The Holy Spirit
IN MIRACULOUS MEASURE

F. L. Paisley

Some months ago I began some essays on the Holy Spirit, but summer meetings and some technicalities have caused a break in their appearance. We resume that study now.

If there is any one important point of teaching in the religious world today, it is the work in, and relation of the Holy Spirit to, human redemption. And if there is any one thing that is misunderstood in the field of religious thought, it is the miraculous work of the Spirit that was necessary in the days of the apostles, but not at all needed now. And the failure to see this distinction in time when needed and not needed is the source of much of the trouble and wild thinking so common in the realm of religion.

There are three measures or gifts of the Holy Spirit to men as revealed in the New Testament. We state them in the order of their application to humanity. First, there was the baptism of, or in, the Spirit. That is the Spirit came upon some—a limited number for a limited purpose—in his overwhelming influence, and took over their minds and tongues to enable them to speak the mind of God with all certainty and infallibility. This measure was also to enable them who had it to do all sorts of miracles to confirm the word they were speaking, for it was a new message of truth and needed proof that it was from God. Beyond these two effects there was no need of the miraculous power of the Spirit upon men. These two things accomplished there is no further need of such gifts unto men. They have been accomplished perfectly, and the Bible is the result. To argue the need of such measure of gift now is to say that one or both of the things then needed has not been accomplished, or to greatly misunderstand the simple meaning of the word “baptism” as applied to the Spirit.

The second sort of gift was bestowed by the laying on of hands of some one directly empowered to bestow such gift that way. Acts 8 gives a concrete example of this and the effect and work following. This gift, the power received from the Spirit through hands laid on the recipient, was less limited in number to receive it, but much more limited as to powers granted.

The third measure of the Spirit upon men is that common gift bestowed upon all who obey the gospel of the Lord. Acts 5:32 and 2:38. In all the Bible there is no hint of any miraculous effect intended. It is evident on the face of all about us that this gift contains no marvelous powers. It is the same, in effect at least, as “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Rom. 8:9.

So with this statement of the very clear difference between either two of these gifts, a short study of the first one—the baptismal measure, promised only to the apostles, and received only by them on the day of pentecost. Some eight or ten years later some Gentiles received the same gift, but it enabled them to reveal no new truth to anyone. It was to confirm to the apostles, and subsequently the Jerusalem church, the right of the Gentiles to the gospel—which was not dreamed possible by any Jew up to this time.

It is now my duty to make proof of the statement just made—that the apostles only received this supernatural gift on Pentecost. There is no greater issue in this land between us and the fanatical, wild-eyed and superemotional, superstitious religiousists than this very point and the resultant claims made by them. And until recently it was not thought that any gospel preacher held the idea that such a baptism belongs to all the saved. The one holding it now is a very fine man, standing alone save the few he may have converted in his congregation, for surely no other gospel proclaimer holds such an absurd line of thought.

If any people today, claiming the baptism of the Holy Spirit, lack such powers as were possessed by those whom they had them, then evidently they lack the baptism itself, unless there can be some good reason given why the baptism continues while the resultant miraculous powers are withdrawn. And we know that we know that the other fellow knows that such powers are not possessed by mortals now. I have said on the radio many times, in the very city headquarters of one of the leading cults holding the claim, that these statements we make are true, and their claims unsustained. And no one has ever called my hand. I have offered many times to raise any dead before their eyes if they, any number of them, could produce any well-established cure, many of which they claim. Something

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like the following was said repeatedly, with one of their ardent members as my announcer at the controls listening, smiling but pretending not to hear me till repetitions forced him to notice it.

"We boldly maintain that all the claims, we care not by whom made, whether by an unknown and unpopular sect, or by the most popular and widely-known one in the field of miraculous claims, we unhesitatingly say that none of them have such powers, nor can they deal with unquestioned cases of affliction common to all communities."

When the forerunner of Christ announced to a multitude on the banks of Jordan, "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me—shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire," he announced three kinds of baptism—immersion in three different elements. I baptize you in water, but Jesus will baptize (some of) you in the Holy Spirit and (some of) you in fire. That this fire baptism is not related to the "tongues like as of fire" on Pentecost when the first case of Spirit baptism occurred, but does refer to eternal punishment, is evident in the comment he immediately made. Speaking of the day of final separation, the baptizer said, "He will gather the wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire." See Matt. 3:11, 12.

Many people do not know how to understand a plural pronoun and think that it must in every use in the same connection refer to all of the same people once covered; or if they are not this uninformed, they have a special theory to sustain. Such people say that the same "you" to be baptized in water were also to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. But the same "you" (if this sort of thinking is correct) who were to be baptized in Spirit are also to be baptized in fire. The fanatics have always claimed this latter as a fact. It is painful to see a gospel preacher saying the same thing—the one referred to above. The extremists say that fire baptism and Spirit baptism are the same.

On the day of Pentecost, while the apostles were speaking to the astonishment of the multitude who thought they were drunk, or claimed to think it, the astonished men said to each other, "Are not all these who speak Galileans?" Acts 2:7. The Spirit had come upon the apostles before the people assembled, then they rushed up to the Temple to see what had happened. This precludes the postterrestrial idea that the crowd received the Spirit. Many of the disciples were from Judea. The apostles were from Galilee. The unbelievers were able to see that the men affected by the Spirit's coming were from Galilee.

To read Acts 1:28 and 2:1 together, for they were written as immediately successive statements, is to see that only the apostles were in the upper room when the Spirit came. Here is the reading: "And they gave lots for them and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they (the apostles) were all together in one place." It was upon these alone that the Spirit came in baptismal measure, described in verses immediately following.

Another Debate With Heretics

W. Curtis Porter

Readers of our religious papers will recall that it became necessary last year for me to meet Thomas L. Conner, ringleader of the "no judgment after death" heretics, in a debate at Boynton, near Laveville, Arkansas. That debate was followed with warnings to the brotherhood against using these false teachers. Nearly all the churches in this section shut them out and refused to use them in any way whatever. They continued to preach for the Boynton church for some time, but later, because of other matters, their service was dispensed with there. The men involved in the teaching of this heresy were Thomas L. Conner, Marshall Conner, Tracy Wheeler and James F. Bronts. After the Boynton church let Conner go, all but James Brents went to the West coast—to California and Oregon—but they failed to find the welcome there that they evidently expected, and soon returned to this section of the country. They had a little following in the Bone Camp congregation west of Senath, Missouri, and with this help and the help of a few families who had followed them from Boynton they proceeded to take over and start preaching their heresy there. Thus they are living up to their past record of disturbing and dividing churches with their heretical teaching. Because of this it has become necessary to engage them in debate again. So I shall meet Conner in a four nights' debate at the Bone Camp congregation in the near future. We must continue our fight against these heretics till they are completely rejected by the brotherhood. This next debate should accomplish the task. The exact date for the debate will be announced soon. In the meantime, we admonish and warn churches to beware of these men—give them no opportunity to preach in your congregation unless you are looking for trouble and division. They are determined to cause all the division they can.

Monette, Arkansas

An Explanation

Leonard L. Willis

In the latter part of August last an article appeared in Gospel Advocate and other papers stating that Leonard L. Willis would begin full-time work Sept. 8, with the church at 8th & "F" St., National City, California. I did just that and with the hope that my physical condition would allow me to be their full-time servant. Later, however, physician's examination revealed the necessity of my retiring temporarily from the ministry. I requested and was granted release solely on account of my health. The brethren were loyal and noble in Christian spirit. It was with much regret that I had to leave. May God continue to prosper them in their effort to serve Him faithfully in my prayer.

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