President Tubman says 'Ouch'. "Compassion, fellow feeling, self-identification, sensitivity to need, readiness to respond to it — this is Christianity in action.

The New Testament clearly states that if we do not possess the spirit of compassion, it is questionable whether or not we know much of the love of God: *But if a man has enough to live on, and yet when he sees his brother in need shuts up his heart against him, how can it be said that the divine love dwells in him?* (1 John 3:17 NEB).

Perhaps we can illustrate by returning to

the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The man in need is described as being *stripped, wounded and half dead* (Luke 10:30). When the priest saw him, he passed by on the other side (v. 31). Was he afraid that if he touched the seemingly dead body, he would be ceremonially unclean, and thus unable to fulfil his role at the Temple?

For some years I excused him on this basis until I noticed the wording of verse 31: *And by chance there came DOWN a certain priest that way*. He was not going to the Temple, but was returning from the Temple. His term at the Temple was completed and thus it was not fear of becoming unclean. He just didn't care. I shudder every time I think of the words of Psalm 142:4. Here was a man in trouble: *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.*

Of course "love in action" should enter every part of human need. The more I read the New Testament, the more convinced I become that Jesus was concerned, not simply with *soul* salvation, but with *whole* salvation. Jesus entered into the problems of humanity in a manner which was spiritually creative and socially corrective. We must, of course, keep a balance here. Soul salvation is still basic, for Jesus came principally to make new men, not new conditions. The redemptive side must always take prior claim to the social side. Having said this, I wonder if we have not been guilty of creating a false division, for when we return to the New Testament, the emphasis is again upon *whole* salvation. *Sozein* means both to save a man in the eternal sense and to heal a man in the physical sense. Let me illustrate from the Scriptures:

(a) The salvation of God extends to the body. The woman with the issue of blood said *If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole* (Matt. 9:21).

(b) This salvation is linked with the mind. With reference to the demoniac of Gadara, Luke 8:36 records *he that was possessed of the devils was healed*.

(c) There is salvation in the time of storm. Think of the disciples at sea who prayed *Lord, save us: we perish* (Matt. 8:25). Of course, it doesn't mean protection from all peril and harm, but it does suggest, as Rupert Brooke put it, "A man can be safe when all safety's lost."

(d) Salvation is for all who are lost. *For the*

*Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost* (Luke 19:10).

(e) This salvation is linked with sin. Of Jesus it was said *he shall save his people from their sins* (Matt. 1:21).

Yes, salvation means both to save a man in the eternal sense and to heal a man in the physical sense. Does our care and concern for the needs of others reach that far? Can we honestly say we "suffer with" our brother in his time of need? Dr. Michael

Ramsay, Archbishop of Canterbury, once wrote: "It is doubtful if any of us can do anything at all until our hearts have been very much broken." Again and again Jesus was "moved with compassion."

Perhaps we need to pray:

Give me a heart like Thine,  
By Thy wonderful power and Thy  
grace every hour,  
Give me a heart like Thine.

The "fruit of the Spirit" is love.

## LESSON FIFTEEN

# The Unpardonable Sin

IN Matt. 12:31, 32, there is recorded a statement which calls for some serious consideration. *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men... (for) whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.* It would appear that our Lord spoke of this sin only once, though it is recorded in three places (Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11:14-23).

When we stop to think of some of the people, yes, sinful people, who met with Jesus and from this contact knew the experience of sins forgiven, it becomes rather startling to hear the Master speaking about a sin that is unforgivable. For example, Luke 7 records the narrative of Jesus in the home of a Pharisee. A woman who was a known sinner came in and began to anoint his feet. The Pharisee was horrified and said to himself *This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner* (Luke 7:39). Jesus responded to the Pharisee by suggesting this was the type of person He had come to heal, and then said to the woman *Thy sins are forgiven* (v. 48).

### ADULTRESS

A similar situation is recorded in John 8. Here we have the incident of the woman taken in adultery. She was brought to Jesus by the scribes and Pharisees. By law her act was punishable by death. What would Jesus say? The Master began to write on the ground, perhaps listing specific

sins of the woman's accusers. One by one they left His presence. Then said Jesus to her *Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more* (v. 10, 11).

In Luke 19 is recorded the visit of Jesus to the house of Zacchaeus. The people murmured *That he (Jesus) was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner* (v. 7). In Matt. 11:19 Jesus was accused of being a *friend of publicans and sinners*. As you read in the Gospels the account of His life, it becomes clear that His three favourite words were *Least, last, and lost*. He said the least should be greatest; the last should be first; the lost should be found. Yet, in spite of all this, He speaks of a sin which can never be forgiven — the sin against the Holy Ghost.

To whom were these words addressed? Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, the religious leaders of His day. In many ways they were good-living, morally upright people. Thus the sin was not one isolated sin such as impurity, drunkenness, murder, fornication. Had the demands of the law been quoted to this group, many would have responded with the rich young ruler: *All these things have I kept...* (Matt. 19:29). Kept in its context, we find this sin was in describing the obvious work of God to the devil.

In order to understand such a statement, we must remember that Jesus was speaking to Jews who, before the Day of Pentecost, had a limited view of the Person and work of the Spirit. To these people, the Spirit had

two basic functions: (a) To bring God's truth to men. (b) To enable men to recognize and appropriate this truth. Of course, even in the realm of the natural, a man can lose any faculty if he refuses to use it. ("Use or lose.") This is true:

(a) Physically: If we cease to exercise our muscles, they eventually lose their power to respond.

(b) Mentally: Many of us learned a little French in school, but we failed to keep working at it. The chances are that those of us who did so have lost most of what we learned. Darwin tells us that as a young man he loved music and poetry, but he so devoted himself to biology that he completely neglected them. The result was that in later life poetry meant nothing and music was merely noise.

(c) Spiritually: Here too we can shut our eyes to God: we can refuse to listen to His voice until eventually we lose the capacity both to receive and to respond. It was to this condition that Jesus was referring in Matt. 12:31, 32.

We thus see that the sin against the Holy Ghost is not so much one specific sin, but rather the result of a deep-seated, stubborn rebellion against God and His claims for our lives. It represents a fixed attitude of heart and mind. That God can save the worst is clear from 1 Cor. 6:9-11 — . . . *and such were some of you*. Paul emphasizes this in Romans 5:20 — *but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*.

Why then is it unforgivable to sin against the Holy Ghost? Two wrong conceptions should be cleared up immediately. Such a sin is not due to either the inadequacy of the Atonement, or to any special sacredness attached to the Third Person in the Trinity. The answer is found in a consideration of the *work* of the Spirit.

One of the "conditions" of our salvation is our willingness to *repent*. ("Condition" is here used as something necessary to, but not the cause of, a certain result.) Repentance is the sincere desire to forsake sin and obey God. But what is it that makes a man aware of his own sin, and then creates within him the desire to forsake it? According to the New Testament this is the work of the Spirit.

In speaking of the Comforter or the Spirit, Jesus said *And when he is come, he will reprove (convict or convince) the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment* (John 16:8). Thus to blind ourselves to the

light of the Spirit is to place ourselves in a position where repentance is impossible, and if repentance is impossible, so also is the experience of salvation. For this reason, *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men*. We can thus see that the unpardonable sin is not a specific deed, but rather an attitude of mind which renders man incapable of responding to the gracious invitation of Christ.

In the first chapter of Romans this principle is illustrated by a thrice repeated phrase: *God also gave them up, God gave them up, God gave them over* (1:24, 26, 28). They had refused the "Light" for so long that they eventually became incapable of receiving it. It was not so much the direct action of God as the indirect reaction of their own hearts. ("Thanklessness" led to "senselessness" and on to "godlessness.")

### SIN OF ATTITUDE

In speaking of the unpardonable sin, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan once stated: "It is not the sin of an hour; it is not the sin of an act. It is the sin of an attitude, definitely taken and persistently maintained to the end. That period never ends until a man crosses the boundary between this life and the life that lies beyond. We are living in the day of grace, and in that day the Spirit never abandons a man." (However, a man can place himself where the prompting of the Spirit is ineffectual.)

In most cases, the unpardonable sin commences in one or other of three ways:

(a) Postponing: We know what we ought to do but we continue to postpone our action until gradually the sense of urgency dies. Of course, the postponing becomes easier each time we engage in this line of thought.

(b) Presuming: We intend to be saved but presume to choose our own time — not realizing that we can only come when we are drawn by the Spirit (John 6:44).

(c) Pretending: Here we are unreal with God and with our own conscience.

For our comfort we should perhaps add that those who are troubled and concerned lest they have committed the unpardonable sin definitely have not committed it. No sincere seeker of God has been guilty of this sin, no matter how grievous may have been the sin of past years. The greatest evidence that a man has not committed it is the fear that he has.

If we have this fear, it is simply another indication of the Spirit's moving upon our lives.

## LESSON SIXTEEN

# The Day of Pentecost

*THEN when the actual day of Pentecost came they were all assembled together. Suddenly there was a sound from heaven like the rushing of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were seated. Before their eyes appeared tongues like flames, which separated off and settled above the head of each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages as the Spirit gave them power to proclaim his message (Acts 2:1-4 Phillips).*

On many occasions we have used the Founder's song which contains the line "We want another Pentecost." Perhaps we should pause and endeavour to discover just what took place at Pentecost. The scriptural account is recorded in Acts 2. Before we look at this account, however, it is necessary to see Pentecost in its historical setting.

Pentecost was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the first Sunday after the Passover (Lev. 23:15-21). It was known as the *feast of weeks* (Exodus 34:22) and the *day of the first fruits* (Numbers 28:26). On this day, the first fruits of the harvest (wheat) were presented to God (Exodus 34:22). Never was there a more international crowd in Jerusalem than at Pentecost. The feast itself had a double significance:

- (a) agricultural — a day of thanksgiving for the goodness of God (Lev. 23:21);
- (b) historical — to commemorate the giving of the law to Moses on Sinai.

As we now move from this historical background, the suggestion of E. M. Blaiklock should be kept to the fore: "Luke is seeking to reduce to simple and intelligible terms what is really an unearthly and indescribable experience."

Verse 1 of Acts 2 indicates that the 120 were all gathered in one place of *one accord*. They were simply following the instruction of Jesus as recorded in Luke 24:49 — *And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high*. They were studying the word and praying together.

When were we last found in such a group? Christianity as a movement began in the place of prayer. In this setting, those in

the Upper Room were aware of a *sound from heaven*. The phrase suggests heaven-sent motion. (A revival cannot be worked up; it must be prayed down.) The descent of the Spirit was then described in terms of *wind* and *fire* (vv. 2, 3). These would be familiar symbols for Ezekiel in the Old Testament, and Jesus in the New Testament had already linked them with the presence of God (Ezek. 37:9-14; John 3:8). Fire, too, had been used as an emblem for the presence of God (Exodus 3:2; Matt. 3:11).

The result of this experience is described in verse 4 — *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*. The reference to *tongues* has brought forth several interpretations:

(a) The 120 spoke in "foreign languages." This has been questioned by some for the following reasons:

1. It would be unnecessary, for the main bulk of the people listed in verses 9-11 were Jews of the Dispersion, who had returned to Jerusalem for a religious pilgrimage. These people would speak Greek and Aramaic; thus, in a world in which these languages would serve all necessary purpose, the need to speak in "foreign languages" would be unnecessary. (Later the crowd appeared to understand Peter's sermon).

2. If it were a special gift of Pentecost, it was one that did not last. (See Acts 14:11-14, where Paul and Barnabas failed to see the beginnings of an embarrassing situation because it was hidden in an alien tongue.)

3. Speaking in foreign languages would hardly have given rise to the fact that the disciples were accused of being drunk (v. 13).

(b) Others have thus suggested that they spoke in "tongues." By this I mean the pouring forth of a flood or torrent of sounds in no known language — sounds which were quite unintelligible unless someone was present to interpret (see 1 Cor. 14). This might give rise to the charge of being "full of new wine" but does not explain such phrases as are found in verses 6, 8 — *every man heard them speak in his own lan-*

*guage; how hear we every man in our own tongue?*

Perhaps we have no right to be dogmatic with either interpretation. The main thought of the narrative is that, under the guidance of the Spirit, the 120 received power to communicate their message. It was perhaps just as much a miracle of "hearing" as "speaking." This "speaking" was, of course, but a preparation for the message delivered by Peter (vv. 14-36). Here the Apostle clearly indicates that what had taken place was but a fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy — *And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh . . .* (Joel 2:28-32 as quoted by Peter in Acts 2:17).

This sermon provides us with an excellent example of the content of early apostolic preaching. Included were such dominant themes as:

1. The announcement that the age of fulfilment had arrived (v. 16).
2. A review of the life, death and triumph of Jesus (vv. 22-24, 31, 33, 36).
3. Use of Old Testament texts which found fulfilment in Jesus and hence proved His Messiahship (vv. 25-28).
4. Call to repentance (v. 38).

The message led up to the first apostolic creed: Jesus is Lord (v. 36 Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:11). To call Jesus *Lord* is to give Him the supreme loyalty of our lives, the supreme devotion of our hearts. (Paul reminds us that no man can say that Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost — 1 Cor. 12:3.)

The result of this sermon is recorded in verses 37-41 — *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said . . . what shall we do?* To this Peter replied *Repent*. Repentance originally meant to "change one's mind." This definition, however, implies that a change of mind will lead to a change of action. (One phase to the exclusion of the other is not true repentance.) True repentance issues in the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost (v. 38).

On this occasion, 3,000 responded and

were added unto them (v. 41). It would appear that a larger company was added in a day than Jesus had secured in His two or three year ministry. Was this a fulfilment of His promise that, as a result of His returning to the Father and the coming of the Holy Spirit, they would perform greater works than they had seen Him do (John 14:12)?

It is interesting to note the wording of verse 47 — *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*. The Lord added. "It is the Lord whose prerogative it is to add new members to His own community; it is the joyful duty of the community to welcome to their ranks those whom Christ has accepted" (F. F. Bruce).

Yes, we reiterate the words of the Founder: "We want another Pentecost." Are we prepared to pay the price? Perhaps we need to experience the "cleansing" motion of heaven. The disciples were converted people when they met in the Upper Room. Jesus had told them to "rejoice" for their names were written in heaven. He spoke of His disciples being not of this world even as He was not of this world. Yet, even in the midst of this privileged group, we find concern as to who should be greatest, who should get the credit for service rendered, who should be found in the limelight. Yes, even in the fellowship there was a need for the cleansing motion to "burn up every trace of sin, to bring the light and glory in."

There was also a need for the power which only comes through the presence of the Spirit (Acts 1:8). Samuel Chadwick once wrote: "To run an organization needs no God. Man can supply the energy, the enthusiasm, the enterprise for things human. But the real work of the church depends upon the power of the Spirit."

At Pentecost, we have evidence of the "real work of the church." We want another Pentecost. Do we? If we do, we need to add:

*O see us on Thy altar lay  
Our lives, our all, this very day,  
To crown the offering now we pray,  
Send the fire!*

## LESSON SEVENTEEN

# Fellowship of the Early Church

IN our previous lesson, we noted the remarkable outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:41 records . . . *and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.* The suggestion of verse 47 is even more significant: *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* Immediately the Church was faced with a challenge. These people were but "babes in Christ" and as such would need a great deal of help. That they did grow and develop speaks well of the internal fellowship of the believers.

In view of this, perhaps we should pause to observe some of the characteristics of the Early Church. We have a brief but significant description in Acts 2:42-47. In this passage, we learn that the Church was:

I. A learning Church — *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine . . .* (v. 42).

The conversion experience was but the commencement of a life of growth. The tragedy in some Christian lives is that growth has ceased. When a census was being taken in Britain, the census papers contained a number of questions to be answered. Mr. Collie Knox, the famous journalist, took strong exception to one of these questions. It read "At what age did you finish your education?" Mr. Knox insisted that he could not answer that question, for he had not as yet finished his education. He was right, of course, for a man must never stop learning. This is certainly true as it relates to spiritual life. *Let us leave behind the elementary teaching about Christ and go forward to adult understanding* (Heb. 6:1; Phillips).

The Early Church placed strong emphasis upon the study of the word, for the written word invariably leads to the Living Word. This is graphically illustrated in Luke 4. Here we read of the occasion when Jesus returned to Nazareth and found Himself, as was His custom, in the synagogue. In this setting, He read a passage from Isaiah 61. The word then records *And he closed the book . . . And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him* (v. 20). The written word pointed to the Living Word.

Thus the Early Church allowed the Scriptures to play a prominent role within

the fellowship. Perhaps we need to recapture the challenge of 1 Peter 2:2 — *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*

II. A praying Church — *And they continued stedfastly . . . in prayers* (v. 42).

People used to suggest to Abraham Lincoln that he wasted too much time in prayer. His answer was "I would be the biggest fool in the world if I thought that I could sustain the difficulties of this high office without the help of someone who is greater and stronger than I." The man who leads the Church back to its original passion will be the man who leads it back to prayer.

III. A Church of fellowship — *And they continued stedfastly . . . in fellowship* (v. 42).

Fellowship (*Koinonia*) is a beautiful word which is employed eighteen times in the New Testament. It is employed with varying shades of meaning:

(a) A sharing of friendship — Acts 2:42, 2 Cor. 6:14. It is interesting to note this friendship is based upon a common Christian knowledge (1 John 1:3). A basic ingredient of this fellowship was that of "understanding." In this atmosphere of love and trust, people could readily share their burdens with one another. Today, we have some built-in problems which militate against such an atmosphere. For example, we often meet in much larger groups, and these groups tend to become impersonal. We must, however, strive to recapture this "sharing of friendship."

(b) A practical sharing — 2 Cor. 8:4, Rom. 15:26, 2 Cor. 9:13. The people in the Early Church felt they could not possess too much if others possessed too little. *And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need* (vv. 44, 45). It should be noted that this ideal standard could only be maintained when their sense of the unity of the Spirit was exceptionally high. The moment the flame began to burn a little lower, they were immediately beset by difficulties (Acts 4:32, 5:11).

Could it be said that the contemporary Church is one that cares? In a recent article

in the *Observer*, the question "Who is Lazarus today?" was posed. The reply was most disturbing, for it indicated Lazarus is: 1. Illiterate and unschooled. In more than sixty countries today, less than one half of the population can read or write. In Latin America, the child who is fortunate enough to get to school spends less than two years there.

2. Sick and unable to secure medical assistance. In Canada, there is one doctor for every 850 people; In Cambodia, there is one in 90,000.

3. Plagued with hunger and malnutrition. Did you know 15,000 people died of starvation yesterday; 10,000 of them were children?

4. Living in a sub-standard shack or is homeless.

5. Unemployed. Only one country in Asia has more than forty per cent of its population gainfully employed.

I want, dear Lord, a love that cares  
for all,

A deep, strong love that answers every  
call;

A love like Thine, a love divine,

A love to come or go;

On me, dear Lord, a love like this  
bestow.

—George Jackson

IV. A partnership in the work of Christ —  
*For your fellowship in the gospel...*  
(Phil. 1:5).

In his book *The Company of the Committed* Elton Trueblood wrote: "The Company of Jesus is not people streaming to a shrine; it is not people making up an audience for a speaker; it is labourers engaged in the harvesting task of reaching their perplexed and seeking brethren with something so vital, that if it is received, it will change their lives."

To this, the late Robert Spike added: "Christians may go on saying creeds and singing hymns and trying to work out some little niche for religion in their personal lives, but this is so much nostalgic hogwash

if the excitement of confessing Christ as Lord and Saviour does not take hold of a man's heart and mind." It was this spirit which was fostered and developed in the fellowship of the Early Church.

V. A Church of reverence — *And fear came upon every soul* (v. 43).

This "fear" was not the terror of being afraid but was rather a sense of "awe." Is this a quality we need to recapture? Is there a danger of becoming "pally" with Deity"? Of course, this does not mean we must be somber, for verse 46 indicates they were possessed of a spirit of gladness. If our Christianity does not make us joyful, it does not make us anything.

Perhaps the characteristics we have noted give us some idea as to why it was also noted as a Church where things happened: . . . *many wonders and signs were done by the apostles* (v. 43).

A young boy upon approaching a railway station was fascinated by the huge locomotive. "Dad," he said "ask the man how much it would cost to build an engine like that." A trainman overheard the conversation and gave the lad an approximate figure. "My," said the father "that's almost as much as our new church cost." "Oh, but," said the boy innocently, "this works."

The world has a vision of a Church where very little is happening; where we meet together and have a lovely time, but make little impact upon the community. Could it be that we have left out some of the basic ingredients of this early fellowship? What place do we give to prayer and the study of God's word? What are we doing to foster a spirit of fellowship? Perhaps we need to pray with Elton Trueblood:

Thou whose purpose is to kindle,  
Now ignite us with Thy fire;  
While the earth awaits Thy burning,  
With Thy passion us inspire;  
Overcome our sinful calmness,  
Rouse us with redemptive shame;  
Baptize with Thy fiery Spirit,  
Crown our lives with tongues of flame.

## LESSON EIGHTEEN

# The Spirit and the word

PERHAPS we should pause to consider the relationship of the Spirit to the Bible. The Army's first article of faith declares: "We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; and that they only constitute the divine rule of Christian faith and practice."

What do we mean by "inspiration"? The word comes from the Greek *Theos-pneustos*, meaning "God-breathed." Dr. Hannah has described inspiration as "that extraordinary agency of the Holy Spirit upon the mind, in consequence of which the person who partakes of it is enabled to embrace and communicate the truth without error." Dr. Wiley adds that inspiration is "the actuating energy of the Holy Spirit by which holy men, chosen of God, have officially proclaimed His will, as revealed to us in the sacred Scriptures." Thus, inspiration is the imparting of such a degree of divine assistance as would enable the authors to receive the revelation, whether the subjects of this communication were things immediately revealed or things with which they were previously acquainted.

Let us at this point examine several false or inadequate views of inspiration:

1. **Genius or Natural Inspiration:** This view states that good, faithful men were inspired, but only in the same sense as a Milton or Shakespeare. Our objection to this belief is that this position reduces biblical writings to the level of the secular, human productions to be mutilated at will. According to this view, inspiration is only the rational insight of man lifted to a higher degree of development. Such a belief, however, does not fit the suggestion of 1 Cor. 2:14. In this theory there is too much emphasis upon man.

2. **Inspired Concepts:** This view suggests that God gave man the thought, but then left him completely on his own to express it. To some, it provides an explanation for the minor discrepancies in the biblical account. According to this theory, man on occasion received the proper concept but was not too successful in putting it into words. Our objection is that language is the vehicle of thought and should not be separated from it. In this view there is once, again, too much, emphasis placed upon man.

3. **Verbal Dictation:** According to this

theory every word was dictated in the same manner that an executive passes on information to his secretary. Our major objection is that it denies the inspiration of the writers and holds only to the inspiration of the writing. (How different is the spirit of 2 Peter 1:21 — . . . *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*). Verbal dictation makes the writer a mere machine and leaves no room for differences of style. There is too much emphasis upon God. The theory of inspired concepts is too weak while that of verbal dictation is too strong.

Our view of inspiration could be summarized by the phrase **PLENARY VERBAL INSPIRATION**. "Plenary" means full, complete, entire — extending to every part. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God . . .* (2 Tim. 3:16). Most attacks upon this view are based upon a misunderstanding of what we are saying. For example, we are not implying that every part of the Bible was directly revealed by God. Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, was present for much of what is recorded; thus it was not necessary for God to reveal these things directly to him. The facts came through personal observation. Thus, plenary inspiration makes allowance for known facts. Neither are we saying there is no difference in practical value or importance.

"Verbal," of course, pertains to words. It is the doctrine of **superintendence** or guidance in the choice of words. "Verbal" inspiration may be an unfortunate term as it appears to single out each separate word of the text as the proper object of inspiration. However, words must be viewed as the vehicle of thought and the arrangement of words that gives adequate expression to the thought is correct, to the exclusion of any other arrangement that fails to do this. Let me illustrate with the following examples:

(a) "The cow jumped over the moon."  
(b) "The moon jumped over the cow."

In these two sentences, we have employed exactly the same words. However, although the words are the same, the arrangement completely changes the sense. The words are important, but so also is their order. Dean Burgon once said: "As for thoughts being inspired apart from words

which give them expression, you might as well talk of a tune without notes or a sum without figures."

Dr. William Evans has summed up plenary verbal inspiration in the following words: "The Spirit employed the attention, the investigation, the memory, the fancy, the logic — in a word, all the faculties of the writer and wrought through these. He guided the writer to choose what narratives and materials, speeches, imperial decrees, genealogies, official letters, state papers or historical matters he found necessary for the recording of the divine message of salvation. He wrought in and with and through their spirits so as to preserve their individuality to others. He used the men themselves and spoke through their individualities."

The second part of the first article of faith states "They only (the Scriptures) constitute the divine rule of Christian faith and

practice." Leonard Griffith has written: "To renew contact with the Bible is to renew contact with God. A rediscovery of the authority and power of Scripture leads inevitably to a revival of vital religion. The renewals, reformations and revivals in the queered history of the Church can be traced, almost without exception to one factor — a rediscovery of the message of the Bible." The late Dr. Ralph Sockman added: "There has never been a significant revival of religion in the history of Christianity which has not been nurtured in a revival of Bible study."

Just a final word from the lips of Jesus: *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . .* (John 16:13). As we read the inspired pages of the Bible, let us personally claim this promise and thus be led to Jesus, the Truth.

## LESSON NINETEEN

# The Spirit and Creation

*IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . . And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters* (Gen. 1:1, 2).

In my travels, many have expressed interest in the subject "Evolution and the Bible." Since this topic has been the subject of debate for more than a century, we would not be presumptuous enough to suggest we can answer all questions in just a lesson or two. Further, since the term "evolution" covers such a wide range of thought, we will limit our thinking to such questions as: Is the biblical account of creation now obsolete in the light of evolution? Can you believe in evolution *and* the Bible? Is it an "either-or" question? Of course, before we even begin to answer some of these questions, we must pause to define evolution. Let me suggest three main lines of thought:

(a) **Atheistic Evolution:** "Evolution may be defined as the hypothesis that millions of years ago, lifeless matter, acted upon by natural forces, gave origin to one or more minute, living organisms, which have since evolved into all living and extinct plants and animals, including man." Atheistic evolution is popular with many because it explains nature apart from the necessity of requiring a God who expects submission of the human

will. However, it also faces some real problems, for "design implies a designer; a machine requires a machinist."

In a rather unique manner, Edwin Conklin, himself a biologist, has rephrased the problem: "The probability of life originating from accident is comparable to the probability of the unabridged dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing shop."

Thus the basic tension between the Bible and atheistic evolution is between the concept of a personal Creator-God, and that of an impersonal chance process. As Salvationists, we can immediately cast aside atheistic evolution for *In the beginning God. . . .*

(b) **Deistic Evolution:** Here, "the evolutionary processes are controlled by an impersonal *mind*" (Greek idea of the *logos*). To help explain law, order, design, a "first cause" or "impersonal Mind" was introduced. Our objection to this theory would be that it denies the personality of God and the part played by Christ in the creative narrative. The Bible records: *All things were made by him (Jesus); and without him was not any thing made that was made* (John 1:3). *For by him (Jesus)*

were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth . . . (Col. 1:16). God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son . . . by whom also he made the worlds (Heb. 1:2). . . . God, who created all things by Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9).

(c) Theistic Evolution: This is "the belief that God personally directs the evolutionary process as a chess player directs his chessmen." Disciples of this school of thought feel there is no difficulty in believing both the Bible and evolution so long as evolution is considered a God-guided process. There are, however, some difficulties here which we will consider when we deal with the "origin of Man."

Now we have defined evolution, what are some of the questions which have caused controversy?

### SCIENCE AND BIBLE

Biblical history spans a period of approximately 6,000 years, and yet many scientists claim the world is millions of years old. Can these two views be reconciled? Our position is that although the Bible is *not* a scientific text-book, it is nevertheless not anti-scientific. Several theories have been expounded to bridge this gap.

(a) Gap Theory: This theory suggests a long period of time elapsed between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 (perhaps a great catastrophe when the earth "became" without form). Many link this with the fall of Lucifer as described in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, although this is purely hypothetical. Following this, there was a re-creation of the earth as described in the Genesis account. The fossil record, going back millions of years, would be the evidence of the first creation.

(b) Solar Day: The Hebrew word for "day" (*yom*) occurs no fewer than 1,480 times in the Old Testament and is translated by over fifty different words, including time and age. It could thus indicate a period of indefinite duration. Augustine said, "The word 'day' does not apply to duration of time, but to the boundaries of great periods." Certainly it is not possible to dogmatize here. (We might note that our sun and moon were not created until the fourth day although there was "evening" and "morning" prior to that time. (See Gen. 1:16.) It should perhaps be stated that any questioning regarding the meaning of "day" is not intended to question God's ability to create in this period of time. It is simply an attempt to bridge the gap between the biblical account and scientific fact. There need really be no conflict.

There are, however, four specific areas of God's creative activity which are held by most creationists:

1. The Origin of Matter: In the atheistic definition of evolution, we spoke of "lifeless matter." But where did this matter originate? Let us again turn to the word: *In the beginning* . . . (Gen. 1:1). Before the creative acts — yes, before time, for time signifies duration measured by the revolutions of heavenly bodies (prior to the creation of these, there could have been no measurement of duration and, consequently, no time) — there was God. The Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God; it simply accepts God as a fact.

The word for "created" is *bara*. In its primary meaning, *bara* suggests bringing something into existence out of nothing. It is employed three times in the first chapter of Genesis. Genesis 1:1 speaks of the creation of *material* substance, and hence answers our questions regarding the origin of matter.

2. The Origin of Life: *Bara* is again used in Genesis 1:21, a passage which speaks of the creation of the soul or *life principle*. In 1:27 it advances to the creation of *spirit*. Thus *bara* is employed in connection with the creation of body, soul and spirit; matter, life and mind. The impasse of the origin of life is admitted by most evolutionists. Said T. H. Huxley: "Looking back through the vistas of time, I find no record of the beginnings of life and therefore I am devoid of any means of forming a conclusion as to the conditions of its appearance." Feature articles in several magazines regarding the possibility of scientists creating life in a test-tube should not cause us undue alarm, for *if* life was produced in such manner, the scientists would simply be answering the question *how* and not *who*. For us, the whole problem should constantly be kept within the context of *In the beginning God*.

Further on in this lesson, we will endeavour to deal with the "Origin of Major Kinds and the Origin of Man."

Yes, we still believe that "there is only one God . . . Creator."

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation:

O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation;

All ye who hear,

Brothers and sisters draw near,

Praise Him in glad adoration.

—Joachim Neander

We have seen that God was the Author or Creator of *matter*. (God created the heaven

and the earth — Gen. 1:1). The Bible also depicts God as the author of *life* (God created . . . every living creature — Gen. 1:21). We now move to the origin of major kinds.

And God said, *Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so* (Gen. 1:24). A careful look at the Genesis account reveals that God created definite “kinds” (genera), not species. Champions of biblical theology have sometimes overstepped the requisites of Genesis by interpreting the revealed fact of creation to mean that all *species* of life, in the modern biological sense, were originally created as they now appear. This the Bible does not say.

On the other hand, if evolutionists had derived all life forms from supernaturally fixed classes, orders, families, consistently with the biblical emphasis that *there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds* (1 Cor. 15:39), each reproducing after its *kind* (Gen. 1:21, 24), there would have been no major conflict.

Most evolutionists, however, have far overstepped this boundary. Historically, the fixity of genera was no article of Christian doctrine. Thus the ark did not include all “species” but “kinds” (genera). We have no quarrel with the fact that through such factors as natural selection and mutations, new forms of life have appeared. However, this is a long way from suggesting we all came from a single cell.

### ORIGIN OF MAN

It is at this stage the creationist parts company with the evolutionist. Let it be said, however, that there is no easy solution. In *The Strategy of Physical Anthropology* S. L. Washburn states: “After more than a century of intensive fact-finding, there is less agreement among informed scientists on the relation of man to other primates than there was in the latter part of the nineteenth century.”

In *The Dogma of Evolution* Professor L. T. More adds: “In our eagerness to get away from the idea of man as divine, for whom the universe was created and by whom alone its phenomena can be comprehended, we are now busy with the effort to class him with the amoeba and with the lump of earth from which his body is fashioned. Yet, in spite of the speculations of the centuries, we have not advanced a step beyond the noble and dignified descrip-

tion of the creation as given by the Hebrew prophet in the book Genesis. When he stated that man was created out of the dust and that God breathed into him the breath of life, all was said of that supreme mystery which can be said.”

This now brings us back to the problems connected with theistic evolution. This school of thought, while accepting the belief that God is operating in the process, also accepts the possibility that man could have arisen from non-human forms, and that God merely endowed him with a soul, which act constituted the “creation of man.” From a biblical standpoint, it challenges:

- (a) The reference to the creation of *kinds* (1 Cor. 15:39).
- (b) The original creation of sexes. *From the beginning of the creation God made them male and female* (Mark 10:6).
- (c) The original perfection of man. If man came from a non-human ancestor, some work was needed on the physical level as well as breathing into him the *breath of life*.

Such considerations are not an attempt to do away with prehistoric man. However, similarities in the physical structure must not be allowed to cover up basic and extremely important differences. Certainly our likeness to God is not physical, for *God is a spirit* (John 4:24). Although man is linked with the natural world about him, he is distinct from it. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him. . . .* (Gen. 1:26, 27).

Although linked with nature by his body, he alone possesses life of a quality above that of nature, directly imparted to him by God. He possesses reason, moral powers, and the capacity for spiritual fellowship. It is his capacity to look beyond the things of time and space which makes him distinctive.

The Scriptures give no support to the evolutionary view that man's primitive state was one of barbarism from which he evolved by a slow process of development to a state of civilization. Rather, the Bible teaches that man was originally created in a state of perfection (this perfection was not of a kind which precluded further progress and development, but is to be understood in the sense of a proper adaptation to the end for which he was created). In the Scriptures the making of man is presented as the crowning act of God's creative work, which took place in successive stages, rising from the creation of light to the creation of man. Man is thus invested with a dignity and value all his own.

For those interested in pursuing the subject at greater depth, perhaps the following books will prove helpful: J. S. Baxter, *The Best Word Ever*; Marshall, Morgan and Scott; R. L. Mixter, *Evolution and Christian Thought Today*; Eerdman's Publishing Co.; H. C. Morton, *The Bankruptcy of Evolution*; Marshall Brothers Limited; O. E. Sanden, *Twelve Bridges No Evolutionist Has Ever Crossed*; Back to the Bible Publishers; O. Wiley, *Christian Theology*; Beacon Hill Press.

Some people ask, "But what does it all mean as far as I am concerned? Does such thinking have any practical application? Is it related to my day by day experience?" We believe it is related, for the Bible indicates God has a two-fold claim upon our lives. He claims us by:

(a) Creation:

*God created man...* (Gen. 1:27). He created man's body and mind. Man is able to

reason and think, to love and be loved; to appreciate music, poetry, art, the beauties of nature; to communicate intelligently with God Himself. Such abilities did not come about by accident. GOD MADE US.

Said the Psalmist: *Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves...* (Psalm 100:3). . . . *And ye are not your own* (1 Cor. 6:19). God has a creative claim upon us.

(b) Redemption:

*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's* (1 Cor. 6:20). Yes, God also claims us redemptively.

Thus, thinking of the stewardship of life, may we respond with Daniel Whittle who wrote:

Not my own; to Christ my Saviour  
I, believing, trust my soul,  
Everything to Him committed,  
While eternal ages roll.

## LESSON TWENTY

# Walk in the Spirit

IN these lessons, we have been considering the Person and work of the Spirit. We have discussed subjects ranging from "the personality of the Spirit" to "the Spirit and Creation." In bringing this study to a conclusion, perhaps we ought to say a word or two regarding "walking in the Spirit." If we are living in the light of the Spirit, the criterion for behaviour becomes not "Can I do it?" but "Would He do it?"

In this connection, let us examine the word *skandalon*, which in the Authorized Version is translated *stumblingblock*. In classical Greek, the equivalent term is *skandalethron* and indicates the bait stick in a trap. It was the arm or stick on which the bait was fixed. The bait lured the animal to step on the stick; this touched off a spring; the animal was thus enticed to its destruction. Aristophanes also used *skandalethron* in the sense of a "verbal trap" and thus spoke of luring someone into an argument and then on to defeat.

In the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the word is used to describe both a stumbling-block and a trap. Lev. 19:14 reads *Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock*

*before the blind*. Joshua 23:13 describes alliances with foreign nations in terms of *snares and traps*.

When we come to the New Testament, both these ideas should be kept in mind. For example, Matt. 13:41 suggests the Son of man will remove all *skandala* from His Kingdom. When the Kingdom comes, all things which are calculated to make man sin; all things that might trip him up; all things that might entice him and seduce him into the wrong way, will be taken away. In other words, all stumbling-blocks will be removed. However, in Romans 16:17 the concept of the snare or trap seems to be the most fitting: . . . *mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them*.

However, when we come to such passages as Romans 14:13, *stumblingblock* is without question the best interpretation: . . . *judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way*. (*Occasion to fall* is *proskomma* and means a barrier, a hindrance or a road-block.) In this section, we are faced with the stewardship of influence.

We may wave our rights in pride or

waive our rights in love. It is the latter principle which Paul develops in this section (Romans 14:13-23). Our rights are far less important than our obligations. We dare not consciously injure the conscience of another; thus we must examine things, not only as they affect us, but as they affect others. One of the dangers in exercising our new freedom in Christ is that this very freedom may become a stumbling-block to someone else (v. 13). Of course, if we begin to think through the implications of such a stand, we are immediately made aware that we are dealing with a very complex question.

For example, in my home community is to be found a group of deeply religious, dedicated people. They endeavour to link the whole of life to the will of God. A strong tenet of their faith is separation from the world. In their interpretation of separation some of them even paint the chrome on their cars black; for chrome, they believe, is a sign of worldliness. Now, although I cannot help but admire the depth of conviction in such a stand, does this mean that I too must paint the chrome on my car black in order not to become a stumbling-block? This is the principle Paul deals with in the next few verses.

Verse 14 certainly needs some clarification lest our interpretation degenerate to giving our blessing to licence. Said Paul: *I know . . . that there is nothing unclean of itself. . . .* Here he was obviously speaking of ceremonial and not moral cleanliness, for to say that nothing is unclean of itself, and then include such things as fornication, is to pervert and twist the Scripture. But in matters of the ceremonial law — such as meats and special days — the issue was to be decided on the basis of personal conviction. (*Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind — v. 5.*) If we indulge in something which we feel to be wrong, it is wrong as far as we are concerned, even though others may practise it without pangs of conscience. Paul, however, goes even further and suggests it is wrong to indulge in something we feel to be right if by so doing we needlessly offend our brother. (*Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died — v. 15.*)

Of course, such a principle may bring to mind what appears to be a perfectly legitimate complaint. Dr. Roy Laurin comments: "Must I then circumscribe my liberty to his legalism? Does this mean that

my brother's weakness is to be the measure and the limit of my strength? Must I limit the enjoyment of my knowledge to his ignorance?"

The answer here is that love must decide or dictate. The question of habits and amusements is not decided by a list of taboos, but by a law of love. The greatest happiness in life comes not from doing what we *want* to do, but from doing what we *ought* to do. No wonder Paul adds in verse 19, *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace. . . .* We dare not spend all our time riding our own little theological hobby-horse, which often leads to strife and division, but rather we should indulge in those things which make for the strengthening and building up of our brethren.

Verse 22 adds much to our consideration of this great principle: . . . *Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.* Ironically enough, a man may be wrong in defending what is right, and thus incur God's disapproval even when he is upholding God's truth, if the law of love has been forgotten. If we have faith that a certain thing is right, and yet we know it may offend others, we ought not to parade it before them and thus cause offence.

Then, in one final phrase, Paul summarizes the chapter and gives us a principle by which every action of ours should be governed: . . . *whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* If it is doubtful, it is wrong. Yes, life would be so much simpler if it could all be seen in terms of black and white. Since this is not so, what we need is greater skill in the discernment and greater love in the application of the shading. *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit* (Gal. 5:25).

Gracious Spirit, dwell with me;  
I myself would gracious be,  
And with words that help and heal  
Would Thy life in mine reveal;  
And with actions bold and meek  
Would for Christ, my Saviour, speak.

Holy Spirit, dwell with me;  
I myself would holy be,  
Separate from sin, I would  
Choose and cherish all things good;  
And whatever I can be  
Give to Him who gave me Thee.  
—Thomas T. Lynch

Brengle Memorial Library  
The Salvation Army  
School for Officers' Training  
Suffern, N. Y.

S.A. BRENGLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY



3 3333 00006 3905

(Permission Received From The War Cry —  
Canadian Territory — For Reprint of  
This Series of Articles)

(May, 1975)