

# THE COMPLETED WORK OF THE SPIRIT

by Douglas W. Hill

*"...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."  
(Jude 3)*

Many different views exist on the role and work of the Holy Spirit. Even among those who believe the Spirit is working today in a miraculous and direct capacity, there are countless claims of inspiration and guidance that are in fact contrary to one another. How can we know what the Truth is? Instead of appealing to the words of men, why not go to the record that the Spirit gave of His own work?

## THE PAST WORK OF THE SPIRIT

REVELATION - It is clear to anyone with the smallest measure of faith, that the Spirit has worked in the past to **reveal Truth**. In fact, Jesus specifically told His apostles that He would send the Spirit to them for this purpose. "He shall **teach you all things**, and **bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you.**" (John 14:26) To be fair, we must acknowledge that this was a specific promise to those who walked and talked with Jesus while He was on the earth. After all, Jesus did say the Spirit would **remind** them of the things He said unto them.

Jesus also said that when the Spirit came unto these disciples, He would teach them **all Truth**. "Howbeit when he, **the Spirit of truth**, is come, he shall guide you into **all the truth**: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come." (John 14:26). Thus, we see that the Spirit's work is clearly identified as revealing Truth. Jesus even referred to the Spirit as "The Spirit of Truth" - which really pinpoints the work and activity of the Spirit. Thus, the work or activity of the Spirit revolves around and focuses on revealing God's word.

CONFIRMATION - At this point, some may ask, where then do miracles, such as healing an casting

out demons, fit in. Simply, as the disciples went out preaching what Jesus taught them and the Spirit reminded them of, we find "the Lord working with them, and **confirming the word by the signs** that followed. Amen." (Mark 16:20)

The purpose of miracles was confirmation of the Truth. When someone came with a new message from God, how would people know whether this person was speaking Truth or lying? God gave clear evidence by which people could know what the Truth was. "God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit..." (Heb. 2:4).

Many Bible examples show that the miracles were not an end in themselves. Healing wasn't just for the sake of healing. Casting out demons wasn't just to cast them out. It all revolved around displaying Divine evidence for why people should believe the newly revealed Gospel (Acts 8:6; 13:12; 14:3; 1 Thess. 1:5).

PERFECTION - As we read about the work of the Holy Spirit, we find the Spirit identifies this work as "perfected" or completed. Remember, Jesus promised the Spirit would bring "all" truth to the disciples (Jn. 16:13). Thus, in the lifetime of those disciples that would be done, or else Jesus would be a liar.

Furthermore, the Spirit wrote through Paul, saying that His miraculous work would not continue forever. Read what the Spirit said:

1 Cor. 13:8 "Love never faileth: but whether there be **prophecies**, they **shall be done away**; whether there be **tongues**, they **shall cease**; whether there be **knowledge**, it **shall be done away.**"

How can anyone deny what the Spirit said? In light of this passage, can you or I rightly say that prophecies, tongues and directly revealed knowledge would continue forever? Not if we are to walk by faith! We MUST agree with the Spirit or else be found contrary to Him!

So, the next question then is WHEN would these things cease? The Spirit explains:

"9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; 10 but **when** that which is perfect is come, that which is in part **shall be done away.**"

Paul said that they knew in part. This meant that the prophecies and tongues and revelations they received in the first century, came like parts and pieces to a puzzle. Each piece filled in its spot, until the "perfect" or complete revelation was given. Remember, the purpose of these miracles was to reveal and confirm Truth. Thus, when all Truth, as Jesus promised, was given - their purpose would be fulfilled and completed.

When you take all the pieces of a puzzle out and put them in place, do you go back to the box looking for more? Can we expect more pieces to be given, after Jesus and the Spirit said "all" has been given?

Consider also Jude 3, when he speaks of "**the faith** which was **once for all** delivered unto the saints." This same word/phrase is used in Heb. 9:28 to refer to the one time for all time sacrifice of Christ. Does Jesus need to be slain again? Was His death somehow insufficient for us 2000 years down the road? No. Once was all that was needed. And the exact same thing is said of the work of the Spirit. **Once for all** revealed...

From here we find passages like 2 Tim. 3:16-17 that describe the Scriptures as complete and able to equip the man of God in every way. Also, warnings against adding to or changing the message, even though a person claims to be an apostle or to have had a supernatural message delivered (Gal. 1:6-9).

## THE PRESENT WORK OF THE SPIRIT

So, if the miraculous work of revealing and confirming the word is done, what is the Spirit doing today? Again, let us consider what the Spirit says for Himself.

The Spirit says that He "dwells in" Christians (Rom. 8:9). How is that possible? How is this accomplished? Many speculate and assert ideas, including claims of direct miraculous indwelling. Thus, we find many people describing how they are "led by the Spirit" - and what they usually describe are feelings and emotions. But remember the work of

the Spirit was to reveal Truth. This work was not a sensual experience. In fact, the Spirit warned of those who would come following their own desires. "These are they who make separations, sensual, having not the Spirit." (Jude 19) Appeals to the senses stand in opposition to the work of the Spirit.

Besides, those who think that the Spirit must dwell personally in the bodies of believers, fail to comprehend the meaning and consequences of this. The Spirit's work was NOT incarnation, but revelation. And if passages like Romans 8:9 mean the Spirit indwells our physical bodies directly, why doesn't Ephesians 3:17 ("that Christ may dwell in your hearts") mean that Jesus dwells in our physical hearts directly? Could it be that these passages mean the same thing? That they are describing a **relationship** we are to have with God, rather than God's supposed location within our physical bodies?

Consider also that the Spirit describes how He works on people and in people today. Ephesians 6:13-17 describes the "whole armor of God" that we are to equip ourselves with. Every single piece is God's word applied to our lives. Note especially the clear description: "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: " (6:17). The tool the Spirit uses to cut and pierce men's hearts today is the Sword of the Spirit. At first this Sword was given directly, miraculously – since it had not been revealed before. But once that miraculous work was given and completed, what further miraculous work do we need? What Truth did the Spirit fail to reveal? What information does the Bible lack that we need delivered to us? And do we lack evidence for the inspiration of the Scriptures today? Do we need more miracles than what are recorded in the Bible?

Is the written word sufficient to do all God wants it to do? John 20:30-31, "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: **but these are written, that ye may believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name."

Many search the Scriptures in order to prove that miracles continue today. Many claim a direct work of the Spirit on their hearts that "cannot be denied". But as Paul said, "I truly thought with myself that I

ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." (Acts 26:9)

We must be careful to examine our thoughts, our feelings, and our beliefs by the standard of the Holy Spirit. All Truth has been revealed and confirmed. It can be known, and knowing it sets us free from sin (John 8:31-32).

Would you like to learn more about what the Spirit says of His work? Do you have further questions about this study? Please feel free to contact us. We will gladly take time to examine this and other Bible topics further.

As we conclude for now, please consider 1 Corinthians 12:3, "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body..." The Spirit's work was to reveal Truth. This Truth includes the necessity of baptism to get "into" the "one body". That one body is Christ's spiritual body, the saved (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:4; 5:23), the church (Eph. 5:23; 1:22-23).

Thus, to be in Christ, in His body, saved by Jesus – one must submit to what the Spirit teaches. Have you been baptized to be saved from your sins (Mark 16:16)? Will you listen to what the Spirit has revealed?

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**"Christ is the head of the church:  
and he is the saviour of the body."  
(Eph. 5:23)**