

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION

PRESENTED BY

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GREEN LAWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

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LAST LORD'S DAY EVENING, WE DISCUSSED THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN JUSTIFICATION, AND AT THAT TIME WE SUGGESTED THAT WE WERE RATHER FORTUNATE BECAUSE ON THAT PARTICULAR SUBJECT THERE WAS VERY LITTLE DISAGREEMENT AMONG BRETHREN, THAT THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF AGREEMENT AS TO THE WORK AND THE WAY IN WHICH THE SPIRIT WORKED IN JUSTIFICATION. BUT AT THE SAME TIME WE WERE NOT SO OPTIMISTIC CONCERNING THE LESSON TO BE PRESENTED TONIGHT--THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION. FOR YOU SEE THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN JUSTIFICATION HAS TO DO WITH THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN CONVERTING THE SINNER AND THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION HAS TO DO WITH HIS WORK IN PERFECTING THE CHILD OF GOD. I HESITATE TO SPEAK ON THE SUBJECT BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN SUCH A CONTROVERISAL ISSUE. BY AND LARGE, THE CONTROVERSY HAS NOW SUBSIDED, AND I HESITATE TO PRESENT A LESSON WHICH MIGHT CAUSE IT TO BEGIN AGAIN. SUCH IS NOT MY PURPOSE, AND DID I THINK THAT OUR PRESENT ATMOSPHERE WERE MORE CONDUCIVE TO GENERATING HEAT THAN SHEDDING LIGHT, I WOULD NOT DISCUSS IT. I DO NOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH IS THE CASE.

I BELIEVE THE TEACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD IS PERFECTLY CLEAR ON THIS SUBJECT AND I BELIEVE THAT IT CAN BE UNDERSTOOD. AS WE STUDY THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION AND HOW HE GOES ABOUT IT LET US DO SO BY ASKING SEVERAL QUESTIONS. THE FIRST QUESTION IS, "HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELL IN THE CHILD OF GOD?" NOW THIS IS NO PROBLEM AS FAR AS THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT IN JUSTIFICATION IS CONCERNED FOR THERE ARE VERY FEW PEOPLE, IF ANY, AND THERE ARE NONE OF WHICH I KNOW AMONG MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST, WHO WOULD CONTEND THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLS IN ONE THAT IS NOT A CHILD OF GOD. THERE IS ALSO GENERAL AGREEMENT, AND I KNOW OF NO ONE WHO WOULD DISAGREE WITH THE FACT, THAT THE SPIRIT DOES DWELL IN THE CHRISTIAN. THE POINT OF CONTROVERSY CENTERS IN THE QUESTION, "HOW DOES THE SPIRIT DWELL?" BEFORE WE LOOK AT WHAT THE SCRIPTURE HAS TO SAY, I THINK WE OUGHT FIRST OF ALL TO RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE ONLY THREE POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO THIS QUESTION. THE FIRST POSSIBLE ANSWER IS THAT THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN IN A MIRACULOUS WAY, BY WHICH I SIMPLY MEAN THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN IN SUCH A WAY AS TO ENABLE THE CHRISTIAN TO DO THE MIRACULOUS OR TO AFFECT HIM IN A WAY THAT IS CONSIDERED MIRACULOUS. THE SECOND WAY IN WHICH THE SPIRIT MAY DWELL IN THE CHRISTIAN IS THAT HE MAY DWELL IN THE CHRISTIAN REPRESENTATIVELY. THAT IS TO SAY, THE SPIRIT DOES NOT PERSONALLY DWELL IN THE CHRISTIAN, BUT RATHER HE DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN THROUGH AN AGENT OR THROUGH A REPRESENTATIVE. IN THIS CASE, THE REPRESENTATIVE IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE THE WORD. THIS IS A POSSIBILITY. WE KNOW THAT GOD DWELLS IN A CHRISTIAN REPRESENTATIVELY. IN EPHESIANS 2:22 WE READ THAT WE ARE "A HABITATION OF GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT," WHICH IS TO SAY THAT GOD DWELLS IN US, BUT GOD DOES NOT DWELL IN US PERSONALLY. GOD DWELLS IN US REPRESENTATIVELY THROUGH THE REPRESENTATION OR THE PRESENCE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD. THE THIRD POSSIBILITY IS THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY DWELL IN US PERSONALLY, THAT IS THE PERSON OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ABIDES IN THE CHRISTIAN. I WANT YOU TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION JUST HERE. THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN PERSONALLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WORD. NOW GENERALLY WE HEAR THE EXPRESSION, "THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN PERSONALLY, SEPERATE AND APART FROM THE WORD." I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS IS A LIVE POSSIBILITY FOR I THINK IF THE CHRISTIAN IS INDWELT BY THE SPIRIT SEPERATE AND APART FROM THE WORD OF GOD THAT THEN WE MUST REVERT TO THE FIRST POSSIBILITY WHICH IS TO SAY THAT THERE IS SOME MIRACULOUS MANIFESTATION PRESENT. SO THEN HAVING OUTLINED THESE POSSIBILITIES 1) THAT THE SPIRIT INDWELLS THE CHRISTIAN MIRACULOUSLY, 2) THAT THE SPIRIT INDWELLS THE CHRISTIAN REPRESENTATIVELY, 3) THAT THE SPIRIT INDWELLS THE CHRISTIAN PERSONALLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WORD--LET US TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES AND SEE WHICH OF THESE THREE POSSIBILITIES WE DISCOVER.

I WOULD INVITE YOUR ATTENTION FIRST OF ALL TO I COR. 6:12-20. "ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL UNTO ME, BUT ALL THINGS ARE NOT EXPEDIENT; ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL FOR ME, BUT I WILL NOT BE BROUGHT UNDER THE POWER OF ANY. MEATS FOR THE BELLY, AND THE BELLY FOR MEATS: BUT GOD SHALL DESTROY BOTH IT AND THEM. NOW THE BODY IS NOT FOR FORNICATION, BUT FOR THE LORD; AND THE LORD FOR THE BODY. AND GOD HATH BOTH RAISED UP THE LORD, AND WILL ALSO RAISE UP US BY HIS OWN POWER. KNOW YE NOT THAT YOUR BODIES ARE THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST? SHALL I THEN TAKE THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST, AND MAKE THEM THE MEMBERS OF AN HARLOT? GOD FORBID! WHAT! KNOW YE NOT THAT HE WHICH IS JOINED TO AN HARLOT IS ONE BODY? FOR TWO, SAITH HE, SHALL BE ONE FLESH. BUT HE THAT IS JOINED UNTO THE LORD IS ONE SPIRIT. FLEE FORNICATION. EVERY SIN THAT A MAN DOETH IS WITHOUT THE BODY; BUT HE THAT COMMITTETH FORNICATION SINNETH AGAINST HIS OWN BODY. 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." NOW THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH, OF COURSE, WAS A PROBLEM CHURCH. THEY HAD HAD PROBLEMS WITH THE EATING OF MEAT SACRIFICED TO IDOLS. THEY HAD HAD PROBLEMS WITH FORNICATION, AND INDEED ONE OF THEIR MEMBERS WAS APPARENTLY LIVING IN INCEST, AND PAUL WROTE UNTO THEM TO STRAIGHTEN THEM OUT ON THESE PROBLEMS. THE VERY FIRST THING THAT PAUL DOES IN THIS PASSAGE IS TO IMPRESS UPON THEM THAT THE EATING OF MEATS AND THE COMMITTING OF FORNICATION ARE NOT IN THE SAME CATEGORY--THE EATING OF MEATS MAY FALL INTO THE AREA OF EXPEDIENCY, BUT FORNICATION IS SOMETHING THAT IS ABSOLUTELY AND IN EVERY WAY WRONG. NOW IN ORDER TO IMPRESS THIS FACT UPON THEM, PAUL MENTIONS TWO OR THREE THINGS. HE SAYS THAT FORNICATION IS WRONG BECAUSE YOUR BODIES ARE MEMBERS OF CHRIST. FORNICATION IS WRONG BECAUSE, SINCE YOU ARE A MEMBER OF CHRIST, THEN IF YOU COMMIT FORNICATION THE BODY OF CHRIST IS JOINED TO AN HARLOT. GOD FORBID THIS SHOULD BE SO. IN THE THIRD PLACE, HE SAYS THAT FORNICATION IS WRONG BECAUSE YOUR BODIES ARE INDWELT BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD AND IT IS NOT CONCEIVABLE THAT AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD TAKE A BODY WHICH IS A TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND JOIN IT UNTO AN HARLOT. NOW PAUL'S ARGUMENT HERE CONCERNING THE ABSOLUTE WRONGNESS OF FORNICATION DOESN'T HAVE ANY MEANING IF THE BODY OF THE CHRISTIAN IS NOT INDWELT PERSONALLY BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

AGAIN, TURN TO EPHESIANS 1:13, 14. "IN WHOM YE ALSO TRUSTED, AFTER THAT YE HEARD THE WORD OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION: IN WHOM ALSO, AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, YE WERE SEALED WITH THAT HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE, WHICH IS THE EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE, UNTIL THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION, UNTO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY." NOW WHAT DOES PAUL SAY TO THE EPHESIANS ABOUT THE SPIRIT HERE? NOTICE AGAIN VERY CAREFULLY THE THIRTEENTH VERSE: "IN WHOM YE ALSO TRUSTED, AFTER THAT YE HEARD THE WORD OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION: IN WHOM ALSO, AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, YE WERE SEALED WITH THAT HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE." NOW NOTICE THE ORDER HERE. YE HEARD THE WORD OF TRUTH, YOU BELIEVED THE WORD OF TRUTH, AND THIRD, YOU WERE SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SEALING OF THE SPIRIT WAS SOMETHING WHICH WAS DONE AFTER THEY HAD HEARD THE WORD AND AFTER THEY HAD BELIEVED THE WORD WHICH IS TO SAY THAT THE RECEPTION OF THE SPIRIT AND THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD ARE NOT AND CANNOT BE THE SAME THING. THE RECEPTION OF THE SPIRIT IS SOMETHING WHICH FOLLOWS THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD. THAT THIS IS TRUE CAN BE SEEN FROM A STUDY OF THE SECOND CHAPTER OF ACTS. IN THE 41ST VERSE, WE READ THIS SIMPLE STATEMENT: "THEN THEY THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED: AND THE SAME DAY THERE WERE ADDED UNTO THEM ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS." NOW IF THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD AND THE RECEPTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ARE EXACTLY THE SAME THING, THEN THOSE THAT "GLADLY RECEIVED THE WORD" RECEIVED THE SPIRIT BEFORE THEY WERE BAPTIZED, AND THAT MEANS THAT LUKE CONTRADICTED HIMSELF BETWEEN VERSES 38 AND VERSE 41 IN THE SECOND CHAPTER OF ACTS. IN THE 38TH VERSE, AND WE'LL LOOK AT THAT VERSE IN JUST A MOMENT, HE SAID THAT WHEN YOU REPENT AND WHEN YOU ARE BAPTIZED FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, YE SHALL (IT FOLLOWS BAPTISM) RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. BUT LET'S TURN BACK NOW TO GALATIANS 4:6. HERE THE APOSTLE PAUL SAYS,

"AND BECAUSE YE ARE SONS, GOD HATH SENT FORTH THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON INTO YOUR HEARTS, CRYING, ABBA, FATHER." NOW NOTE CAREFULLY THE ORDER HERE. "BECAUSE YE ARE SONS, GOD HATH SENT FORTH THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON INTO YOUR HEARTS, CRYING, ABBA, FATHER." NOW, YOU SEE, THEY RECEIVED THE SPIRIT BECAUSE THEY WERE SONS. WE RECEIVE THE WORD, NOT BECAUSE WE ARE SONS, BUT IN ORDER TO BECOME SONS. THEREFORE, PAUL TELLS THE GALATIANS THAT THE RECEPTION OF THE WORD AND THE RECEPTION OF THE SPIRIT ARE NOT THE SAME THING AND CANNOT BE EQUATED FOR IT IS BECAUSE WE ARE SONS THAT GOD SENDS FORTH THE SPIRIT INTO OUR HEARTS.

NOW LET'S GO TO ACTS 2:38, FOR IT SEEMS THAT IT IS IN THIS PARTICULAR VERSE THAT THE CONTROVERSY HAS FOUND ITS CENTER. YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH IT. PETER 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." NOW OBVIOUSLY, THERE ARE ONLY TWO POSSIBLE MEANINGS FOR THIS EXPRESSION, "GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST." EITHER IT IS SOME GIFT THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES OR IT IS THE GIFT WHICH IS THE HOLY SPIRIT. NOW WHICH OF THESE TWO POSSIBLE MEANINGS IS IT? FIRST, LET'S LOOK AT THE POSSIBILITY THAT IT IS SOMETHING THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES. THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, A GIFT WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT BESTOWS UPON THOSE WHO HAVE REPENTED AND BEEN BAPTIZED FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS. IF IT IS A GIFT THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES, WHAT IS THE GIFT? IF IT IS A GIFT WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVES, WHAT IS THE GIFT THAT THE SPIRIT GIVES? THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBLE ANSWERS. SOMEONE MIGHT SAY THAT IT'S THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE ABILITY WHICH WAS GIVEN THAT DAY TO PERFORM THE MIRACULOUS, BUT YOU SEE IF THAT IS WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT GAVE, THEN FOLLOWING THE DAY OF PENTECOST, AFTER WHICH THERE WAS NO MORE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, NO GOSPEL PREACHER COULD PREACH ALL OF ACTS 2:38. HE'D HAVE TO SAY, "REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS AND YE SHALL NOT RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT," BECAUSE THAT IS THE BAPTISMAL MEASURE AND YOU CAN'T GET THAT. THUS, IT CANNOT BE THE BAPTISMAL MEASURE, THE MIRACULOUS CAPACITY WHICH THE SPIRIT BESTOWED UPON SOME.

OTHERS MIGHT SAY, THAT THIS WAS THE DAY OF MIRACLES AND WHAT THE APOSTLE PETER WAS REFERRING TO—THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—IS THAT THE APOSTLES WOULD LAY THEIR HANDS UPON OTHERS THAT THEY MIGHT BESTOW MIRACULOUS CAPACITY UPON INDIVIDUALS. BUT IS THIS A POSSIBILITY? AFTER THE 38TH VERSE PETER SAID, "FOR THE PROMISE IS UNTO YOU, AND TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND TO ALL THAT ARE AFAR OFF, EVEN AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD SHALL CALL." SO IF THE PROMISE OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS THE PROMISE OF THE LAYING ON OF HANDS THEN EITHER PETER WAS WRONG WHEN HE SAID IT SHALL BE GIVEN UNTO ALL, OR WE ARE WRONG WHEN WE SAY THAT THE DAY OF MIRACLES IS PASSED. "FOR THE PROMISE IS TO YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN, AND TO ALL THEM THAT ARE AFAR OFF EVEN AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD SHALL CALL." SO IT CANNOT BE THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

PERHAPS IT REFERS TO SALVATION. "REPENT, AND BE BAPTIZED EVERYONE OF YOU AND YOU WILL BE SAVED." BUT YOU SEE THAT WOULD INVOLVE THE APOSTLE PETER IN A GREAT REDUNDANCY AND WE JUST DON'T FIND THINGS LIKE THAT IN THE SPIRIT-WRITTEN WORD OF GOD. IF IT REFERS SIMPLY TO SALVATION PETER HAS JUST SAID, "REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERYONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE THE REMISSION OF SINS." YOU JUST DON'T FIND A REDUNDANT STATEMENT LIKE THAT IN SCRIPTURE. THERE IS NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION OF THE GIFT IF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT SIMPLY REFERS TO A GIFT WHICH THE SPIRIT GIVES.

NOW THERE IS JUST ONE OTHER POSSIBILITY AND THAT IS THAT IT MIGHT WELL BE TRANSLATED, "REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED EVERYONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT WHICH IS THE HOLY SPIRIT." BOTH LOGIC AND LANGUAGE DEMAND THIS UNDERSTANDING OF ACTS 2:38. FIRST, THERE IS NO LOGICAL EXPLANATION OF A GIFT WHICH THE SPIRIT GIVES. SECOND, THE CONSTRUCTION IN THE GREEK IS IN THE GENITIVE. THE MAJORITY OF THE LEXICOGRAPHERS AND OF THE LINGUISTS SAY IT IS THE GENITIVE OF APPPOSITION OR THE GENITIVE OF IDENTIFICATION WHICH MEANS THAT THE SPIRIT IS BEING IDENTIFIED AS THE GIFT AND PETER HAS SAID "THE GIFT WHICH IS THE SPIRIT."

THUS, ALL OF THESE PASSAGES, AND WE COULD MULTIPLY THEM, POINT TO THE FACT THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD PERSONALLY DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN. NOW SOMEONE ASKS, "WELL, IF THAT IS TRUE, HOW DOES HE DWELL IN THE CHRISTIAN? JUST TELL ME THAT." I WISH I COULD. IF THE BIBLE TOLD ME, I THINK I COULD TELL YOU. BUT WHILE THE BIBLE TELLS ME THAT THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN ME, IT DOESN'T TELL ME HOW THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN ME. IF I MIGHT ANSWER A QUESTION WITH A QUESTION, IF YOU BELIEVE THE SPIRIT DWELLS REPRESENTATIVELY, I MIGHT ASK YOU HOW THE WORD DWELLS IN YOU. WHEN YOU TELL ME HOW THE WORD DWELLS IN YOU, I THINK I CAN JUST TAKE OUT THE WORD "WORD" AND INSERT THE WORD "SPIRIT" AND TELL YOU HOW THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN ME. MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO TRY SOMETHING A LITTLE BIT SIMPLER. TELL ME HOW YOUR OWN SPIRIT DWELLS IN YOUR BODY AND WHEN YOU CAN EXPLAIN TO ME HOW YOUR OWN SPIRIT DWELLS IN YOUR BODY, PERHAPS I CAN EXPLAIN TO YOU HOW THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN MY BODY. THE ANSWER IS, I DON'T KNOW. THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY AND I SEE NO USE IN SPECULATING AND WASTING TIME TRYING TO DISCOVER WHAT GOD DOES NOT REVEAL.

BUT NOW THERE COMES ANOTHER QUESTION, AND I THINK REALLY THIS IS WHERE WE HAVE HAD CAUSE FOR CONTROVERSY. I THINK THE CONTROVERSY HAS NOT CENTERED SO MUCH IN HOW DOES THE SPIRIT DWELL IN ME AS WHAT DOES THE SPIRIT DO FOR THE CHILD OF GOD. SO LET US ASK THE QUESTION, "WHAT DOES THE SPIRIT DO TO OR IN A CHRISTIAN?" AND I WANT YOU TO NOTE THOSE PREPOSITIONS VERY CAREFULLY BECAUSE THEY ARE IMPORTANT. I DID NOT ASK THE QUESTION, "WHAT DOES THE SPIRIT DO FOR A CHRISTIAN?" THE SPIRIT MAY DO SOME THINGS FOR THE CHRISTIAN THAT HE DOES NOT DO THROUGH THE WORD. I CAN THINK OF AT LEAST ONE WHICH IS REVEALED--ROMANS 8:26--WHERE IT SAYS THAT "THE SPIRIT ITSELF MAKETH INTERCESSION FOR US WITH GROANINGS WHICH CANNOT BE UTTERED." YOU SEE WHERE IS THE SPIRIT DOING SOMETHING FOR THE CHRISTIAN. BUT THIS IS REALLY OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF OUR LESSON. I WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE SPIRIT DOES TO OR IN A CHRISTIAN AND AGAIN LET US TURN TO THE WORD OF GOD.

LET US TURN TO ROMANS 8:14 AND HERE WE WILL DISCOVER THAT THE SPIRIT LEADS THE CHRISTIAN. "FOR AS MANY AS ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD." EVERYONE WHO IS THE SON OF GOD IS LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD. II THESSALONIANS 2:13 "BUT WE ARE BOUND TO GIVE THANKS ALWAY TO GOD FOR YOU, BRETHREN BELOVED OF THE LORD, BECAUSE GOD HATH FROM THE BEGINNING CHOSEN YOU TO SALVATION THROUGH SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT AND BELIEF OF THE TRUTH." THE SPIRIT SANCTIFYS THE CHRISTIAN. THE SPIRIT BEARS WITNESS TO THE SONSHIP OF THE CHRISTIAN, ROMANS 8:16; "THE SPIRIT HIMSELF BEARETH WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT THAT WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD." THE SPIRIT STRENGTHENS THE CHRISTIAN, EPHESIANS 3:16: "THAT HE WOULD GRANT YOU, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY, TO BE STRENGTHENED WITH MIGHT BY HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN;" THE SPIRIT ENABLES US TO ABOUND IN HOPE, ROMANS 15:13: "NOW THE GOD OF HOPE FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING, THAT YE MAY ABOUND IN HOPE, THROUGH THE POWER OF THE HOLY GHOST." FINALLY, (AND THESE ARE JUST REPRESENTATIVE, THIS DOES NOT EXHAUST THEM ALL BY ANY MEANS), ROMANS 5:5, "THE LOVE OF GOD IS SHED ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS BY THE HOLY GHOST, WHICH IS GIVEN UNTO US." AND NOW HERE AGAIN WE REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY CONTROVERSY, FOR WHETHER AN INDIVIDUAL BELIEVES THAT THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN HIM PERSONALLY OR WHETHER HE BELIEVES THAT THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN HIM REPRESENTATIVELY, THERE IS AGREEMENT

THAT THE SPIRIT DOES ALL OF THESE THINGS BECAUSE THE BIBLE STATES IT IN SUCH PLAIN LANGUAGE. A THIRD QUESTION BRINGS US TO THE MEAT IN THE COCONUT AND THAT IS, "HOW DOES THE SPIRIT DO THESE THINGS IN A CHRISTIAN?" NOW YOU WILL PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IN OUTLINING THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE SPIRIT'S INDWELLING OF THE CHRISTIAN ONE OF THESE POSSIBILITIES WAS NOT THAT THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN SEPARATE AND APART, BUT RATHER THE SPIRIT DWELLS IN THE CHRISTIAN PERSONALLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WORD OF GOD. IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION, "HOW DOES THE SPIRIT LEAD THE CHRISTIAN, HOW DOES HE SANCTIFY THE CHRISTIAN, HOW DOES HE SHED THE LOVE OF GOD ABROAD IN THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN," I WOULD SIMPLY POINT YOU TO EPHESIANS 6:17 WHERE PAUL SAID, "AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION, AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD." EVERYTHING THAT THE SPIRIT DOES TO, EVERYTHING THAT THE SPIRIT DOES IN THE CHRISTIAN IS DONE THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF THE WORD. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THE SPIRIT DWELLS ONLY REPRESENTATIVELY THROUGH THE WORD IN THE CHRISTIAN FOR SUCH I DO NOT BELIEVE, BUT NEITHER DO I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ANY GUIDANCE, THAT THERE IS ANY LEADING, THAT THERE IS ANY INSTRUCTION WHICH THE SPIRIT GIVES TO THE CHILD OF GOD SEPARATE AND APART FROM THE WORD. EVERYTHING THAT THE SPIRIT DOES IN AND EVERYTHING THAT THE SPIRIT DOES TO THE CHRISTIAN HE DOES THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF HIS SWORD. YOU SEND A SOLDIER OUT TO DO BATTLE WITHOUT HIS SWORD OR HIS WEAPON AND HE IS NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH VERY MUCH. GOD SENDS FORTH HIS SPIRIT INTO OUR HEARTS WHEREBY WE CRY ABBA, FATHER, BUT EVERYTHING THAT THIS SPIRIT OF GOD DOES TO US OR DOES IN US, HE DOES THROUGH THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF HIS WEAPON WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD. MAY I REPEAT AND BE EMPHATIC, THERE IS NO LEADING, THERE IS NO GUIDING, THERE IS NO TEACHING THAT THE SPIRIT GIVES TO A CHRISTIAN OR ACCOMPLISHES THROUGH A CHRISTIAN WHICH IS DONE SEPARATE AND APART FROM THE WORD OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

SOMEONE ASKS IMMEDIATELY, "WHY DO YOU PRAY? WHY DO YOU WORRY ABOUT PROVIDENCE? HOW DO THESE THINGS OPERATE? HOW DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER IF HE DOES EVERYTHING THROUGH THE WORD?" MY ANSWER IS, BRETHREN, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT AND I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THE SPIRIT IS INVOLVED IN PROVIDENCE OR IN ANSWERING PRAYER. UNTIL YOU DISCOVER HOW GOD WORKS PROVIDENTIALLY OR UNTIL YOU EXHAUST ALL OF THE METHODS BY WHICH GOD MAY ANSWER PRAYER, THEN YOU CANNOT PROVE THAT THE SPIRIT IS INVOLVED IN THEM. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT GOD DOES NOT WORK PROVIDENTIALLY. YOU GO BACK AND READ THE SERMON ON PROVIDENCE AND YOU WILL FIND OUT THAT HE DOES. I HAVEN'T PREACHED ONE ON PRAYER IN THIS SERIES, I DON'T KNOW IF I'VE GOT ONE OR NOT, BUT WE'LL ADD ONE. GOING A YEAR, ANOTHER WEEK WON'T MAKE THAT MUCH DIFFERENCE, I BELIEVE THAT GOD ANSWERS PRAYER BUT GOD'S PROVIDENCE AND GOD'S ANSWERING PRAYER STILL HAVE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT THE SPIRIT DOES TO AND IN THE CHILD OF GOD. THEY ARE JUST NOT PLAYING IN THE SAME BALL PARK, THEY ARE NOT THE SAME SUBJECTS UNDER DISCUSSION.

SOMEONE ASKS ANOTHER QUESTION AND THAT IS, "WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD TODAY?" I HEAR OF THOSE WHO HAVE SAID THAT THEY HAD TEN PERSONAL WORK CARDS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT TOLD THEM WHICH CARD TO PICK AND THEY WENT AND CONVERTED THAT MAN. THE HOLY SPIRIT JUST SPOKE TO THEM AND SAID, "TAKE THIS ONE." WHAT ABOUT THAT? IS THAT A LIVE POSSIBILITY? WELL, I WOULD ASK THEM SOME QUESTIONS. IF THEY USE THE SPIRIT TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR SUCCESSES, HOW DO THEY ACCOUNT FOR THEIR FAILURES? DID THE SPIRIT LEAVE THEM? AND IF THE SPIRIT LEFT THEM AND DIDN'T SPEAK TO THEM, THEN THEY ARE NOT SONS OF GOD. THEY NEED TO BE RESTORED. AND IF THAT'S NOT THE CASE, THEN ARE THEY SAYING THAT THE FAILURE WAS THE PART OF THE SPIRIT, THAT THE SPIRIT TOLD THEM THE WRONG CARD, IN WHICH CASE, IF THE SPIRIT MADE A MISTAKE, HE'S NOT GOD. THEY DON'T NEED TO BE RESTORED BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING TO BE RESTORED TO. I WOULD ASK THEM ANOTHER QUESTION, AND THAT IS UPON WHAT BASIS WOULD THEY DISAGREE WITH JOSEPH SMITH WHO CLAIMED THAT THE SPIRIT TOLD

HIM TO GET A WHOLE NEW RELIGION? THE SPIRIT JUST TOLD THEM YOU SEE TO PICK A CARD, BUT THE SPIRIT TOLD JOSEPH SMITH TO COME UP WITH A WHOLE NEW BOOK. AND IF THE SPIRIT SPEAKS TO THEM, THE SPIRIT CAN SPEAK TO JOSEPH SMITH IN THE SAME WAY. THEY REALLY HAVE NO VALID BASIS UPON WHICH TO DISAGREE WITH JOSEPH. I UNDERSTAND ONE MAN CLAIMED THAT THE SPIRIT TOLD HIM WHICH WOMAN TO MARRY. IT WASN'T SOMETHING THAT HE JUST SURMISED THE SPIRIT TOLD HIM OR SOMETHING IN WHICH HE WAS LED OF GOD PROVIDENTIALLY, BUT THE SPIRIT OF GOD SPOKE TO HIM AND SAID, "NOW HERE'S THE ONE YOU OUGHT TO MARRY." I'M SURE GLAD THE MARRIAGE WORKED OUT, I WOULD HATE FOR THE SPIRIT TO HAVE MADE A MISTAKE IN THAT MATTER! UPON WHAT BASIS WOULD HE DISAGREE WITH MARY BAKER EDDY'S SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURE WHICH SHE CLAIMED TO BE LED OF THE SPIRIT IN COMPILING AND IN EXPLICATING AND EXPLAINING THE WORD OF GOD. IF THE SPIRIT CAN SPEAK TO HIM OR IF THE SPIRIT DOES SPEAK TO HIM, MARY BAKER EDDY HAD THE RIGHT TO MAKE THE SAME CLAIM. HE HAS NO BASIS AT ALL FOR DISAGREEMENT.

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS I DO NOT QUESTION THE WORKING OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE, I DON'T KNOW HOW IT WORKS. I DO NOT QUESTION THAT GOD ANSWERS PRAYER, I DO NOT KNOW HOW HE ANSWERS PRAYER, I BELIEVE THAT HE DOES. BUT THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS PLAIN, THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS CLEAR, THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLS IN ME AS A CHRISTIAN, BUT ALL OF THE LEADING, ALL OF THE GUIDING, THAT THE SPIRIT DOES TO ME OR IN ME HE DOES THROUGH THE WORD AND IF THIS IS NOT SO PAUL WAS MISTAKEN WHEN HE SAID THAT THE WORD WAS ABLE TO MAKE THE MAN OF GOD PERFECT AND THOROUGHLY FURNISH HIM UNTO EVERY GOOD WORK.

SOMETIME AGO A GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE WERE WORKING IN A CAMPAIGN KNOCKING DOORS. THEY WERE STANDING AROUND ON SATURDAY MORNING WHEN, ACCORDING TO THE THINKING OF SOME, THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN OUT KNOCKING ON DOORS. THE PREACHER FOR THE CONGREGATION CAME IN AND ASKED THEM WHY THEY WEREN'T OUT DOING WHAT YOU THEY CAME TO DO, AND THEY SAID, "THE SPIRIT HASN'T TOLD US TO GO YET." THE PREACHER SAID, "WELL, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE SPIRIT, BUT THE ELDERS WHO ARE PAYING YOU SAID TO GET OUT AND GET WITH IT!" IN REALITY THE SPIRIT HAD TOLD THEM TO GO. THE SPIRIT TOLD THEM TO GO IN THE LONG AGO WHEN THE WORDS OF JESUS CHRIST WERE RECORDED AND HE SAID, "GO YE INTO ALL OF THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED, HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED." THE SPIRIT IS NOT GOING TO ADD TO THAT MESSAGE. IT IS PLAIN ENOUGH. IT IS CLEAR ENOUGH. AND EVERY MESSAGE THAT YOU ARE GOING TO RECEIVE FROM THE SPIRIT IS GOING TO BE FROM THE WORD. THERE ARE GOING TO BE NO ADDITIONAL REVELATIONS.

SOMETIMES CHRISTIANS WONDER WHY THEY DON'T LIVE BETTER LIVES AND WHY THEY AREN'T STRONGER AS CHILDREN OF GOD, AND THEY SIT BACK AND SAY, "LET THE SPIRIT OF GOD DO IT." THEY FAIL TO REALIZE THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD'S WORKING IN THEM AND FOR THEM IS LIMITED TO THE WORD--A SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATION, BUT A LIMITATION NEVERTHELESS. AND IF YOU WANT TO BE STRONG AS A CHILD OF GOD TONIGHT, YOU WILL BE STRONG THROUGH THE WORD. IF YOU WONDER WHY YOU ARE WEAK, YOU GET YOUR BIBLE AND READ IT AND STUDY IT AND LET IT LIVE IN YOU AND YOU WON'T BE WEAK ANY LONGER. YOU WONDER WHY IT IS DIFFICULT TO RESIST TEMPTATION, YOU READ, AND LOVE, AND STUDY, AND LIVE THE WORD, AND YOU WILL FIND THAT YOU WILL BE STRENGTHENED TO OVERCOME TEMPTATION. YOU WONDER WHY THE WAY IS DARK AND THERE IS NO MORE LIGHT SHED IN YOUR PATH, MAYBE IT IS BECAUSE YOU HAD THE ONLY SOURCE OF LIGHT CLOSED AND YOU WOULDN'T OPEN IT UP AND LET GOD SPEAK TO YOU THROUGH HIS WORD. IN SANCTIFICATION AND JUSTIFICATION THE SPIRIT OPERATES BUT THROUGH THE WORD.

NOW THE WORD SPEAKS TO YOU TONIGHT. GOD SPEAKS TO YOU THROUGH HIS WORD. FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT GOD'S CHILDREN HE SAYS, "REPENT, AND BE BAPTIZED EVERYONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND YOU WILL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT." IT IS NOT SOMETHING MIRACULOUS. IT IS NOT SOMETHING BETTER FELT THAN TOLD. IT IS SOMETHING THAT WE ACCEPT BY FAITH. GOD SAID HE WOULD SAVE ME AND WHEN I HAVE DONE WHAT GOD SAID I BELIEVE THAT GOD WILL FULFILL HIS PROMISE. IF YOU HAVEN'T LIVED ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS OF THE SPIRIT, THEN WOULD YOU NOT RETURN TO WALK IN THE PATH REVEALED UNTO YOU THROUGH THE HOLY WORD, IF YOU WOULD BE IDENTIFIED WITH US IN OUR WORK AND WORSHIP HERE, WOULD YOU MAKE THAT KNOWN. WOULD YOU COME WHILE WE STAND AND SING.