

## **“RECEIVE” THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The basic cause of the entire realm of Arminian holiness error is a poor beginning; and the further along this line one travels, the more advanced the problems become. Capt. J.C. Metcalfe points to the fact that “most of the frustrations, failures, and errors which abound in ‘Christendom,’ can be traced to too low an estimate of the marvel of the new birth, and the consequent insistence on another reception of the Holy Spirit.”

QUESTION- “Is there a distinction between the reception of the Holy Spirit as a Person, and the enduement of Pentecost?”

MRS. J. PENN-LEWIS- “I will say, Yes; not only from the light of Scripture, but from the knowledge of experience, and the confirmation of facts around us on every side. In John 20:22, we read that the Lord Jesus said to the disciples on the first Easter Day: ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost,’ or, as in the Greek: ‘Take ye the Holy Spirit.’ And yet on the Day of Pentecost there came a mighty influx of the Spirit of God into them, so that they were ‘filled’ with the Holy Ghost.

“On the Easter Day, there was an act of ‘taking’ the Holy Spirit, for when the Lord Jesus said, ‘Take ye,’ there must have been a response and a reception. But how different the description of the Pentecostal enduement of the Spirit. ‘He hath poured forth this.’ ‘As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell.’ ‘Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you.’

“Until a Christian receives the Holy Spirit, although he may be regenerated and born of the Spirit, his Christian life is more mental than spiritual. He may be out-and-out loyal to Christ, but it is mainly in the realm of the will and of the mind. Then a great change takes place when he is brought to receive the Holy Spirit, and he becomes conscious of a life after the spirit, in more or less degree.

“But still a greater change takes place when by the teaching of the indwelling Spirit, the believer sees that there is still for him a fulness of the Spirit for service, which will enable him to be an effective witness to the Risen Lord, and equip him for aggressive warfare against the powers of darkness. The

Baptism of the Spirit is, therefore, very clear to me, as a greater influx of the Holy Spirit into a spirit already indwelt by Him. The Lord Jesus said, 'I will give you another Comforter;' let me ask you, Have you received the Holy Ghost?" (1912 Overcomer pp. 82-84.)

"The reception of the Holy Spirit in its initial form requires certain conditions which the believer should be able to quickly and simply fulfil. The (1) putting away of every known sin in the life; (2) definite trust in the power of the Blood of Christ to cleanse from all unrighteousness; (3) obedience right up to the edge of light through the Word of God; (4) full surrender to God as His entirely, with not one thing clung to and withheld from Him; (5) the act of faith in which the believer, fulfilling these conditions, takes the gift of the Holy Spirit, as simply as he received the gift of eternal life through Christ.

"All who receive Jesus as their Saviour, must also receive the Holy Spirit as a Person - the gift of Christ to make His saved ones, Christlike. Have all who read this understood that just as you receive Jesus — the gift of God, so you must receive the Holy Spirit — the gift of the Lord Jesus. Jesus to save you — the Holy Spirit to make you like Jesus. Read John 20:22, and Gal. 3:13, 14, and you will see how you are to 'receive the Holy Spirit'." —J. Penn-Lewis (1912 Overcomer, p. 29.)

A.J. GORDON— "It seems clear from Scripture that it is still the duty and privilege of believers to receive the Holy Spirit by a conscious, definite act of appropriating faith, just as they received Jesus Christ. We base this conclusion on several grounds. Presumably if the Paraclete is a person, coming down at a certain definite time to make His abode in the Church, for guiding, teaching, and sanctifying the Body of Christ, there is the same reason for our accepting Him for His special ministry as for accepting the Lord Jesus for His special ministry.

"To say that in receiving Christ we necessarily receive in the same act the gift of the Spirit, seems to confound what the Scriptures make distinct. For it is as sinners that we accept Christ for our justification, but it is as sons that we accept the Spirit for our sanctification: 'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father' (Gal. 4:6). Thus, when Peter preached his first sermon to the multitude after the Spirit had been given, he said: '... Repent, and be baptized every one of you

in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38). This passage shows that logically and chronologically the gift of the Spirit is subsequent to repentance." (The Ministry of the Spirit, p. 68.)

Dr. Merrill F. Unger supplies us with a very interesting refutation of the error set forth by these two well-known leaders. "Our Lord, while on earth, taught that the Father in answer to prayer would '... give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?' (Lu. 11:13). This promise, of course, was pre-Pentecost, and was spoken under the Old Economy, when the Spirit of God came upon men, and departed according to divine sovereign will. For a man to ask for, much less receive, the Spirit was a staggering new thing to a Jew, in advance of the fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29, and there is no evidence that any asked for the Spirit, claiming this promise.

"To apply this teaching to the present age is erroneously to assume that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is the same in every dispensation and to forget Pentecost, ignoring the fact that every believer now, has the Indwelling Spirit. It was the ascended Christ who asked the Father for the Spirit as the Ascension Gift (John 14:16), and no believer now, baptized and indwelt with the Spirit, as he is, need ever ask for Him. He possesses Him, and never because he has prayed or asked for Him, but because he has Him as a free gift by virtue of simple faith in the crucified and risen Saviour.

"The Lord Jesus, during His earthly life, instructed His disciples concerning an amazing and revolutionary development that they might receive the Holy Spirit by asking the Father (Lu. 11:13). He was, no doubt, preparing them for a more glorious unfolding of truth that **He** would pray for the Comforter, who would come to abide permanently in each and every one of them, without any asking whatever on their part (John 14:16, 17), but in answer to simple faith in Him as the Redeemer.

"On the evening of the day of His resurrection a further step was taken. The Lord Jesus breathed on the disciples (John 20:22), and apparently gave them the Holy Spirit, possibly to equip them to

receive the teaching of the forty days, and possibly in the sense in which they failed to ask for themselves, according to the promise of Luke 11:13.”

“When the Lord Jesus ‘breathed on His disciples’ and said, ‘Receive ye the Holy Spirit’ (John 20:22), it was a unique and special case to meet an exigency in the transition from one dispensation to another, and in no sense formed them into the mystical body of Christ (Acts 1:5). It was a sovereign act of the risen Saviour upon a chosen few to perform a special task (Acts 1:2, 3), and not upon the whole group to merge them into a corporate body. That could not take place until Christ had left the earth, and sent the Spirit to regenerate, baptize, indwell, seal, and fill the **whole** body of believers.” (The Baptizing Work of the Holy Spirit, pp. 45-53.)