

## **BASIC BIBLE KNOWLEDGE**

### **9. THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Text: John 15:26 – 16:14

#### **WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

He is the third person in the ever-blessed TRINITY: GOD the FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT. It is important to recognise that the HOLY SPIRIT is a PERSON and not merely a power or influence. Everything said of GOD can be said of the HOLY SPIRIT. We should therefore approach the whole subject with the utmost reverence.

The Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter II Section III states: In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power and eternity; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost ... the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.

#### **THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTIVE FROM ETERNITY**

The HOLY SPIRIT being equal with GOD the FATHER in substance, power and eternity, was therefore in existence from the beginning. Not only that, the HOLY SPIRIT was ACTIVE also. He has been ceaselessly active in the creation, in the ordering and preservation of the universe, in providing for all life's needs, in revelation of the truth, as well as in the regeneration of believers.

#### **IN THE OLD TESTAMENT RECORDS**

We read of the HOLY SPIRIT coming upon certain chosen men for special tasks e.g. the calling of Noah to build the ark for the salvation of his family, the calling of Abraham to be father of the Jewish nation, the preparation of Joseph to be a ruler and counsel in the land of the Egypt (Genesis 41:38-46), and Moses to lead His people out of Egypt.

Then there were the heroes of the faith, spirit-filled men, listed by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews Chapter 11, and of course the Prophets of God: men like Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Elijah, Elisha, Samuel and others, whom God mightily used. We should not omit to mention King David, God's choice servant who, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote many of the Psalms – a man after God's own heart, and other "holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21), giving us the books of the Bible.

In the Old Testament times, we see that God the Holy Spirit was present with His chosen people. Although the Old Testament does not provide us with a comprehensive teaching on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the New Testament does, we know from the above instances that for a person to be saved, he must have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Therefore both the OT and NT saints have the same indwelling of the Holy Spirit when they believed.

#### **IN THE OLD NEW TESTAMENT**

With the coming of our Lord Jesus, a new day dawned, marked by the fulfillment of the Old Testament promise that God's Spirit would be freely and universally given to all who believed.

### **IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD**

The birth of Jesus by the virgin Mary was through the working of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18). He was conceived by the Holy Ghost – sinless, holy, undefiled.

At His baptism, the Holy Spirit as a dove descended from Heaven and abode upon Him, anointing Him for His holy ministry (John 1:33). Through the Spirit, He was consecrating Himself for God the Father's mission.

In His ministry, our Lord worked many miracles through the Holy Spirit, healing the sick, casting out demons, raising the dead.

### **AT PENTECOST**

The promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place in Jerusalem (Acts 2). A new day dawns. The Holy Spirit of God becomes a free gift, available to all who believe.

On the disciples, a profound and permanent transformation was effected. Division, strife and cowardice were replaced by unity, boldness and forbearance. Simple fisherfolk and unlearned men became heroes of the faith and fearless preachers of the Gospel “turning the world upside down” by the power of their preaching. They were ready to die for their faith, as indeed they all eventually did.

Peter's Spirit-filled preaching at Pentecost caused the hearers to be “pricked in their heart” and to seek salvation in Christ. “Repent, and be baptised ... in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:37, 38).

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BELIEVER'S LIFE**

The believer's life is life in the Spirit. From the first moments of his Christian life – the NEW BIRTH – the HOLY SPIRIT begins to be active in his life. It is the SPIRIT who give the NEW BIRTH and sustains this NEW LIFE. The believer becomes the temple of the HOLY GHOST (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; John 14:16). The HOLY GHOST or COMFORTER indwells the believer and begins HIS WORK OF SANCTIFICATION: his nature is refined, purified and made new. We are changed and made more Christ-like as we grow in knowledge of GOD (Ephesians 1:17; Galatians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 3:18). By the HOLY SPIRIT's power, evil desires are restrained and fruit of the SPIRIT appears (Galatians 5:16-22).

By the SPIRIT's work all true believers are drawn together in the unity of the faith, in fellowship and in worship (Philippians 2:1). The HOLY SPIRIT is the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, and HE guides us into all truth (John 16:13).

The words of our Lord are so precious here that we shall quote them for our remembrance: “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with

you for ever; ... he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you” (John 14:16,26).

The HOLY SPIRIT helps us to war against “the flesh”, our old sinful nature. He enables us to mortify or put to death the flesh (Romans 8:13) and its sinful deeds. He helps us to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:5-8).

The believer’s whole Christian life must be energised by the HOLY SPIRIT, without whose constant abiding we would fall. On our part, however, we must not grieve the HOLY SPIRIT by our disobedience to HIS promptings (Ephesians 4:30). We must constantly yield ourselves as instruments of righteousness unto God (Romans 6:13, 16, 19).

## **THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE UNBELIEVING WORLD**

“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8).

While the unbelieving world may reject the Saviour and spurn the Gospel, nevertheless it cannot escape the restraining power of God the Holy Spirit. He reproves the world by exerting the irresistible power of TRUTH so that unbelievers are thereby restrained and convicted, even in their state of unbelief.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS** the unbeliever of the **sin** of not believing in Christ; of righteousness by reminding him of Christ’s triumph over sin, His great work on the cross through which God now declares sinners righteous; of judgement by showing the certainty of the coming judgement and the utter futility of not submitting to the righteous JUDGE.

How does the HOLY SPIRIT do all these? Principally, through the witness of Christians who are “in the world” but not “of the world”. By their lives and actions, and by their witness to Gospel Truth, the unbelieving world is reproved and convicted.

THIS IS THE HOLY SPIRIT’S WORK.

## **WHAT IS THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

It is currently fashionable in some Christian groups and churches to teach that Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a post-conversion experience which all believers are urged to strive for after they have been saved, if they have not already experienced it.

The teaching of Scripture, however, is quite clear that Holy Spirit Baptism is an initiatory experience i.e. it takes place at the moment of conversion or the New Birth, and not something which comes later as a second experience.

**BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT** is a NEW TESTAMENT expression, in fulfillment of OLD TESTAMENT expectation. God had promised that in the days to come He would pour down His Spirit upon all flesh. When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming as he was preaching by the

River Jordan, he declared: “I indeed have baptized you with water: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost” (Mark 1:8)

The BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT was therefore to be expected in our Lord’s ministry. We see this stated in His interview with Nicodemus. Jesus said to him “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God ... Ye must be born again” (John 3:5-7).

The NEW BIRTH is clearly seen to consist of two distinct steps:

1. born of water, signifying the washing of sin, and
2. born of the Spirit, signifying the work of God’s Spirit in REGENERATION i.e. making the believer a new person.

This work of the SPIRIT in giving a person the NEW BIRTH is the same as

GIFT OF THE SPIRIT (Acts 2:38)  
BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT (Acts 1:5)  
OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT (Acts 2:17)  
PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT (Acts 2:33)

We conclude that the NEW BIRTH comes about through the BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT, without which a person cannot be born again.

We further conclude that there is no scriptural basis for asserting that believers must seek the BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT as a post-conversion experience.

The greatest demonstration of the BAPTISM of the SPIRIT was at Pentecost when 3,000 heard the Gospel, believed and were baptised. These penitent sinners received the gift of the Spirit in a mighty outpouring on that day.

## **HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM A UNIVERSAL BLESSING**

God’s Word teaches that ALL believers receive the BAPTISM of the HOLY SPIRIT. We are “born of the Spirit”. Holy Spirit Baptism is our birth-right. This was promised in Joel 2:28 and quoted by Peter (Acts 2:17) – “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.” All flesh means on all who believe irrespective of race, rank, age or sex. All who repent and believe shall receive this great gift – JEWS and GENTILES alike.

“Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

From this we see that HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM is **not** confined to some select group of Christians but a universal gift given to **all** believers.

## **THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT: A COUNTERFEIT SPIRIT**

There is currently a world-wide movement in the name of “Holy Spirit Renewal” or the “Charismatic Movement” involving Christians, believers and unbelievers, saved and unsaved persons, Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Everywhere, the movement is hailed as a unifying force working towards the ultimate reunion of all Christendom and peace in the world. The universal cry is “One in Christ”.

From our understanding of Holy Scripture and our observation of the activities of the Charismatic Movement we have serious reservations on the motivation and direction of this movement. Far from being unkind or unduly critical, we have applied Scriptural grounds to dissociate ourselves from the movement and to warn our members from any entanglement or involvement with its activities. The reasons for our first stand are these:

### **1. The grounds for unity are unscriptural**

While all true believers naturally find a common bond of fellowship and kinship in the Lord Jesus Christ, the coming together of believers with unbelievers cannot be a true scriptural unity.

In the Charismatic Movement the saved and the unsaved acclaim their common association as “oneness in Christ”. How can this be when some members of the movement have not even found salvation in Christ, have not been born again, and are not of the household of faith?

God’s Word clearly teaches in the Spirit – “one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God” (Ephesians 4:4-6). Many who participate in Charismatic meetings, shouting “Hallelujah! Praise the Lord” and babbling in tongues, are unsaved persons, still in darkness. How can such persons be part of the body of Christ and claim to be one in Him?

The Apostle Paul warns with these words: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ... or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?” (2 Corinthians 6:14-15).

### **2. The “tongues speaking” causes confusion**

The unintelligible babbling of “tongues” by groups of unsaved persons cannot be a sign of Holy Spirit renewal. “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Corinthians 14:33).

The noisy, confused shouting and hand-clapping phenomena which characterises Charismatic meetings does not bear the stamp of an authentic movement of God the Holy Spirit.

### **3. Re-union of churches the work of Satan**

While on the surface, and to the unsaved or uninstructed, the coming together of the Churches (Protestant and Roman Catholic, or of different Protestant Denominations) is a desirable thing, nevertheless God’s Word has clear teaching against such a

man-made organic union at this time. Prophetic Scripture foretells the formation of the false church of Satan, described in Revelation 17 as the harlot, the great whore and Babylon the Great.

We have observed and constantly warned against the coming of the end-time One-World Church of Satan. All believers must keep clear of this evil counterfeit body which our Lord shall utterly destroy with fire at His coming (Revelation 18). Today, this One-world Church is rapidly taking shape with the increasing dialogue and co-operation between the Ecumenical Movement and the Roman Catholic Church.

**THIS CHURCH UNION IS BEING ACTIVELY PROMOTED BY THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT.**

Can the Holy Spirit be in a movement which is working against GOD?

There are other unscriptural manifestations within the Charismatic Movement, e.g. the unbalanced emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the alleged "faith healing", the so-called "renewal". We recognize that it has done some good and in many respects it appears to be a genuine work of God's Spirit. Herein lies the snare. Even Satan will come in the form of an angel of light to deceive the unwary. Our Lord has warned against false Christs and false prophets who shall, if it were possible, deceive the very elect (Matthew 24:24).

We conclude: The Charismatic Movement is a COUNTERFEIT. It is not of the Holy Spirit. Believers must have nothing to do with it.

## BIBLE KNOWLEDGE QUIZ

### 9. THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### Fill in the blanks:

1. The HOLY SPIRIT is the \_\_\_\_\_ PERSON of the TRIUNE GODHEAD.
2. The HOLY SPIRIT has been \_\_\_\_\_ from the beginning, in the work of creation and preservation of the universe, and other works of GOD.
3. In the OLD TESTAMENT TIMES, the HOLY SPIRIT was not \_\_\_\_\_ available to all GOD'S people.
4. When Christ came, He promised the dawn of a new age, the age of the \_\_\_\_\_ SPIRIT.
5. Now the HOLY SPIRIT is freely given to all who \_\_\_\_\_ JESUS CHRIST as Saviour.

#### Underline the correct answers:

6. At Pentecost, there was
  - (a) a Charismatic renewal
  - (b) a downpouring of the Holy Spirit
  - (c) mass hysteria
7. The HOLY SPIRIT indwells
  - (a) every true believer
  - (b) all church members
  - (c) certain church leaders only
8. The HOLY SPIRIT purifies and refines the believers who
  - (a) never reads God's Word
  - (b) yields himself to GOD's Word
  - (c) rebels against God
9. The Charismatic Movement is
  - (a) a false movement
  - (b) the work of the HOLY SPIRIT
  - (c) GOD'S gift
10. All believers should
  - (a) join the Charismatic Movement
  - (b) promote union with Roman Catholics
  - (c) keep clear of all unscriptural movements and teachings