



**"The Beginnings
of Faith"
(#2)**

- 1—Jesus is the Perfect Sacrifice for Sin
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"Jesus is the Perfect Sacrifice for Sin"

God is revealed to us in Holy Writ as "triune"—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). It is what some call the "composite unity" of God. Each personality of Deity has His specific part to play in man's redemption. We previously suggested the following:

1. God, the Father, is the great Planner for man's redemption;
2. God, the Son, came to earth as a man to carry out those plans for man's redemption;
3. God, the Holy Spirit, came to give life to those who put their trust in God.

In the two previous lessons on Jesus, we studied about His Lordship and His Deity in the flesh. In this lesson, we want to take a close look at the Son's part in man's redemption. Remember, these seven "ones" are the basis of what we are to believe to be pleasing to God. There is only one God, the Father! But, as well, there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ! Why is it so important to believe this? Because only the one Lord could be the perfect sacrifice for sin!

Man Needs a Redeemer

Man's origination is dealt with in the first two chapters of Genesis. How man came into being has everything to do concerning the question of "Redemption!" If man merely evolved as some would have us believe, then he is only a higher form of a brute and therefore has no need of "Redemption." But, if man was created by God by design, then man is a responsible being, has free-will, and can make his choices in his life. If those choices lead to man's separation from God, he will need "Redemption" from the just penalty of his wrong choices. And as chapter three of Genesis reveals, man exercised his choice, made a bad decision, and the outcome was what God had threatened—DEATH! (Romans 6:23) The word "death" has two basic connotations: (1) Separation of the spirit from the body (James 2:26); and (2) Separation of man's spirit from God (Ephesians 2:1, 5). As a result of sin, all men will die a physical death (Hebrews 9:27). But man will also die a spiritual death (separation from God). The sad thing about sin is that we have no means of our own to rid our lives of that sin and its penalty. It is therefore said of man that he is in "bondage" to sin—he can't get loose from its hold! (Romans 6:6) Therefore man needs a "Redeemer"—one who can pay the price for his freedom from the hold of sin. Jesus is pictured in the Scriptures as being that "Redeemer" for mankind.

A REDEEMER FORETOLD

The Scriptures indicate that God planned for man's redemption before he created all things (Ephesians 1:4-5; 3:11; 1 Peter 1:18-20). The Old Testament Scriptures record the promises of God of a redeemer to come in the following verses: (1) Genesis 3:15-16—To be of the seed of the woman; and (2) Genesis 12:3; 22:18; 26:3-5; 28:10-15—To bless all nations through the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The New Testament Scriptures point out that the "seed" (descendant) of Abraham that would come and bless all nations is "JESUS!" (Galatians 3:15-16). The New Covenant Gospels of Matthew and Luke show that Jesus is of the lineage of Abraham (Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-37). And the Prophet Isaiah foretold that this "servant" of God would be a "guilt offering" (NAS) and would "justify the many" and would "bear their iniquities." He also stated that He "bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors." (Isaiah 53:10-12). The prophetic indications are that the one who would come would die for the people to redeem them. Sin and its penalty had to be dealt with or man would be forever lost.

JOHN, THE FORERUNNER OF JESUS

The last Old Testament writing Prophet ended his book with a promise of the coming of the redeemer and forerunner to prepare the way for Him (Malachi 3:1; 4:4-6). The Gospel of Mark opens with a quotation from Malachi that indicates that John the baptizer was the one sent by God to prepare the way for the Redeemer (Mark 1:1-4). The inspired Apostle Paul stated in Galatians: *"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."* (4:4-5). It is stated about John that he was filled with the Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15). At the proper time, John began preaching to prepare the way for the One who would redeem lost mankind. He told the people that *"There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose."* A short time later, he pointed to Jesus of Nazareth as being the One that was to come. John vividly portrayed Him as: *"Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"* (John 1:29). Jesus had now come to become the sacrifice sin-offering for lost mankind. John also told the people that: *"I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."* (John 1:34). He also added that Jesus must increase, but that he would decrease (John 3:30). A short time later, John was imprisoned and beheaded—for his work had been WELL-DONE!

JESUS OFFERED HIMSELF

Jesus understood and clearly stated why He came to earth and what His

mission was: ***"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*** (Luke 19:10). He knew that He would be put to death (John 12:32-33) and the purpose for it. On the night of His betrayal, he instituted the "Lord's Supper" as a continual reminder of His death that He would soon die for the sins of the world or ***"for the remission of sins."*** (Matthew 26:26-28). However, as the time came for His arrest, trials, and death, He was exceedingly sorrowful, even to death and sought refuge in praying to the Father. He even prayed that this coming sacrifice could be avoided; but, if not, He was resigned to carry out the Father's Will! (Matthew 26:38-46). Jesus also made it very clear that men had no power to take His life unless it was the Will of the Father (John 19:10-11). He stated that he had the choice to keep his life or lay it down (John 10:15-18). When the time came for his arrest by the soldiers from the chief priests and Pharisees, He willingly surrendered to them (rebuking Peter in his efforts to defend him with his sword) (John 18:1-11).

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE

The idea of a sin offering is giving something of value in the place of that which should be punished. An innocent animal had to die as a "sin-offering" in the place of the one who had sinned. God had ordained that this was to be done until the perfect sacrifice for sin had been accomplished in Jesus. The blood of bulls and goats could not really atone for sin—even though God required that such be offered (Hebrews 10:1-10). Full atonement had to come from a human who lived perfect and did not justly deserve death—Jesus was that man! (2 Corinthians 5:21). In His death, He became the "sin-substitute" for those who have faith in Him. He did not deserve death, but He willingly chose to die in our stead (shed His blood) so that we might be set free from the just penalty of our sins (Romans 5:6-10). Through His death: ***"He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."*** (Hebrews 10:14). Again, we emphasize that Jesus had to be a perfect man in order to redeem fallen man. He was like: ***"a lamb without blemish and without spot."*** (1 Peter 1:18-21).

GOD'S LAW UPHELD

Why so much emphasis upon the perfection of Jesus? (Hebrews 5:8-9). The answer is simple—to show that God was just (righteous) in all His actions! His Law states that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). If God did not punish sinful man; then, He would become unjust in His actions toward His creatures. Jesus' death satisfied the demands of the Law, and thereby God could forgive us and look upon us as perfect (when we were not!) (Romans 3:20-26). Jesus, as a perfect man, could take our place, pay our penalty, and the Law of God would be satisfied and upheld and God would be shown to be just in His actions.

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you." (John 15:13-14). *"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."* (Romans 5:8). The *"Law of sin and death"* (You sin—you die) has been successfully removed for those who put their trust in Jesus

God's great scheme of Redemption has now been completed in the death of Christ. Man's freedom has been paid for in full! God's justice has been shown, His Law upheld, and His love for His creatures provided a way for Him to be merciful to sinful man. True fellowship with God has become a reality and a great hope for the future made possible by the perfect sacrifice for sin. Has God's great love for man been shown sufficiently through His Son's death that you are motivated—not only to come to Him for redemption, but to serve him out of love all of your life? Have you become a devoted follower of Jesus, the Son of God?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. In what sense was Jesus to bless all nations? (Genesis 22:18)
2. How did Jesus become man's sin offering? (Isa. 53:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:21; Matt. 27:46)
3. How is Jesus our propitiation? (Isa. 53:11; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10)
4. If the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, why did God require such? (Heb. 10:1-10)
5. How do we know when a sacrifice is able to truly redeem us? (Heb. 10:11-18)
6. How does Jesus prove God to be just in forgiving man's sin? (Rom. 3:21-26)
7. What made men free from the Law of sin and death? (Rom. 8:1-4)
8. Why is the New Testament called the perfect law of liberty? (James 1:25; 2:12)

Lesson Two

"Jesus was Raised from the Dead"

God became flesh to redeem fallen man! But the question arises: "*For what purpose(s) has He redeemed us?*" or "*Unto what has He redeemed us?*" Is it:

1. **To live a better life here?** This certainly would be a part of the answer assuredly because we have been given access to "*all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*" (Ephesians 1:3).
2. **To glorify God by our words and actions?** Yes! This too is emphasized in the word of God: "*Do all to the glory of God*" (1 Corinthians 10:31).
3. **To tell others about Redemption to be found in Christ?** The "Great Commission" makes this very clear as being a part of the reason for our being redeemed (Matthew 28:18-20).

But, we believe there is another reason that gives us new meaning and assurance to our lives—that is, He has redeemed us unto "*A living hope*" through the resurrection from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). And in being raised from the dead He became Lord over the "*living and the dead*" (Romans 14:9).

The inspired Apostle Paul showed the great necessity of having this hope when he said: "*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable.*" (1 Corinthians 15:19). It is critical for us to not only believe in Jesus' death for our redemption, but to also believe in His resurrection from the dead for the hope of eternal life! Of what value is redemption, if that is all there is to the existence of man? It is in reality meaningless because we will all die a physical death anyway and that will be the end of the story! Generally speaking, we don't want to believe that physical death is the end of man. And besides, the very concept of redemption is that we are freed from the punishment for sin (eternal punishment—Matthew 25:41, 46); and, we have been given that hope of eternal life with God after this life is over (Philippians 3:20-21). The resurrection of Jesus not only proves Him to be the Son of God with power (Romans 1:4), but it has assured us of a "living hope" of life with God when this life is over. It is this hope that "saves us" and motivates us to keep living for God till the day we die (Romans 8:24; Revelation 2:10b). The Apostle also states vividly: "*If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!*" (1 Corinthians 15:17). He is clearly pointing out the worthlessness of the death of Christ if there is no resurrection from the dead! But Christ is raised and we do have a great hope.

WHAT THIS HOPE INCLUDES

When we talk about "going to heaven" or "the hope of heaven;" just what do we mean, or what is involved in this concept. The following ideas will help to explain the Biblical concepts involved:

1. **Our bodies are to be raised (1 Cor. 15:35-42).** It is the body, not the spirit that is raised. Our spirit will evidently be clothed with our resurrected body. What will this body be like?
2. **It will be a new "spiritual" body (1 Cor. 15:44).** It is a new body that is fit for our new existence. Even though the Bible speaks about the resurrection of our bodies (old bodies); yet, it also points out that the old body will be changed into a spiritual body.
3. **This new body is raised as:** (1) An incorruptible body; (2) It is raised in glory; and (3) It is raised in power (1 Cor. 15:42-43). Our new body will not be limited as our own body was.
4. **It will bear the image of the heavenly man (1 Cor. 15:48-49).** Our new body will be conformed to Christ's glorious body (Phil. 3:21). When we read about the resurrected body of Jesus we can get some idea of what our new body will be like.
5. **Our new body will be immortal (1 Cor. 15:53).** It will never be subject to death as our old body is. We are given the victory over death because of our body is not mortal (1 Cor. 15:54-57).
6. **It will be a "house" (the dwelling place of our spirit) from God that is not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1).** Again emphasizing that will no longer be mortal (that is, subject to death!).

EVIDENCES FOR THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Upon what can we base our faith that we will be raised like the above passages state? Blind faith is nothing more than wishful thinking. True faith is based on evidence! What are the evidences for believing in the resurrection of Jesus?

1. **Prophecy.** David foretold of the resurrection of the Christ in Psalm 16:8-11. The Apostle Peter quotes this reference and points out that David could not have been talking about himself, for his tomb was still among them at that time. So, he had to be speaking about the Messiah that was to come. Even though he would be put to death, he would be raised up from Sheol (Hades).
2. **Jesus' Foretelling.** Jesus not only foretold about His coming death (and what kind of death it would be), but also foretold of His resurrection.

He even used the graphic event in Jonah to compare it to: *"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."* (Matt. 12:39-40).

3. The Empty Tomb has always been a thorn in the side of the skeptics. The angel told the women: *"He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."* (Matt. 28:6). All the Jewish had to do to stop their preaching of the resurrection of Christ was to produce the body—which they could not do!

4. The Appearances. Jesus appeared to His Apostles on several occasion after His resurrection (Acts 1:1-3). In Acts 2, the Apostle Peter preached that Jesus had been raised according to prophecy—and then added: *"This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses."* (Acts 2:32). But the Apostle Paul stated: *"He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the Apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time."* (1 Cor. 15:5-8).

The evidences for His resurrection are there to be examined and evaluated as to their legitimacy. The honest inquirer will do so **and then** will draw his conclusions. Jesus' resurrection from the dead is one of the great proofs of His Deity (Romans 1:4).

"Resurrection unto life" has a great appeal to humanity. It has through the centuries. This is one of the reasons why the message was received and still is being received by people—it promises us that death does not end man's existence. Jesus' resurrection from the dead is our assurance—not only that all men will be judged (Acts 17:31), but that all men will be raised someday. Some will be raised to life and others to condemnation (John 5:28-29).

Whatever decision we make about Jesus, we had better make it as sure as we can, because much is at stake. He is either the Son of God or an imposter! He was either raised or we are all without hope. When Jesus asked His close disciples would they also leave Him as some other disciples were doing, their answer should be and could be ours as well: *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* (John 6:66-69).

Lesson Three

"One Spirit versus Many spirits"

We believe that the "composite oneness" of Deity is identified as "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit." My ability to fully explain this concept to answer all questions is thankfully not a pre-requisite to my believing such. Faith is not "sight," but faith is based on sufficient evidence that I can believe something to be true or real. There is no question in my mind that Deity is presented to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). The passage in Eph. 4:4-6 stresses that there is only "one Father," "one Son" (or one Lord Jesus the Christ), and "one (Holy) Spirit." In this lesson, we will be looking at the importance of there being "one Spirit." God is a Spirit (Jn. 4:24), but there is only "one Spirit." Man is made up of both physical and "spirit" (Gen. 2:7; 1 Thess. 5:23), but there is only "one Spirit!" Demons and the Devil are evidently spirit beings (along with all the Holy Angels)(Heb. 1:14), but there is only "one Spirit!" Let's examine together to see why there is only "one Spirit."

The Personage of the Holy Spirit

Because we are human and basically understand things from a human (person) standpoint, we use the term "person" to identify with God, the Father, but also the Son and the Holy Spirit. A "person" to us has Life, Thought, Volition, Action, Individuality, Character, and Influence. The Bible indicates that the Holy Spirit has all of these things. It is also said of Him that:

1. He lives, He wills, He acts;
2. He has a separate individuality from the Father and the Son;
3. He has a particular character and possesses influence.

Personhood is indicated by such things as:

1. Possessing the ability to think (Rom. 8:27);
2. Possessing knowledge (1 Cor. 2:11);
3. Having affections (Rom. 15:30);
4. Having a will (1 Cor. 12:11);
5. Having names and titles (Spirit of Truth, Comforter, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, etc.).
6. Using "personal pronouns" to identify the person (Jn. 14:26).

The Scriptures obviously attributed all of the above to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not an "it" or a "thing," but a person in the general sense of the use of this word.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Miraculous gifts come from God but which person of the Godhead

gives these gifts? Where there is specificity, such gifts come from the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 12:1-11; Acts 19:1-7). The "gift" of the Holy Spirit promised by Peter in Acts 2:38 could be the "indwelling" of the Holy Spirit in the new child of God. But the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit would be those miraculous abilities that are listed in 1 Cor. 12-14 that were given in the early church before the New Testament was fully revealed and written down. It is very important to know why such "gifts" were given so that we do not draw wrong conclusions about these gifts still being given to men today. The Scriptures clearly state why such gifts were given (Jn. 20:30-31; Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:4; 1 Cor. 12:7; 13:8-9; 14:4, 12, 22, 25-26, 40).

Two facts should be evident from the above information: (1) That those who claim to speak "for God" needed to have a miraculous sign to prove they were speaking God's message and not their own; and (2) That the new Churches being established all over the world needed to have these gifts in order to teach correctly the message of God so the church could be built up and matured in Christ Jesus. Once the "New Covenant" message was given completely and confirmed as being from God, there would be no longer a need for the miraculous gifts—they would cease (1 Cor. 13:8-10).

The Work of the One Holy Spirit

Deity's desire is to bring men back into a relationship or fellowship with Himself so that he can be blessed here and be with God for all eternity. Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection has made such possible to those who will put their trust in Him. The Spirit's work is not only to convict and bring men back to God; but, as well, to keep them faithful in their obedience to God. He does this through the use of the Word of God being read or heard, believed, and obeyed. That is the reason why such admonitions are given in His Word to:

1. Feed on the Word of God (1 Pet. 2:1-2);
2. Be filled with the Word of Christ (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18);
3. To be willing to be taught, reproved, corrected, and instructed in the Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

If we will do the above, then the Spirit through the Word of God can give us:

1. Assurance of salvation (Rom. 8:16);
2. Strength to live godly (Eph. 3:16; Acts 20:32);
3. Comfort in the midst of life's trials (Acts 9:31; Rom. 15:4);

Concluding Thoughts

There is no indication that the Holy Spirit works directly upon a person to save them or to guide them; but, rather, He does His work through the read or preached Word of God. A statement that I believe cannot be refuted that would show this—***"There are no Christians anywhere in the world where the Word of God has not been taught or read!"*** His work "in us" is accomplished by our hearing, believing and obeying the Word of God! He has given to mankind the Message of Redemption. It is our job to see that it is spread throughout the world so that men might hear it, believe it, and obey it to be saved and live godly lives until death (Rev. 2:10).

Questions for Discussion

True or False

- ___ ___ 1. It is necessary to fully understand Deity before I can believe in the "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."
- ___ ___ 2. If God is Spirit, and man is spirit, and the demons and the devil are spirits, then there is more than one spirit.
- ___ ___ 3. The term "person" is used in reference to God because that is the only way we have of identifying Him for our understanding.
- ___ ___ 4. Using the term "person" in reference to God does not take away from His Deity.
- ___ ___ 5. The Divinity of the Holy Spirit has been questioned by some through the centuries, but the evidence is overwhelming in the Scriptures to believe in His Deity.
- ___ ___ 6. Miraculous gifts can only come from God.
- ___ ___ 7. The "gift" or the Holy Spirit and the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit are different concepts.
- ___ ___ 8. The New Testament actually lists the "gifts" of the Spirit that were given in the first century church.
- ___ ___ 9. The Scriptures do not really state why the "gifts" were given in the early church.
- ___ ___ 10. Miraculous gifts were used to confirm that the message being spoken came from God.
- ___ ___ 11. Miraculous gifts were mentioned as being in churches over the world.
- ___ ___ 12. The New Testament (Covenant) was definitely given by the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- ___ ___ 13. The New Testament was written down so that future generation could have the same message that the early church had.

- _____ 14. We do not need the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit today because we have the same full revelation that these gifts were designed to give to the early church..

Take Notes

*Lesson Four****"The One Spirit is Deity"***

A unified understanding about the Holy Spirit has been hard to come by among professed believers in the Bible. Even in our present religious situation, there are various false concepts about the Spirit of God—not only about His work, but about His very being (nature).

A very early controversy arose over the question of the Holy Spirit's Personage and Deity. The Arians taught that neither Jesus nor the Holy Spirit were Deity. They advocated that they were created by God. They also taught that the Holy Spirit was only an exerted energy of God manifested in the created world. Socinius revived the controversy during the Reformation Movement. He taught that the Holy Spirit was merely the eternal proceeding energy of God and laid the foundation for the Unitarian Church. The "Jehovah Witness" religious group teaches that the Spirit is only an influence, not a person. There are others, today, who believe that He is a person, but not Deity. The purpose of this lesson is to look at what the Scriptures indicate about the Nature of the Holy Spirit.

The Personhood of the Holy Spirit

The personhood of the Holy Spirit is indicated by the names and titles attributed to Him. There are approximately 400 Scripture references to the Holy Spirit. Over 50 use different terms, titles, names to identify the Holy Spirit (Spirit of Truth, Comforter, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, etc.). Also, personal pronouns show His personage. The Holy Spirit is referred to as a "He" (John 14:26). Even though the word for Spirit is neuter (Pneuma), it is always followed by a masculine pronoun. The Holy Spirit is not a "thing," nor an "it." Pronouns are used to refer to people.

The Holy Spirit's Personage can also be shown by abilities and activities, as well as by the fact that He can be offended, etc. See the following that illustrates:

- 1) He speaks (1 Tim. 4:1).
- 2) He can be grieved or vexed (Eph. 4:30).
- 3) He testifies (John 15:26).
- 4) He can be despised (Heb. 10:29).
- 5) He teaches and quickens and brings to remembrance (Jn. 14:26).
- 6) He can be resisted (Acts 7:51).
- 7) He can be lied to (Acts 5:3).
- 8) He guides (John 16:13).

- 9) He can be blasphemed (Matt. 12:31).
- 10) He searches (1 Cor. 2:10)
- 11) He intercedes (Rom. 8:26)
- 12) He restrains and forbids (Acts 16:6-7).
- 13) He convinces the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8).
- 14) He commands (Acts 13:2).

The Deity of the Holy Spirit

Several terms are used in Scripture to refer to the Supreme Being of the universe: God, Deity, Divinity, Godhead, Jehovah, God Almighty, Lord, etc. One strong emphasis of Scripture is that there is but One God (not many gods). However, the Bible pictures God as:

- 1) One God, but in three personages of equal rank and dignity.
- 2) Yet, in some sense there is a certain subordination of function and manifestation.
- 3) Three in One—a tri-unity—a trinity!

And, of course, three different terms are used to identify each personage of the God head: Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:18-20)

The Holy Spirit is identified with Deity by a reasoning process. In Acts 5:1-4, Peter said that Ananias had lied to the "Holy Spirit" (verse 3); but, he also said that he had lied to "God" (verse 4). We could conclude that the Holy Spirit is God. What Isaiah records in Isaiah 6:1-13 as being spoken by Jehovah, Paul by inspiration attributes such to the Holy Spirit in Acts 28:25. This is even a stronger indication of the Deity of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is associated on an equal basis with the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).

- 1) He was with the "Father" at creation (Gen. 1:1-3);
- 2) He was with the "Father" at the baptism of the "Son" (Lk. 3:21-22)
- 3) Jesus speaks of the Father sending the Comforter (John 14:16).
- 4) The Father gives us the Spirit and we become heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:12-17).

For the Holy Spirit to be Deity, He must possess the attributes of Deity. Scripture shows Him to have such attributes:

- 1) He is spoken of as the "eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14).
- 2) He is said to know all things, even the mind of God (1 Cor. 2:10-11).

- 3) There is no place man can go from the Spirit of God (Ps. 139:7).
- 4) His holiness is noted by His special name—Holy Spirit.
- 5) He is the giver of life (John 3:5).
- 6) He is all-powerful (Micah 3:8).
- 7) He was involved in the creation of the universe (Ps. 104:30).
- 8) He performs miracles and will be involved in the resurrection of man's bodies (1 Cor. 12:4-11; Rom. 8:11).

Concluding Thoughts

From the above it should be evident that the Holy Spirit is God in every sense of the word.

- 1) He is **not** a created being.
- 2) He is **not** just a mere emanation from God, an influence, exerted energy.
- 3) He is **not** a lesser god in some sense from the One God.
- 4) He is **not** an invisible active force emanating from God.
- 5) He is **God**—just as much as the Father and the Son.

Thus, to take away from His personage and His Deity is not only religious error, but disrespect to the God of Heaven. The Holy Spirit is due Honor, Respect, Reverence, and Worship that belongs to Deity.

Questions for Discussion

True or False

- ___ ___ 1. There has been a fairly good unified understanding of the Nature and Work of the Holy Spirit among those who profess belief in the Bible as the Word of God.
- ___ ___ 2. Deity is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as being a person.
- ___ ___ 3. There are over 50 different terms, titles, or names used to identify the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures.
- ___ ___ 4. The Holy Spirit can speak even though He does not have a human body.
- ___ ___ 5. The Holy Spirit can be resisted.

- ___ ___ 6. The terms: God, Deity, and Divinity are used to refer to the Supreme Being of the Universe.
- ___ ___ 7. The term, "Tri-unity," is used to identify God.

- ___ ___ 8. The Holy Spirit is associated with the "Father" and the "Son" on an equal basis.
- ___ ___ 9. The Holy Spirit was present when all things were created in the beginning.
- ___ ___ 10. The Holy Spirit possesses the attributes of Deity.

Lesson Five

"The Holy Spirit and the Word"

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.....And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...." (John 1:1, 14). The identification in these verses is obviously with Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. While we cannot separate entirely Jesus, the Word, from His spoken and written word; yet, in this study we need to make that distinction. We will be looking at the connection between the Holy Spirit and the spoken and written word of God. God chose to make man with the ability to hear and to speak. He chose to communicate with man by words. The expression, *"The Pen is mightier than the Sword!"* helps to illustrate the great importance of the spoken word between human beings. Throughout the Old Testament the expression, *"And the Lord God said.....,"* is used a great number of times—which would be expected. But the emphasis was placed upon what God said, not what man has said! So, what makes the Bible, what is called the Word of God, so important to mankind? It is because it comes from God, not just a group of men. This is what it claims for itself.

The "Inspired" Word

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God....." (2 Timothy 3:16). The Scriptures (the Bible) makes a claim as being from God. The literal meaning of the Greek words here is "God breathed." God spoke through these men and guided them as they wrote down the message. *"But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."* (2 Peter 1:21; Ephesians 3:3-6). The Holy Spirit's guidance caused their spoken message to be infallible and their written message to be inerrant. But the Spirit was able to accomplish them in a way that did not take away their own feelings and expressions. The Spirit helped them to write only what God wanted written....so it would be in fact "the Word of God!" Additional passages to study: 1 Corinthians 2:6-13; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Matthew 10:19-20). It is important to recognize that the Spirit did not communicate through feelings, etc. (2 Peter 1:21; 1 Timothy 4:1; Matthew 10:20; Luke 4:18), but through words.

Similar Actions of the Spirit and the Word

A great number of passages can be cited to show that what the Spirit was said to do that the Word also did the same thing. In some instances it will be evident that the Spirit does the action through the inspired word of God. However, a distinction must be made between the Spirit and the Word—they are not the same!

(Ephesians 6:17). The Spirit can do some things separate and apart from the Word, while doing most of His work through the Word. The following can show the likenesses in action.

1) In Creation:

- a) The Spirit was there at Creation and evidently taking part (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30).
- b) But it was by the Word of God that Creation happened (Hebrews 11:3; 2 Peter 3:4-5).

2) In Giving Life:

- a) The Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6).
- b) But life is also given by the Word of Truth (James 1:18).

3) In Being Born of God:

- a) The New Birth is a spiritual birth brought about by the Spirit (John 3:3-8).
- b) But the Word of God is the vessels by which that life can happen (1 Peter 1:23).

4) In Salvation:

- a) We are renewed (saved) by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).
- b) But it is the implanted word that saves our souls (James 1:21).

5) In Sanctification:

- a) We are sanctified from our all sinful life by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13).
- b) But Jesus prayed that we might be sanctified by His Truth (Word of God)(John 17:17).

6) Indwelling:

- a) We are told that the Spirit indwells the people of God (Romans 8:11).
- b) But we are encouraged to allow the Word of God to dwell in us richly (Colossians 3:16). The question to be ask is—can both the Spirit and the Word abide in us?

7) Power:

- a) God wants us to have joy & peace by the power of the Spirit (Romans 15:14).
- b) But God upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:3).

The Spirit's Use of the Word

Since the Spirit has given us the Word and confirmed it by miracles, wonders, and signs (Hebrews 2:3-4), we would naturally assume that there was a good reason for Him giving it to mankind. In other words, He had a use for it in the work that God wanted to accomplish. We know from what is revealed that there

are three areas in which the Spirit works, but He operates through the revealed Word to accomplish these tasks.

- 1) **The Conviction of man's heart.** God has chosen to communicate with His creatures by His inspired Word. The first purpose of that communication is to bring about a conviction within man of His need of God. The Spirit accomplishes this when the Word of God is read or preached and finds lodgment in good and honest hearts (John 16:8-11; Acts 2:22-39; 7:51-54; Hebrews 4:12).
- 2) **The Conversion of man.** If man is to be saved eternally, he must be converted, turned back to God and away from disobedience to God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to see that such is accomplished—but without taking away man's power of choice. This is simply accomplished by the Word of God finding lodgment in a good and honest heart. The following Scriptures show clearly the involvement of both: John 3:5; Titus 3:4-8; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23; Romans 10:13-17; 1:16-17).
- 3) **The Sanctification of man.** To be sanctified means that we are cleansed and set apart to do service unto God. Again, both the Spirit and the Word are involved in the process, but it seems evident that it is the Spirit working through His tool, the Word of God. (1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26).

Concluding Thoughts

It is important to remember that the Spirit is one of the three personages of the Godhead and is accomplishing what Deity had decided before the foundation of the world. The Spirit's powerful tool is the Word of God to bring man back to Himself!

Questions for Discussion

True or False

- ___ ___ 1. The Word was in the beginning with God and was God.
- ___ ___ 2. God made the choice on how He would communicate with man through words (language).
- ___ ___ 3. Holy men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to reveal God's message to mankind.
- ___ ___ 4. The Holy Spirit revealed the message to men and they spoke and wrote it down in their own words.
- ___ ___ 5. The Spirit communicated through feelings also.

- ___ ___ 6. The Holy Spirit and the Word of God are said to do the same thing.
- ___ ___ 7. The Holy Spirit was involved in the creation of all things.
- ___ ___ 8. The new birth is brought about by the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.
- ___ ___ 9. The Holy Spirit convicts man's heart so that He will listen to the Word of God.
- ___ ___ 10. Both the Spirit and the Word of God are involved in man's sanctification.

Lesson Six

"The One Spirit in Conversion"

Jesus stated that the Holy Spirit would come and convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). From this statement, it should be evident that the Holy Spirit is involved in the conversion process of people turning to God. Thus, the real issue here is not whether He is involved, but in what way or how does He accomplish His work? Some advocate that the Holy Spirit comes down and operates directly on the human heart and gives him an "experience of grace"—which means he has been saved! The problem with this is that none of this is taught in the Scriptures. Such beliefs are mere conjecture or subjective thinking, not provable by Scriptures. In fact, it is in plain contradiction to the teachings of Scripture. The real question that needs to be answered is—"Does the Holy Spirit convert the sinner directly or does He accomplish His Work through the preached Word of God and the sinner's obedience to the Gospel?"

**Did the Holy Spirit Come Upon the Apostles
to Save Them?**

There is no Scripture that I am aware of that states such! The Holy Spirit came upon them to empower them for the work of teaching, confirming God's message, and to pass on these Gifts to Christians to help build up the church. When Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, He stated that when He comes He will:

- 1) Teach them all things (John 14:26)
- 2) Testify of Jesus (John 15:26)
- 3) Guide them into all truth (John 16:13)
- 4) Glorify Jesus (John 16:14)
- 5) Equip them to be witnesses into the entire world (Acts 1:8).
- 6) Confirm their message as being from God (Heb. 2:3-4).

Out of some 16 different passages that talk about the activities of the Holy Spirit, none state that He would directly come upon anyone to save them. But, again, it is obvious that the Holy Spirit is involved in bringing about the salvation of mankind.

- 1) We are born of the Spirit (John 3:3-8).
- 2) The Spirit gives life (John 6:63; Rom. 8:2, 10; 2 Cor. 3:6).
- 3) We are washed, sanctified, and justified by the Spirit (1 Cor. 6:11).
- 4) It is by one Spirit that we are all baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13).
- 5) We are renewed by the Spirit (Titus 3:5).

But the question again is—"*Does He do these things directly or through*

an instrument that leads to man's salvation?"

The Holy Spirit and the Word

In a previous study we pointed out that what the Spirit is said to do, the Word of God is also said to do—not in the absolute, but in most instances. When we look to see what the Word of God does in conversion, it coincides perfectly with what is said of the Spirit.

- 1) The Word convicts the heart of the sinner (Titus 1:9).
- 2) The Word pricks the heart (Acts 2:37)
- 3) The Word begets us unto God (1 Cor. 4:15; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23).
- 4) The Word saves us (James 1:21; Romans 1:16).
- 5) The Word purifies us (1 Pet. 1:22).
- 6) The Word sanctifies (John 17:17).
- 7) The Word cleanses us (John 15:3; Eph. 5:26).

If they both do the same thing, it would seem logical that the Word of God is the means that is used by the Holy Spirit to bring about man's salvation (Eph. 6:17). Romans 10:11-18 makes it very clear that man's salvation depends upon his hearing, believing and obeying the Word preached unto him.

Examples of Conversions Show This

An Overview of Acts:

- 1) 3000—"When they Heard this." (2:37-38).
- 2) 5000—"Many heard the word and believed." (4:4)
- 3) Samaritans—"They believed Philip preaching." (8:12)
- 4) Simon—"He believed also." (8:13)
- 5) The Eunuch—"Philip preached unto him Jesus." (8:35-38)
- 6) Saul—"Shall be told thee what to do" (22:12)
- 7) Cornelius—"Words whereby you shall be saved." (11:14)
- 8) Lydia—"Heard, attended to the things spoken." (16:14)
- 9) Jailer—"Spake unto him the word." (16:32)
- 10) Corinthians—"hearing, believed, and were baptized." (18:8)
- 11) Bereans—"Received the word." (17:2)
- 12) 12 Men at Ephesus—"When they heard this they were baptized." (19:5)

The Conversion of the Gentiles shows this clearly (Acts 10:1-48; 11:1-18):

- 1) Cornelius saw a vision that told him to send for Peter.
- 2) Meanwhile, Peter was given a vision and then told to go with the men from Cornelius.

- 3) Peter came for the purpose of speaking words to them so they could be saved.
- 4) Peter preached to them.
- 5) The Holy Spirit fell upon them like it did on the Apostles at the beginning, and they spoke in tongues.
- 6) Peter was convinced, seeing this outpouring of the Holy Spirit that God wanted the Gentiles to be saved as well as the Jews by an obedient faith.
- 7) So, Peter commanded them to be baptized.

It is obvious that the Holy Spirit was involved in this conversion. It took three miracles to help Peter and the Jewish Christians with him that God wanted the Gentiles to be saved also. The Gentiles were told to do the same thing to be saved as the Jews were (Acts 2:38; Acts 10:43, 47-48). The Holy Spirit gave them power to speak in tongues, but He did not save them by such. They were told Words to believe and be obedient to like everyone else had been told (Acts 11:14).

Concluding Thoughts

For those that would advocate that the Holy Spirit saves a man directly apart from the Word of God, the following things should be honestly dealt with:

- 1) Such a belief contradicts all passages that say that the Word of God saves.
- 2) The Holy Spirit becomes a respecter of persons because He does not convert everyone.
- 3) Preaching to sinners becomes foolishness.
- 4) Such a belief relieves the individual of personal responsibility and accountability.
- 5) It violates man's freedom of choice.
- 6) It contradicts passages that indicate that the Holy Spirit is given to the Sons of God—not sinners (Acts 5:32).

God's Spirit has given us His Word. There is no conversion to God without the preaching of the Word of God (1 Cor. 1:21). There are no Christians where the Word has not gone! Man must respect God's Word, listen to it, believe it, and obey it to be saved.

Questions for Discussion

True or False

- ___ ___ 1. The real issue here is "how" the Holy Spirit converts men to God.
- ___ ___ 2. From the 16 passages that speaks about the activities of the Holy Spirit, there is only one that states that He comes upon a person to save him.
- ___ ___ 3. When the Holy Spirit fell on the Apostles, He saved them.
- ___ ___ 4. What is said that the Holy Spirit does, it also says that the Word does the same thing.
- ___ ___ 5. The New Testament tells us that the Word saves us, not the Holy Spirit.
- ___ ___ 6. Man's salvation depends upon his hearing, believing and obeying the Word preached unto him.
- ___ ___ 7. All 12 cases of Conversions in Acts stated that people were preached to.
- ___ ___ 8. The Holy Spirit came on Cornelius and his household to save them.
- ___ ___ 9. The Gentiles were told to be saved the same way as the Jews were told.
- ___ ___ 10. There is no conversion to God without the teaching of the Word of God.

