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THE HOLY SPIRIT IN LIFE AND LABORS

By J. Wesley Adcock

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Mrs. J. Wesley Adcock

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TO MY WIFE

Her years of experience as an English teacher have aided her in giving valuable assistance
in editing the manuscripts for this little volume.

For this help and for her rich contribution to my teaching, pastoring, and evangelizing
ministry, I affectionately dedicate this little book.

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MY THANKS TO

Rev. Samuel Wickard for his kindness in typing material for publication.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1
Is the Holy Ghost a Person?

2
A Preacher Quit Praying

3
My Faith Was Tested

4
A Holy Ghost Revival

5
The Holy Ghost Ordered the Battle

6
I Got More Than I Asked For

7
The Holy Spirit Helped Me with the Word

8
The Holy Spirit Checked Me

9
The Holy Ghost in a College Classroom

10
If You Can't Pray, Praise

11
The Holy Spirit in an Offering

12
The Hog Came Home

13
God Speaks Through His Word

14
The Holy Ghost Makes the Difference

15
The Lord Still Speaks

16
God is Concerned about Our Financial Needs

17
Keeping the "Poles" Set

18
Prayer Privileges

19
God Has Made Provision for Our Physical Needs

20
Let Us Give Thanks

21
Give Us the Right Message

22
How Determined Are We?

23
Why Fast?

24
How Long Should We Pray?

25
An Unfinished Sermon

26
A Preacher's Delightful Detour

27
An Unspeakable Blessing from an Unseen Guest

28
The Divine Author Brings Blessed Enlightenment

29
Some Benefits of the Holy Spirit

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FOREWORD

The subject to which your attention is being called in the following pages is one of paramount importance in these days of mechanical performance in our religious activities. The leadership of the Holy Spirit and His miraculous manifestations of His presence and power are so seldom seen in these days. Many prayers go unanswered because they are not Holy Spirit directed. Many sermons are ineffective because the Holy Spirit is not honored by them. And, where He is not honored Jesus is not glorified. Many times special singing magnifies the singer more than it glorifies Christ or opens the flood gates of heavenly blessing on the saints. As the author of this volume has so ably pointed out, there is a great need, even in holiness ranks of a recognition of the Holy Spirit as a person rather than just an influence or an emanation. No man practices what is written in this book more than the man who has written it.

Dr. R. G. Flexon

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PREFACE

Anyone who has read with care the final conversation of Christ with His disciples as recorded in John, Chapters 14-16, will notice the great stress that Jesus puts upon His promise of another Comforter. The coming of this Divine Person is so important that Jesus says it is expedient for the disciples that He Himself should depart so that it will be possible for the Comforter to come. Anything that Jesus regards as worthy of such stress and emphasis is most certainly a matter that should be of deep concern to every Christian .

Jesus leaves no doubt as to Who this Divine Comforter is, for He is none other than the Spirit of Truth Who proceedeth from the Father and will be sent by the Father on Jesus' own request. The Master also describes certain activities of the Comforter when He comes, and in the process of making that description, He uses language that can only be used of a person.

In these simple facts that are so apparent in Jesus' words about the Comforter, lie the seeds of the great doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Jesus plainly teaches His personality, His Deity, His Relationship to the Father and the Son, and He also gives us some of the features of His activity or office work. Around these simple, basic truths, multitudes of volumes have been written setting forth the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This is all very important, but there is an additional emphasis that Jesus gives in His conversation that is rather easily overlooked.

To some the truths about the Holy Spirit are merely doctrines to be set forth and defended. And surely this is true. However, a little careful reading will also show that Jesus has a personal message for His troubled disciples in all of this that He is saying. There is a strong emphasis on a personal relation to the disciples, and the fulfilling of the closest of individual relationships . The Comforter is to be to them all that Jesus Himself had been, and even more. He is to be their constant Resource. He is to be their Help. He is to be by their side for encouragement and aid in life's problem moments. He is to be their Reminder, their Guide, their Teacher, their constant Companion, who will abide with them forever.

Here is a truth concerning the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit to the people of God that is sometimes overlooked or forgotten. But no matter how well we know the doctrinal side of this truth, we have missed the real heart of the entire matter unless the Comforter becomes this very close personal Friend and Helper that Jesus describes.

This is the burden of Brother Adcock's book. It is a message greatly needed today. In the pages of this book, those who have known Brother Adcock's ministry across the years can detect his style and almost hear his words as he describes some of the wonderful blessings that can come to the individual Christian through the blessed ministry of the Holy Spirit.

May the readers of this book catch the writer's message until they are brought into a closer, more personal relationship to the Blessed Divine Spirit of God.

Leslie D. Wilcox
Cincinnati, Ohio,
March, 1977

* * * * *

Chapter 1 IS THE HOLY GHOST A PERSON?

I am persuaded that numbers of people would readily give a positive answer to the above question. But do we preach, pray, talk, and act about and toward the Holy Ghost as if we believe Him to be a person?

I know not how many evidences there are to prove the personality of the Holy Ghost but I offer two of them. I know the Holy Ghost is a person because He can be grieved. Sticks and stones, pulpits and pews can't be grieved. So many times there are empty pews in church services, but they aren't grieved because they have no one to occupy them. The pews that have the biggest loads aren't grieved either. Things can't be grieved but personalities can. The Holy Ghost can be grieved -- He is a person. Let us be sure we don't grieve Him. Then, too, I know the Holy Spirit is a person because He has a will. Again, sticks and stones, pulpits and pews don't have wills, but people do. Even small children have wills. The Holy Ghost has a will -- "He giveth the gifts severally as He willeth." That is one reason we shouldn't dictate to Him what particular gift we have to have.

But the Holy Spirit is more than a person. He is a divine person. Let us notice two evidences of this fact.

First, I know the Holy Spirit is a divine person because attributes are ascribed to Him that are ascribed to the Father and to the Son. He is as eternal as the Father and the Son. He is as holy as the Father and the Son. Second, He is placed with the Father and the Son in the baptismal formula in such a manner that would be absolutely wrong if He were not divine. To simplify, imagine a preacher taking a new convert into the water for baptism and saying, "I baptize you, my

brother, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of Michael." Such practice would be just grounds for real alarm and for proper correction to be made.

Some time ago, a person heard another speaking on the personality of the Holy Ghost and wondered what difference it made. It makes all of the difference in the world! If the Holy Ghost were a thing, an it, a power, or an influence, I might well ask, "How can I get hold of the Holy Ghost to use the Holy Ghost." But since He is a person -- Yea! a divine person -- the question is not how can I get hold of the Holy Ghost to use "it" but, "How can I submit, yield, and die out until I can be a clean channel through which He can carry out the will of the Most High God?"

Then, too, if the Holy Ghost were other than a divine person it would be idolatry to worship the Holy Ghost. But since He is a divine person, to worship Him is not idolatry. So when you bow your soul to adore (worship) the Father and the Son be sure to adore the Holy Spirit. Such will not make you an idolater.

In the pages that follow we share some personal experiences of this Holy Ghost in our life and labors.

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Chapter 2 A PREACHER QUIT PRAYING

I was engaged in a meeting in the Pilgrim Holiness Church in English, Indiana.

I went to the basement of the church to pray. I am not sure just how long I tried to pray. But after quite some time of prayer battle without breaking through in prayer I quit trying to pray.

But the "stop" was followed by a gracious "start". I stopped praying and started reading my Bible. I read in Psalm 145. There is such rich truth found early in that Psalm. When I reached verse 18 and read: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all them that call upon him in truth," the blessed Holy Spirit flooded my soul until I was rejoicing happy. The devil would have us believe God is far off, but in this 18th verse we learn that He is "nigh" -- "Nigh to all them that call upon him -- unto all them that call upon him in truth." What an incentive to pray! I "stopped" and "started" again -- stopped reading and started praying.

I asked the Lord to hide me behind the cross, and He did such a good job that it wasn't needful that I preach in the morning service. I didn't even have to give the altar call. While "Amazing Grace" was being sung a gray-headed man came to the altar and others came, and Oh! what a gracious time of victory and blessing. We got to the parsonage around 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Oh! for more of the manifest presence and power of the blessed Holy Ghost in our services.

We must have the Holy Ghost to open and quicken Scripture to our hearts and to aid us in prayer if our Bible reading and prayers are to be as profitable as they ought.

Read the Word to guard against fallacy, and pray to guard against form. And let the Holy Ghost make both be what would otherwise be impossible.

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Chapter 3

MY FAITH WAS TESTED

I was the evangelist for an indoor camp that was held in a Nazarene Church in Columbus, Indiana.

The Lord had been helping us in the camp. I had been praying that the Holy Spirit might be so manifest as to cancel out my needing to preach. I was willing to preach, but it seems especially blessed to have the Holy Spirit move in such blessing and conviction that souls really get delivered from sin separate and apart from my feeble efforts to preach.

We had been having regular services for a week or so. The service I so much desired and had prayed about hadn't come.

I was in my room (in the home of Rev. Charles Felsburg, a former student of mine) trying to get clear on what to preach. It seemed that maybe it was one of two lines of truth, but I didn't know which one. I tried to meditate or pray along one of those lines of truth and it didn't register, and I tried the other and it didn't burn, and it was near time to go to meeting. What should I do?

It was not in an audible voice -- but it wouldn't have been any more clear if it had been in an audible voice, when the Lord asked, "Haven't you been asking for one without preaching?" I answered, "Yes, Lord, but I didn't know it was going to be tonight." And the Holy Spirit flooded my soul until I was rejoicing happy. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

We went to meeting and the congregational singing was ever so ordinary. Oh! What a temptation came to me to get my Bible and get ready to read something. The congregational prayer was over without any special manifestation of the Holy Spirit. There was a special song, and the Holy Spirit hadn't manifested Himself in any unusual way. Again how I was tempted to get my Bible and get ready to read something, but I just let it lie nearby. Finally, the last special number was being sung without an outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Then the last stanza was finished, and the Holy Spirit still hadn't come in any unusual manifestation. What a temptation to read something! But our God knows just when and just how to manifest Himself.

A man who helped sing the last special number said something after they had finished their special number, and it wouldn't have been any more real if a gust of wind had swept through a window when the blessed Holy Ghost moved in such rich blessing. People shouted and rejoiced; the spiritual tide would subside a little and then it would break out afresh. I suppose this rejoicing lasted thirty or forty minutes, and then conviction settled and a number of souls came to the altar. Oh! What a work was wrought in hearts by the Holy Spirit!

If I didn't miscount, one calendar year the Holy Spirit came in thirty-five of our services until there was an altar service without my needing to try to preach.

Oh! for less of the human and more of the divine!

May we ever welcome the Holy Spirit into our services. Yea! Let us make room for His coming.

Let us not minimize the Scripture -- but make room for the Holy Ghost!

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Chapter 4

A HOLY GHOST REVIVAL

I was to go to a country church near Bedford, Indiana, for a meeting. An evangelist friend of mine who had been there told me that I would have a good time there. Well, my wife and I went for this meeting. We started on Monday night. We went through the first week and on to the second Sunday and it was far from being a good time. The battle was sore -- it was tied up tight and hard. It was cold and dry. Up to the second Sunday there had been only four souls at the altar.

But, in the midst of it all I witnessed something I had not witnessed before and haven't witnessed since. There was a woman by the name of Meadows who would get up and testify and get blessed over what the Lord was going to do. If you had judged by what you could have seen with your physical eyes or have heard with your physical ears, you might have been tempted to say, "Sit down, sister, sit down! There is nothing that is going to happen here -- not this time -- not this time."

After the second Sunday morning, while some ate, I went to the hayloft to pray. That night a teenage son and a teenage daughter of Brother and Sister Meadows went to the altar. After they got through to victory another young person got so gloriously saved. She testified and in a short time was testifying again and again. There was rejoicing for some time, and we got over to the preacher's house around 1 o'clock Monday morning.

The meeting didn't close that night as it was planned. Instead there was an altar service Monday night, Tuesday night, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday nights. One night I didn't preach and had two altar services.

What made the difference between the first two weeks and the third one? The answer is easy -- the difference was in the outpoured presence and power of the blessed Holy Ghost.

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Chapter 5

THE HOLY GHOST ORDERED THE BATTLE

It was my privilege and honor to be a co-laborer with Brother Flexon in the Colorado Springs Camp. According to schedule we were to alternate in services. Brother Flexon preached in the morning, so it was my turn to bring the afternoon message.

We gathered for the service, and the Holy Ghost blessed in a spontaneous praise meeting. Bless His dear name!

I am not sure which one of us got on his knees first; but it wasn't long until we were both on our knees on the platform. So desirous was I that the Holy Spirit would not be hindered in what He wanted to do for us. After some time of waiting on my knees, I had an experience that I have never had before or since. I was so impressed that this was a continuation of Brother Flexon's service and that the Lord would be pleased for him (Brother Flexon) to take over. I went to him and shared my impression with him. He arose and extended an invitation, and soon around twenty-five or thirty stepped out and came to the altar in that afternoon service.

Oh! I am so glad the blessed Holy Ghost knows just how to order the battle against sin and the devil. I cherish His checks and His leadings.

Zechariah 4:6 is still true: "Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

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Chapter 6

I GOT MORE THAN I ASKED FOR

I was in a meeting at Forest, Indiana. The battle was sore -- it was hard. The meeting was tight, tied up, and dry. I drove out in the country to pray. It was hard to pray. I never did break through in prayer that time. I share this with my readers for I do not want (in what I am about to relate) to lead you to think I pray without battles.

The next day I went back to the country to pray. The blessed Holy Ghost aided my soul above measure in prayer. I asked the Lord for at least a specific number of victories. And Oh! what assurance of at least the specified number of victories. I believe I could have honestly said (as I left the place of prayer) that I knew there would be at least as many victories as I had asked for.

With this background I went to my meeting. The blessed Holy Ghost moved graciously in our midst. A long-legged brother walked the floor and sang as he walked. A spontaneous praise meeting broke out. Around 8:30, the pastor, Brother Martin, wanted to know if I felt like taking over. I had no leading whatsoever to take over. The Holy Ghost had taken over! A short time later, someone said a young lady wanted to get sanctified. I asked the congregation to stand and called on the pastor's wife to pray, and there just lacked one being two times as many at the altar as I had asked the Lord for.

I got more than I asked for in that it wasn't needful that I try to preach for desired results to be realized. Then, too, I got more than I asked for number wise.

Oh! How I long to trust the Lord more. And I so deeply desire that I may know better how to stay out of the Holy Spirit's way.

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Chapter 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPED ME WITH THE WORD

I was an evangelist in the Colorado Springs Camp meeting. It was my time to preach in an afternoon service. My Scripture lesson was to be I Peter 1:1-13; my text was to be the 13th verse; and my subject was to be, "The Christian's Duty and Hope." I started quoting my Scripture lesson. Before I got very far the blessed Holy Ghost added His blessings until "mercy drops" were falling, and I know not how many were enjoying the blessing of the Lord.

When I reached my text I started to quote it. I got a portion of it quoted, and the Holy Spirit flooded my soul until I couldn't finish it. After some time the overflowing blessing subsided and I started quoting it again. If there was any difference between this and the first time, I consider that it surpassed the first time that I tried to quote my text. I couldn't say the words for some time. When I finally got the text quoted, the Holy Spirit had so taken over and moved on hearts until around twenty-five were in that altar service.

We need the Holy Spirit to help us with the Word. We need Him to open the Word to us and to quicken the Word to us. We need Him to help us read the Word effectively. Surely, He wants to do all of these for us. Will we let Him?

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Chapter 8

THE HOLY SPIRIT CHECKED ME

The first time I ever preached at the Binghamton, New York Camp, it was my honor to have Brother Walter Drown from the Rocky Mountain District of the Pilgrim Holiness Church as my co-laborer.

I preached on "Three Reasons Why We Don't Have More Revivals." I didn't consider the line of truth to be especially evangelistic, so I didn't plan to give an altar call when I finished. After I finished with the message I started praying what was to be the dismissal prayer. I meant to say amen and dismiss the congregation. But somewhere between the opening word of that prayer and the planned "amen," the Holy Spirit checked me; and instead of the amen I had in mind to say, I gave an altar call. I almost missed it! It was doubly blessed when Brother Drown, who had had so much more experience than I, told me that he was afraid I was going to dismiss them and that wasn't the thing to do.

We need the Holy Ghost to help in the altar call. The preacher needs Him to lead and check him; Saints need Him to aid them to hold on in prayer for souls; and sinners need to have His convicting presence and power. Let us welcome Him! Let us make room for Him!

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Chapter 9

THE HOLY GHOST IN A COLLEGE CLASSROOM

The course was in Evangelism. The classroom was at Pilgrim College in Frankfort, Indiana. It was the ordinary practice to have prayer before the lesson.

But this particular class session was extraordinary. Words can't fully reveal what took place in the class period we refer to here. But in an attempt to share with our readers something of the riches the blessed Holy Ghost gave us, let me say that we pushed heavenward in prayer. We stopped and got a new hold in prayer and pushed higher still. I urged the students to trust or believe, and we pushed or broke on through in prayer. Oh! The experience was so rich and blessed.

One student was praying for lost loved ones. He declared that some of them were already saved or soon would be. In a short time we had the news that his mother and a brother or sister had gotten saved. Another student was praying for the healing of a person who had a serious malady or disease. He claimed the work was done. We soon had good news which verified his claim.

Well, the class period was gone without our getting to the lesson. But the Holy Ghost gave us a bigger lesson -- a greater lesson -- a richer lesson.

We can have revivals without a church house, without an evangelist, without a special singer, without a song book, and we might even have a revival without a copy of the Bible in hand; but we can't have a revival without the Holy Ghost.

When students forget various things that I endeavor to teach them, they may well remember when there was a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Oh! that He might be welcomed in every classroom -- but especially every classroom of church -- related schools of all levels.

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Chapter 10

IF YOU CAN'T PRAY, PRAISE!

I was in a meeting in the Pilgrim Holiness Church in Binghamton, New York. The first night I was there the Lord blessed in a very gracious way. There were a number of souls at the altar.

Sunday morning the battle was hard -- the meeting was tied up. At the noon hour I went to the basement of the church to fast and pray. I don't know that I ever found it any harder to pray. In

fact it was so hard that I stopped praying so far as asking the Lord for anything. I started thanking and praising the Lord. I don't recall that the Holy Spirit ever did help me any more in this exercise of soul. I suppose this lasted around thirty minutes, and then the devil left and what liberty and blessing I had in prayer! It was blessed indeed.

That night the Lord came to our rescue and we had an altar service.

The battlefield changed but the battle was similar. This time I was in a meeting in Loogootee, Indiana. At noon I was fasting and went out into the country to pray. The Lord blessed graciously in that season of prayer.

Around 4 o'clock in the afternoon I went back to the country for prayer again, and in so short a time there was a drastic change. It was so hard to pray! It was so much as if the Lord were gone, or as if I had backslidden since the good season of prayer at noon.

I reminded the Lord that if He were not pleased to bless me as He did at the noon hour I was still going to trust Him. The blessed Holy Spirit aided my soul in prayer and the blessing of the Lord was so rich that the second season became more blessed than the one at the noon hour.

Prayer and praise are to the Christian as the two wings are to the bird. Don't expect the bird to fly if one wing is broken. Even so the Christian needs both prayer and praise.

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Chapter 11 THE HOLY SPIRIT IN AN OFFERING

We pastored a small church in Southern Indiana. Our Sunday School was small. It was unusual for the Sunday School offering to be as much as eight dollars. One particular Sunday of each month was Missionary Offering Day for the Sunday School.

This particular Sunday, the Sunday School offering was around six dollars. One of the deacons walked to the front and put some change on the treasurer's table and said that he thought the Sunday School offering should be eight dollars that morning. Someone else placed some money on the table and another followed suit. The offering became thirteen dollars or more. It wasn't long until white-haired Grandma Mayheugh began to shout, and the blessed Holy Spirit moved in such a blessed way. Someone went back the second time with money. I would like to remind you that no one was begging for further response. The offering became twenty-three dollars or more. Another added to that Sunday School Offering and then another. The offering reached thirty-five dollars or more. It continued to grow without anyone begging for money. With added response in giving, the offering was forty dollars or more. It reached forty-eight dollars or more, and finally that Sunday School offering that had been around six dollars increased more and more until it reached fifty-one dollars. One man, who had a practice of nudging his wife when an offering was being taken and saying that they could give a dollar, made four trips to the treasurer's table that morning and put in over twenty dollars.

We even need and may have the Holy Ghost in offerings to and for the glory of God. He can loosen more purse strings in two minutes than we can open in two hundred years. Glory to God in the Highest!

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Chapter 12

THE HOG CAME HOME

We were pastoring a small church and the support was meager. The parsonage was outside of the city limits. There was a lot back of the parsonage. I traded for a fat hog and put it in the lot out back. We could look forward to some fresh meat.

Soon after the hog was put in that new place, I had a suitcase packed to go to a revival meeting in Lawrenceville, Illinois. Before I got away from the parsonage, I learned that our fat hog was gone. My bus was to leave in a few hours!

I started looking for that hog. I waded mud and hunted and hunted for the hog. One after another hadn't seen it.

After a rather lengthy search, I went down by the railroad track from Baldwin Heights School and got on my knees to pray. After prayer I went up toward the schoolhouse and looked toward the railroad tracks and there came that fat hog. He turned left, went one block, made a right turn and went directly to the parsonage yard; and soon he was back in his pen.

One needs to know something about the nature of a hog to fully appreciate this hog's return. If a hog is put into a new place and soon breaks out, you may expect it to go back where it came from or wander around -- unless God sends it back to its new home.

Oh! How my faith was raised and strengthened through this answer to prayer.

I would be willing to wade mud and search and search again to have what the Holy Spirit did for me in this experience through prayer. Bless His dear name!

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Chapter 13

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD

I was in a meeting in Portsmouth, Ohio. I had been spending time in prayer in the basement of the church. The Lord had given me help in my soul, but I was so desirous that He would speak to me. I asked Him about this, and He so distinctly answered me by asking me a question. He inquired as to whether or not I would be willing for Him to do it through the Word? I was willing. But where in the Word? I read some in the Psalms, but it was very evident that that wasn't His message for me at that time.

Some time later I read Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," (the Holy Spirit quickened that to my soul. How blessed to think the only true and living God would think on me.) But that wasn't all of the message -- "saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not evil." That was more blessed still. But His message did not end there. He further says, "to give you an expected end." When the Holy Spirit quickened that to my soul, I was overflowingly blessed. I was impressed that I could claim that expected end for victory in the altar service that night. I claimed it and He gave victories. I was impressed that I could claim the expected for traveling mercies home. I claimed it and He rode the highway with me. What a blessed trip; I was alone humanwise, and yet not alone. He was with me! I am persuaded that if I will stay true to Him I may claim an expected end in triumphant departure from this life. I praise Him for speaking to me through His Word aided by His Spirit.

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Chapter 14

THE HOLY GHOST MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

A number of Free Methodist churches were having a special meeting in their church in Lawrenceville, Illinois. I had the honor of being the speaker for this particular service.

My text was the last part of Genesis 42:36. It reads, "All these things are against me." These are the words of Jacob when he thought Joseph had been dead for years; Simeon had been left in Egypt, and there was an effort to take Benjamin to Egypt. Notice how he expresses it as he says, "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away."

Jacob was badly mistaken in thinking all those things were against him. God was working things around for him to see Joseph who he thought had been dead for years.

My subject in dealing with my text was, "A Smiling Face Behind a Frowning Providence."

The devil would like to rob us of the rich Scriptural teaching on divine providence. Oh! what a battle the devil gave me in the earlier part of the message. It was somewhat as if I were reaching into thin air grasping for words. And then something happened; the blessed Holy Spirit set me in a large place of liberty and blessing. I don't remember ever having my nothingness and God's all sufficiency so distinctly revealed in one and the same message. The aid of the Holy Ghost was so pronounced and blessed!

The church official over that section of churches was present. I understand he claimed the message was worth five hundred dollars to him. They had lost an only son in Uncle Sam's service, and the Lord got to his soul with needed help.

The Holy Spirit made the difference! Bless His dear name!

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Chapter 15

THE LORD STILL SPEAKS

Over and over we read in the Bible, "Thus saith the Lord." Similar expressions that reveal God as speaking to man are given. For instance in Jeremiah 18:1-2, we read, "The word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words."

But many centuries separate us from the days when God was speaking to Moses, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah and other prophets.

Since He speaks through His written Word, it isn't needful that He speak to us directly as when He was giving mankind the Bible. And yet it is blessed to know that He can and still does speak directly.

Some time ago I was going through some trying times -- the waters were deep. I was in a meeting in a country church in Southern Indiana. It was Sunday morning, and I was trying to pray. It was so hard to pray. It was so much as if there were no God to pray to, or as if He had no particular interest in me.

But how blessed to have the Holy Ghost to help us in such a time of need! He still helps our infirmities in prayer.

I drew up close and told the Lord I loved Him. It wasn't in an audible voice, but it wouldn't have been a bit more distinct or clear if it had been in an audible voice, when He told me that He loved me, too.

Oh! How blessed was that message. From His written Word we know He loves us, but it is especially precious to have the only true and living God to condescend to speak directly to such an unworthy one as I.

BLESS HIS DEAR NAME!

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Chapter 16

GOD IS CONCERNED ABOUT OUR FINANCIAL NEEDS

The greatest of all God's blessings to man are His spiritual blessings. They satisfy a deeper need and are longer lasting.

Nevertheless, it is good to notice from His word that He is concerned about the material needs of His children. One authoritative source reminds us that there are 2,412 verses in the Old Testament, and 1,091 verses in the New Testament on the subject of "Temporal Blessings"; and 331 verses that give either examples or promises of clothing or food being provided.

We list some references to clothing being provided for God's children: Genesis 24:35; Deuteronomy 10:18; 29:5; 33:25; Job 27:16, 17; Matthew 6:25-34.

Then notice some references to the provision of food for God's children: Genesis 21:19; Exodus 16:35; Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 37:3, 25; Isaiah 1:19; 33:16; Matthew 6:11, 25-34; II Corinthians 9:10.... Others and others may be added.

I am glad for a threefold evidence that God is concerned about the material needs of His children. I know this by clear teachings of His word. I have added evidence of His concerns for material needs of His children from testimonies of children of His. In addition to these, I have the evidence of personal experience as to His interest in this line of need.

Some years ago, some money had been borrowed for some college training. I was getting eight dollars a week (not a day -- much less an hour) teaching in a holiness Bible School. After paying our tithes, my new wife and I could rigidly "pinch pennies," and still not have money enough to pay off the note when it came due. So I went alone to pray about this need -- this material need; but my faith didn't take hold for the need. I prayed on and on until by the aid of the Holy Spirit my faith took hold for that need. In fact, I got blessed in my soul more over the assurance than I did the cold cash.

You may ask, "Did the money really come?" Yes, the Lord sent it in from four different states and a dozen different individuals. Bless His dear holy name! He provides!

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Chapter 17

KEEPING THE "POLES" SET

Can you imagine a strange -- a very strange conversation? Can you imagine two telephone poles striking up a conversation? Just imagine one telephone pole suggesting that they either go hunting or fishing for, "No one has talked over these wires for three hours." Can you hear the other pole answer back, "No, we can't go hunting or fishing either. We must stand still and keep these wires in their place so when that young fellow gets ready to talk to his sweetheart the wires won't be grounded."

Even so we need to keep our prayer poles set -- even though it seems long before an answer comes. May we illustrate?

I was in a meeting in a Christian New Light Church out in the country from Kokomo, Indiana. I went to the church to pray, Sunday morning. The Holy Spirit helped me; it was good to pray. Later that same day I went back to the church to pray, and again I had help to pray.

That night was the closing night of the meeting. After the service was over I went home. The next morning I arose early and went to my study. I knelt to pray. I was in prayer around forty-five minutes. It was just like saying words. It was so much as if I had backslidden (I wasn't

conscious of grieving the Lord since that last good season of prayer in the country church) or as if God were gone. I never did get through in prayer that time. Later Monday it was hard to pray.

Tuesday morning I was up early again and went to pray. It was so similar to what I had experienced the morning before. The praying was dry and hard. Why? What was wrong?

Wednesday morning came, and again I was early in prayer. If there were any difference between this and the two previous mornings, it must have been harder than they had been. Later on Wednesday it was still hard. By this time the devil would have us quit. What is the use to pray under such as this?

Thursday morning came, and again I got alone to pray. Sometimes, pleading the blood helps me to get hold or get through in prayer. Sometimes special help has been mine by thanking the Lord for past blessings. But this time nothing I tried seemed to help me to break through in prayer.

Friday, I went to prayer again. I think this might have well been classed as the worst of all the five consecutive days of prayer battle. What should one do? WHAT?

I was teaching in Frankfort Pilgrim College, so I went to school after all of those five mornings of prayer battle. I believe the Lord was in my discarding the assignment for my last class before dinner. Instead of the assigned lesson, I spoke to that class of young people (around 30) on a divine call. I dealt with the Necessity of a call, the Nature of a call and the Evidence of a call. I had help for such from Dr. Hogue in his Pastoral Theology. I praise the Lord for His help in my effort to share that needed truth with my class.

When I had finished, Jim Storey said that if he weren't out of order, he would like to ask Brother Adcock to pray for those of them who had a call.

Ask whom? Adcock? What is the use to ask him after Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday with prayer "failure"? Of course, those students didn't know the sore battles of their teacher.

You won't know by reading this, what happened. Words break under the strain of the load to express what the blessed Holy Ghost did for teacher and students in that classroom. That you may have an inkling of what God bestowed, let me say, we knelt in prayer and windows of heaven were opened and unspeakable rich blessings were poured out. Oh! How hearts were made to rejoice. The unworthy teacher, in spite of the five mornings of prayer battle wasn't left out. After a while the bell sounded. It was time for class to be over; it was time to go to dinner. But the blessing of the Lord was so rich that numbers lingered and so did the blessing of the Lord.

Now back to the telephone poles -- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning, I was keeping the prayer poles set; and when my heavenly Father got ready for His rich bestowal, the unseen wires between our souls and heaven weren't grounded.

So praying souls, pray on! When blessings seem long in coming -- KEEP THE "POLES" SET!

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Chapter 18 PRAYER PRIVILEGES

The privileges of prayer are not limited as so many things are.

The time to pray is not limited as various things are. One of the most ideal times to pray is early in the morning. If we can meet God's smile of approval before we come face to face with the world's frown of displeasure, we can enjoy spiritual benefits all day that might otherwise be missed. And yet it is wonderful to remember that if we don't get in touch with God at four o'clock in the morning, the five o'clock hour is open; and should we let the five o'clock hour slip by without prayer, the six o'clock hour is open. Yea, the storehouse of God's grace never closes. It is open twenty-four hours a day.

Then, too, the numbers of times to pray aren't so limited as many things are. Jews used to claim that one shouldn't pray more than three times a day. The reason they gave for this limitation was that we shouldn't weary the Lord. I would like to announce that praying more than three times a day won't weary the Lord. One is just as welcome to pray the tenth, etc., time a day as the first time.

Furthermore, the place to pray isn't limited as other things are. God might have fixed it that all who prayed had to do so at an altar in some church. I say He, in His sovereignty, could have so fixed the place of prayer, but I am so glad He didn't place such a limitation on prayer. Such would have robbed saints of much of their praying.

Some years ago, we were in a meeting in Clay, Kentucky. I was teaching in a holiness Bible School in Evansville, Indiana. Around forty miles separated these two places. One particular night a lunch had been fixed for us. We hadn't gone far until someone started asking the blessing, and the blessed Holy Ghost moved until there was shouting and rejoicing around thirty miles.

One reason for that rich experience was in the fact of the place to pray not being limited.

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Chapter 19 GOD HAS MADE PROVISION FOR OUR PHYSICAL NEEDS

"The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:5b.

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." Psalm 103:3.

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." James 5:14, 15.

In my pastorate, I had a deacon by the name of Mayheugh. I think he was past sixty years of age at the time and had heart trouble. Brother Wilder and Brother Henry (two men of our church) and I went into Brother Mayheugh's country home to pray for him. It seemed that I had such confidence or assurance on our way there that he would be healed. (Oh! How I wish I had such faith all the time.)

We reached the home and went to prayer. We prayed on and how the devil did fight! But we held on, perhaps, thirty minutes or more. I am so glad for the aid of the blessed Holy Ghost in prayer. The Lord answered prayer -- Brother Mayheugh was healed. He was in the grocery business and was soon lifting a hundred pounds of one thing or another in his store.

Brother Mayheugh lived to be past ninety years of age and to my knowledge he never had heart trouble after that.

I don't know who exercised faith for his healing, but to God be all the glory. He alone is worthy! He still heals. Bless His dear worthy name!

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Chapter 20

LET US GIVE THANKS

I am so very grateful to the Lord for His healing power in my behalf. I don't know just how many times He has touched my body with His healing power. A number of times I have experienced His healing touch in my throat.

May I share with you, my reader, one of those times in particular?

I was in a meeting in Lima, Ohio. I preached in the morning service. I perspired and after getting in a breeze, became so hoarse I didn't know how I would possibly preach that night.

We had dinner, and after finishing dinner I went to my room. After a while I started thanking the Lord for some other times when He had touched my throat. I praise the Holy Spirit for His aid in thanksgiving. This thanksgiving to the Lord lasted for some time. I hadn't gotten around to asking Him for healing of my throat that afternoon. Suddenly He touched my throat, and I could praise Him out loud. Healing at His hand of mercy is healing with a plus -- healing, plus all of the spiritual blessing that accompanies His healing touch. Well, I was able to preach that night and also able to resume teaching responsibilities at Frankfort Pilgrim College the next morning.

"Don't ask the Lord for a thing until you have receipted Him in full for the last blessing you received."

Let me add that if you have receipted Him in full for the last blessing you had at His hand of mercy, it won't hurt if you receipt Him three, nay, or twenty-three times. He is worthy! He is worthy!!

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Chapter 21

GIVE US THE RIGHT MESSAGE

All of God's Word is good. But all of it is not equally good for a particular time. In other words it is so very important that we as preachers of God's Word have His particular message for a particular time.

Sometimes it has been quite easy for me to get clear as to what message to preach, and at other times it has been more difficult -- sometimes quite difficult.

In one of the meetings in the East Side Nazarene Church in Indianapolis, Indiana, I had an experience that has lingered with me for years.

It was Sunday morning, and I had been praying and trying to get clear as to what I should preach. It seemed to be settled. I thought I was to preach on holiness.

The blessed Holy Ghost moved graciously in our midst and soon a wonderful testimony meeting was in progress. In fact the Holy Ghost was moving so graciously that for a while it seemed that, maybe, I didn't need to preach anything.

Around 11:15 the pastor told the people that if any of them had to go before 12:30 they had better go now. Suddenly, the spirit of the meeting changed so drastically, and it was so clear concerning the message -- not holiness but the solemn subject of hell.

I arose to preach. Praise the Lord for the help of His Spirit. The altar call was given, and the Holy Spirit further helped and numbers (as I recall 10 or 12) came. And Oh! what earnest seeking there was. Around 1 o'clock the pastor counted and there were around one hundred still at the church.

Some time later I understand that one of the seekers (a woman who had attended a holiness school and was so woefully backslidden) said -- if not these very words -- words to this effect -- "I thought I could go to church on Sunday morning; whoever heard of a preacher preaching on hell on Sunday morning?"

The blessed Holy Ghost knew who was there and what was most needed. Oh! I so deeply appreciate His leading.

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Chapter 22 HOW DETERMINED ARE WE?

In many things it is of little or no importance whether we are persistent. But when it comes to having God's will in His blessings and victories He has made possible for us, no degree of determination is too great to exercise.

We may conclude that Jacob believed this when we read in Genesis 32:24-26, "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." And he was blessed -- greatly blessed -- blessed to the point of a changed nature that called for a new name to fit the new nature. Jacob -- the heel grasper -- didn't fit his new nature. Now he is Israel -- "wrestler with God" or "Prince of God."

Martin Luther realized something of the need of real earnestness -- real persistence in prayer until it used to be declared, "He will not be denied."

John Knox was persistent when in desperation he cried, "Give me Scotland or I die."

We read that Epaphras, "laboured fervently in prayer."

Christ was in great agony when we read, "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Luke 22:44.

This writer is quick to acknowledge that he doesn't equal Jacob, Luther, Knox, or Epaphras and so much less Jesus in prayer. But I am grateful for special helps in prayer while pastoring some years ago. We had prayer meetings five mornings a week for weeks and weeks. Oh! how graciously and blessedly God did move in and through those prayer meetings.

One particular morning I was in prayer at the church altar. The Holy Spirit aided me as I wrestled in prayer. I got right up to the breaking through point, and suddenly (so much as if one had cut a string that was holding a desired treasure) I was cut off. I started in praying again and again I was cut off. Finally I left the altar and went into a room nearby and as I wrestled further I broke through to victory. Praise the Lord for His mercies!

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Chapter 23 WHY FAST?

Deep feelings may lead to fasting, and fasting may deepen deep feelings. Fasting can be an aid to physical health. It can contribute to intellectual vigor. And it can intensify fervor in

devotions. It can bring one to a keener consciousness of his dependence upon God. This should, in turn, lead to an increase of faith.

From the way fasting and prayer are so frequently placed together in the Scriptures, we may conclude that fasting makes prayer effective to a higher degree than it would otherwise be.

We certainly don't advocate that Christians never fast except when so prompted by the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, it is especially blessed to have Him prompt and then be faithful to that prompting.

Of all of the times I have fasted, there is one time which stands out above all others. I was in a meeting in a Free Methodist Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was Friday, and I was so definitely impressed that I should fast at noon on Sunday. Why Sunday? Why not Friday? I didn't have the answer to these two questions, and I still don't know just why today. But when the Holy Spirit leads we don't have to know why. The fact of His leading is "WHY" enough.

Sunday came, and so did the dinner hour. We were entertained in the home of a business man. What a spread of good things. There was turkey with all of the good things to go with it. I was privileged to have my wife and our two sons with me. As they joined the host and his family in enjoying such a wonderful dinner, I had no temptations to eat. I went into a room to pray.

In the afternoon I had a question I needed an answer to. Was I supposed to fast at supper, too, or should I eat? I was willing to fast at supper, too, but I waited further for the answer. After some time I felt clear to eat. My supper consisted of a sandwich and a glass of milk. I don't remember ever in all of my life having such a consciousness of eating to the glory of God as I ate for added strength for the closing service.

Oh! How graciously the Holy Ghost moved in that service. There was such a wonderful response in the altar call. Among the seekers was the man who carried mail in that part of the city. It was especially blessed how people held on in prayer. We got out of that service around 11 o'clock.

One of our Bible School teachers likened fasting to putting a booster on prayer. Can you picture a five-year-old boy trying to climb a slim, slick sycamore sapling? See how poorly he is getting along, but note the change when that husky uncle of his gives him a boost that enables him to catch hold of the lowest limb.

Let us add fasting to prayer and give our praying a boost!

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Chapter 24

HOW LONG SHOULD WE PRAY?

Some might answer the above question by saying, "Ten minutes." Another might choose to answer, "One hour." We read of Jesus praying all night.

Across more than a quarter of a century of teaching in holiness schools we have had prayer and then the lesson. I welcome the Holy Spirit to each of my class sessions. I don't just welcome His presence -- I welcome Him to have right of way in my classes. I more than need Him -- I MUST have His presence and power if my teaching is to be all it should for good to students and for glory to God. Again and again when too many weeks have slipped by without a special moving of the Holy Spirit, I have specifically prayed for a special manifestation of Him. Sometimes this has come by His special aid in presenting truth; sometimes His presence has been manifested by His sweet hallowed presence; other times He has moved in such a spirit of prayer and praise that there has been burden, shouting, and rejoicing until we failed to get to the assigned lesson. The Holy Spirit has a special lesson for us. Oh! We must have Him or else have an unspeakable loss. When students have forgotten some of the things I have endeavored to teach them, they may well remember times when the Holy Spirit manifested Himself in our midst.

Some time ago in my Life and Letters of Paul class we had a moving of the Holy Spirit that hasn't been duplicated in any of my classes since then. We went to prayer. After some time in prayer, I felt we should wait a while longer. I mentioned it to my class and we prayed on. After a while I told them that if every heart were clear we might arise, and not one of them arose. I never had an experience just like that one. It seemed that maybe some needed help about their call. I mentioned this and some wanted help about their call. I don't know the details of their needs on this line, but we prayed more, and again I told them that if all hearts were clear we might arise and not one got up. Some more wanted help about their call. I was so impressed that we were doing business for eternity.

Finally, the bell sounded, and it was time for class to be over. Again students were at liberty to go. Two left. I think they were to leave for their work. Others of us stayed on our knees over into the next hour.

How long should we pray? Instead of marking it by the hands of the watch or clock, suppose we endeavor to obey the Holy Spirit and pray as long as He leads or until we pray clear through!

Following Him there should be no wasted time. He never misleads. Bless His dear worthy name! Be sure to make room for His coming, whenever or whatever is the occasion.

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Chapter 25

AN UNFINISHED SERMON

It had been my privilege and honor to be a worker in the Hobe Sound Camp a number of times.

One year it was my time to preach on Monday morning. Usually on Monday morning, the attendance in camp meeting is quite small. This particular Monday, hundreds were present.

I was speaking from Ephesians 1:18, 19 on the "Consciousness of the Church." The message was divided into three major divisions. I. What is the Hope of His calling; II. What are the Riches of the Glory of His inheritance in the saints; and III. What is the Exceeding Greatness of His power to us-ward who believe. This is a very rich line of inspirational truth. It should feed, encourage, and strengthen the saints, but I didn't think of it as being evangelistic. I didn't plan to give an altar call when I finished with the message.

I had begun to deal with the hope (dead certainty) of His call; there is His call to repent, His call to holiness, His call to service, and His call unto His eternal glory, and the blessed Holy Spirit was giving this unworthy servant very special help to preach. Bless His dear name!

Numbers of people were shouting or rejoicing and conviction was so great that I stopped preaching without developing the last two points of consciousness, and thirty some were in the altar service.

There is no substitute for the Holy Ghost. We need Him to help us as to what to preach; we need Him to anoint us to preach; and we even need Him to help us as to WHEN to stop preaching.

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Chapter 26

A PREACHER'S DELIGHTFUL DETOUR

In November of 1976, I had surgery for a hernia. By January 12, I was well on my way to recovery, and yet my strength was limited. It was so good to be physically able to do a little of what once I could do much more.

There was some wood for our fireplace stacked back of our house, so I decided to split some of that wood. On my way to split wood, I noticed my Thomson Chain Reference Bible lying on a chest of drawers. Should I stop to read it? I passed it by. I was on my way to split wood! But before I reached the door to go outside where the wood was stacked, I came to my Marked Bible. There I started what proved to be a delightful detour. I stopped to read my Bible. I started reading in Psalm 105. I finished the forty-five verses that make up that Psalm. The 106th Psalm has forty-eight verses in it and I read them.

Psalm 105 deals richly with the gracious providence of God, and describes graphically God's care for His people. Part of that care is expressed in verse 17 where we read, "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant."

Psalm 106 deals with the rebellion of Israel and with God's rich mercies to them. Israel's rebellion and God's mercy are both climaxed in verse 23, where we read, "Therefore he said he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them."

The part of that scripture reading that the Holy Spirit especially blessed to my soul was Psalm 105:4. Notice its message, "Seek the Lord and his strength: seek his face evermore." Let us

seek the Lord for salvation, seek His strength to serve Him, and His face for fellowship with Him. What a rich detour! And I was in a better shape to split wood.

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Chapter 27

AN UNSPEAKABLE BLESSING FROM AN UNSEEN GUEST!

The Christian doesn't always have the felt presence of God, but he always has the providential presence of God because God is omnipresent. He is present everywhere at all times.

I was traveling in Southern Illinois, headed north on Route One.

Sometimes I ride the highway alone (as far as human passengers) and sing. Sometimes I ride and quote Scripture. This particular time I wasn't singing or quoting Scripture either one. I didn't feel too well. What a wonderful time to have one's Heavenly Father with him.

As I rode along I was so impressed that in the work of the Lord, you don't have to pull wires or play politics to make advancement. I am still convinced that this is true. The Holy Spirit can order our steps and work out the will of God for our lives. It was so blessed to have the above impression.

But the Lord didn't leave me with the thought that one doesn't have to pull wires and play politics for advancement in the Lord's work. Another thought came that blessed my soul yet the more. In the Lord's work you don't even have to get a bigger church or a bigger income to make progress or advancement. If you are sure that you are in the will of God, that is more blessed by far than all positions, power, or possessions. Thinking on such a line of truth is enough to bless one's soul.

The Lord so blessed my soul that I drove the car off of the highway and stopped and didn't travel for a while.

There is nothing like the gracious refreshing of the blessed Holy Spirit. Bless His dear name.

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Chapter 28

THE DIVINE AUTHOR BRINGS BLESSED ENLIGHTENMENT

The Holy Spirit opens Scripture to our understanding and quickens Scripture to our spiritual well being.

In the closing of Revelation 18, we have a funeral dirge -- Babylon has been destroyed. What great reason for all saints to rejoice and praise the Lord. This praising is expressed in the

four Hallelujahs that are in the scope of the first six verses of chapter 19. We are told that Hallelujah means, "Praise the Lord."

For some time the Lord has given me special help from Revelation 19:6 where we have a glorious climax to the praise richly expressed in the four Hallelujahs in the opening of this chapter. Notice this verse; "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluja: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." How great is the voice or sound of a great multitude, plus the sound of many waters, plus mighty thunderings? This is indeed a tremendous sound. What is the nature of the sound? What is the message expressed? "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Praise the Lord, the Almighty reigneth, and He is not about to turn the reins over to men or the devil. What great consolation!

Fresh help has come to me from Psalm 86:5 where we read "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon Thee." What solid grounds are here given to mortal man to expect salvation and help. Such may be expected and received on the grounds of God's goodness. He is personally good; He is actively good, and He is perpetually good. He is good in His being and good in His doing. (Psalm 119:68).

"Oh! how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust thee before the sons of men!" Notice we are not told here how great is His goodness. There is no measuring stick by which the extent of His goodness can be determined. Notice, too, that our God has two kinds of goodness -- WROUGHT goodness for the here and now, and LAID UP goodness for the future.

Added grounds for expecting and receiving salvation and help are found in His readiness to forgive. Such readiness on His part is revealed in Isaiah 1:18. Hear Him as He says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Further take note, in Matthew 11:28 "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."


If more grounds are needed for expecting and receiving salvation and help, it is richly provided in the closing of Psalm 86:5 where we read, "and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." The Bible teaches us that God's mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. It also teaches that He is the father of mercy, the earth is full of His mercy, His mercy endureth to all generations, and His mercy endureth for ever. His mercy enduring to all generations takes care of mercy for time, and His mercy enduring for ever provides mercy for eternity. That should be sufficient mercy for all men (who will have its benefits through the blood of Jesus) forever. Truly His mercy is plenteous. He isn't about to run out of mercy.

Praise Him for His goodness, for His readiness to forgive, and for His plenteous mercy!

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A student once asked, "Does the Holy Spirit do anything for us but save and sanctify us?"
Yes! He does much more!

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS: John 16:8-11 -- "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

1. He convicts of sin -- thus making the sinner conscious that he needs a Saviour. Matthew Henry says, "The Spirit convinces of the fact of sin, that we have done so and so; of the fault of sin, that we have done ill in doing so; of the folly of sin, that we have acted against right reason, and our true interest; of the filth of sin, that by it we are become odious to God; of the fountain of sin, the corrupt nature; and, lastly, of the fruit of sin, that the end thereof is death." [1] 

2. He convicts of righteousness because Jesus has gone to the Father -- and thus a Saviour is provided.

3. He convicts of judgment because the prince of this world is judged -- and thus man should be made to see his doom if he will not have the Saviour he needs and has been provided for him.

II. THE BIRTH OF THE SPIRIT: John 3:5 -- "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

There is a natural birth, and there is a spiritual birth. Matthew Henry declared, "To be born again is to be born of the Spirit. The change is not wrought by any wisdom or power of our own, but by the power and influence of the blessed Spirit of grace." [2]

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT SANCTIFIES:

Titus 3:5 -- "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

I Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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:"

I Peter 1:2 "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

In reference to the verse in II Thessalonians, Adam Clarke says; "Let us observe the order of Divine grace in this business:

1. They were to hear the TRUTH -- the doctrines of the Gospel.
2. They were to BELIEVE this truth when they heard it preached.
3. They were to RECEIVE the Spirit of God in believing the truth.
4. That Spirit was to SANCTIFY their souls -- produce an inward holiness, which was to lead to all outward conformity to God.
5. All this constituted their SALVATION -- their being fitted for the inheritance among the saints in light.
6. They were to OBTAIN THE GLORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST -- that state of felicity for which they were fitted, by being saved here from their sins, and by being sanctified by the Spirit of God." [3]

In reference to the verse in II Peter 1:2, Adam Clarke says, "'THROUGH SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT' -- through the renewing and purifying influences of his Spirit on their souls." [4]

Dr. Benson shares some rich truth in reference to II Thessalonians 2:13 "' . . . through sanctification of the Spirit....' Through that renovation of mind and heart, and reformation of life, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit's influences." [5]

IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES: John 16:13-15 -- "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

"And he will show you things to come." Dr. Adam Clarke's comments on this portion of Holy Writ are worthy of our notation. He says, "He will fully explain everything that may now appear dark or difficult to you; will give you such a knowledge of futurity as shall, in all necessary cases, enable you to foretell future events; and shall supply every requisite truth, in order to make the new covenant revelation complete and perfect." [6]

V. THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS US -- Romans 8:14 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

In commenting on Romans 8:14 Dr. Clarke helps us as to the leading of the Spirit. "As Christ, by His sacrificial offering, has opened the kingdom of God to all believers; and, as a mediator, transacts the concerns of their kingdom before the throne; so the Spirit of God is the great agent here below, to enlighten, quicken, strengthen, and guide the true disciples of Christ; and

all that are born of this Spirit are led and guided by it; and none can pretend to be the children of God who are not thus guided." [7]

VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT CHECKS US: Acts 16:6 -- "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." If we are to be led by the Holy Spirit we should be willing to be checked by Him.

One might have thought Paul would have known the mind of the Spirit or the will of God so perfectly that he would never need be checked.

Matthew Henry offers two suggestions as to how the Holy Ghost forbade -- "It was the Holy Ghost that forbade them, either by secret whispers in the minds of both of them, which, when they came to compare notes, they found to be the same, and to come from the same Spirit; or by some prophets who spoke to them from the Spirit." [8]

VII. THE HOLY GHOST SHEDS DIVINE LOVE ABROAD IN OUR HEARTS: Romans 5:5 -- "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

Clarke reminds us as to the nature and benefits of the divine love here referred to: "We have the most solid and convincing testimony of God's love to us, by that measure of it which He has communicated to our hearts. There, it is poured out and diffused abroad; filling, quickening, and invigorating all our powers and faculties. This love is the spring of all our actions; it is the motive of our obedience; the principle through which we love God, we love Him because He first loved us; and we love Him with a love worthy of Himself, because it springs from Him: it is His own; and every flame that rises from this pure and vigorous fire must be pleasing in His sight: it consumes what is unholy; refines every passion and appetite; sublimates the whole, and assimilates all to itself. And we know that this is the love of God; it differs widely from all that is earthly and sensual. The Holy Ghost comes with it; by His energy it is diffused and pervades every part; and by His light we discover what it is, and know the state of grace in which we stand."

IX. THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS US PRAY: Zechariah 12:10 -- "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

Romans 8:26, 27 -- "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

Matthew Henry, on Zechariah 12:10 says, "As a Spirit of supplications, inclining us to, instructing and assisting us in, the duty of prayer."

Clarke shares such very rich truth with us on Romans 8:27: "Our Lord makes intercession for us, by negotiating and managing, as our friend and agent, all the affairs pertaining to our

salvation. And the Spirit of God makes intercession for the saints, not by supplication to God on their behalf, but by directing and qualifying their supplications in a proper manner, by His agency and influence upon their hearts; which, according to the Gospel scheme, is the peculiar work and office of the Holy Spirit. 'According to the will of God,' according to the mind, intention, or design of God. And thus the prayers which we offer up, and the desires which subsist in the unutterable groanings, are all such as are pleasing in the sight of God. So that God, whose is the Spirit, knows what He means when He leads the saints to express themselves in words, desires, groans, sighs, or tears: in each God reads the language of the Holy Ghost, and prepares the answer according to the request.

From all this we learn that a fluency in prayer is not essential to praying: A man may pray most powerfully in the estimation of God, who is not able to utter even one word. The unutterable groan is big with meaning, and God understands it, because it contains the language of His own Spirit. Some desires are too mighty to be expressed; there is no language expressive enough to give them proper form and distinct vocal sound: such desires show that they came from God; and as they came from Him, so they express what God is disposed to do, and what He has purposed to do. This is a matter of great encouragement to all those who are agonizing to enter in at the strait gate." [9]

X. THE HOLY SPIRIT FIGHTS OUR BATTLES: Isaiah 59:19 -- "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him."

The marginal reading seems stronger still. It is, "put him to flight." Matthew Henry declares, "He that has delivered will still deliver."

XI. WE ARE SEALED BY THE SPIRIT: Ephesians 1:13 "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."

Clarke declares, "God has no child who is not a partaker of the Holy Ghost, and he who has this Spirit has God's seal that he belongs to the heavenly family. And they who in the day of judgment are found to bear this seal -- TRUTH; truth in the inward parts, having truly repented, truly believed, and having been in consequence truly justified and truly sanctified; and having walked in truth and sincerity towards God and man; these are sealed to the day of redemption; for, having this seal, they are seen to have a right to eternal life." [10]

XII. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE: Ephesians 1:14 -- "Which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory."

"Which is the earnest of our inheritance" -- Clarke helps us with this when he declares, "This Holy Spirit, sealing the soul with truth and righteousness, is the earnest, foretaste, and pledge of the heavenly inheritance." [11]

XIII. WE HAVE ACCESS UNTO THE FATHER BY THE HOLY SPIRIT: Ephesians 2:18 -- "For through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father."

This verse is a clear proof of the holy Trinity.

We share with our reader a quote from M. Henry "Our access is by the Holy Spirit." [12]

XIV. WE HAVE A RICHER REVELATION BY THE HOLY SPIRIT: Ephesians 3:5 -- "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

The calling of the Gentiles was known by prophets in other ages, but a richer revelation came by the Holy Spirit.

Notice what Clarke has to say about that. "It certainly was not made known in that clear and precise manner in which it was now revealed by the Spirit unto the ministers of the New Testament: Nor was it made known unto them at all, that the Gentiles should find salvation without coming under the yoke of the Mosaic law, and that the Jews themselves should be freed from that yoke of bondage; these were discoveries totally new and now revealed for the first time by the Spirit of God." [13]

XV. WE CAN HAVE OUR INNER MAN STRENGTHENED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT: 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."

Though the outer man perish our inner man can be strengthened day by day and that by the Holy Spirit. Give us this soul strength. Such benefits will enable us to discharge faithfully our duties, triumph over our temptations, and profit by our persecutions.

XVI. OUR SUFFICIENCY IS IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: Philippians 1:19 -- "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." What is included in 'the supply of the Spirit' is made clear by what Clarke gives us when he says, "The word (epichoregia), which we translate supply, signifies also furnishing whatever is necessary. The Spirit of God he expected to help all his infirmities, and to furnish him with all the wisdom, prudence, strength or reason, and argument, which might be necessary for him in the different trials he had to pass through with his persecutors, and the civil powers, at whose judgment seat he stood." [14]

To ponder the rich benefits of the Holy Spirit expressed in these sixteen facts about Him is to find that He does "much more" for us than to save and sanctify us.

Then to remember that this is only a partial list of the Holy Spirit's benefits, we should be brought to see something of how broad and blessed is the place of the Holy Spirit in Christian doctrine and experience.

The writer desires for each of his readers a Spirit-filled life with all of the benefits of the Holy Spirit.

Let us conclude with a quote and a comment.

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness." Acts 4:31.

"Though these disciples had received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, yet they were capable of larger communications; and what they had then received did not preclude the necessity of frequent supplies, on emergent occasions. Indeed, one communication of this Spirit always makes way and disposes for another. Neither apostle nor private Christian can subsist in the Divine life without frequent influences from on high." [15]

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ENDNOTES

1. Matthew Henry Commentary, Vol. V, page 1137.

2 Matthew Henry Commentary, Vol. V, page 883.

3. Adam Clarke Com. Vol. VI, pages 567-568.

4 Adam Clarke Com. Vol. VI, page 843.

5 Benson's Com. Vol. V, page 414.

6 Adam Clarke Com. Vol. V., page 833.

7 Adam Clarke Com. Vol. II, page 96.

8 Matthew Henry Com. Vol. VI, page 203.

9 Clarke Com. Vol. II, pages 100-101.

10 Adam Clarke Com. Vol. II, page 434.

11 Ibid.

12 Matthew Henry Com. Vol. VI, page 895.

13 Adam Clarke Com Vol. II, page 444.

14 Adam Clarke Com. Vol. II, page 492.

15 Adam Clarke Com. Vol. V, page 713.

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