

OLD PATHS

BEING PLAIN STATEMENTS

ON SOME OF THE

WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF CHRISTIANITY

BY THE RIGHT REV.

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"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to thee
battle?"—1 COR. xiv. 8.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT.

“If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”—ROM. viii. 9.

THE subject of this paper is one of the deepest importance to our souls. That subject is the work of God the Holy Spirit. The solemn words of the text which heads this page demand the attention of all who believe the Scriptures to be the living voice of God. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is NONE OF HIS.”

It is probable that most of those into whose hands this paper will fall, have been baptized? And in what name were you baptized? It was “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

It is probable that many readers of this paper are married people. And in what name were you pronounced man and wife together? Again, it was “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

It is not unlikely that many readers of this paper are members of the Church of England. And in what do you declare your belief every Sunday, when you repeat the Creed? You say that you “Believe in God the Father, and in God the Son, and in God the Holy Spirit.”

It is likely that many readers of this paper will be buried one day with the burial service of the Church of England. And what will be the last words pronounced over your coffin, before the mourners go home, and the grave closes over your head? They will be, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Cor. xiii. 14)

Now I ask every reader of this paper a plain question: Do you know what you mean by these words, so often repeated,—the Holy Spirit?—What place has God the Holy Spirit in your religion?—What do you know of His office, His work, His indwelling, His fellowship, and His power?—This is the subject to which I ask your attention this day. I want you to consider seriously what you know about the work of God the Holy Spirit.

I believe that the times in which we live demand frequent and distinct testimonies upon this great subject. I believe that few truths of the Christian religion are so often obscured and spoiled by false doctrine as the truth about the Holy Spirit. I believe that there is no subject which an ignorant world is so ready to revile as “cant, fanaticism, and enthusiasm,” as the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit. My heart’s desire and prayer to God is, that about this subject I may write nothing but the “truth as it is in Jesus,” and that I may write that truth in love.

For convenience sake I shall divide my subject into four heads. I shall examine in:—

I. Firstly,—the *importance* attached to the work of the Holy Spirit in Scripture.

II. Secondly,—the *necessity* of the work of the Holy Spirit to man's salvation.

III. Thirdly,—the *manner* in which the Holy Spirit works in man's heart.

IV. Lastly,—the *marks and evidences* by which the presence of the Holy Spirit in a man's heart may be known.

I. The first point I propose to consider is *the importance attached to the work of Holy Spirit in Scripture.*

I find it hard to know where to begin and where to leave off, in handling this branch of my subject. It would be easy to fill up all this paper by quoting texts about it. So often is the Holy Spirit mentioned in the New Testament, that my difficulty is not so much the discovery of evidence as the selection. Eighteen times in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans St. Paul speaks of God the Spirit. In fact the place which the Holy Spirit holds in the minds of most professing Christians bears no proportion to the place which He holds in the Word.¹

I shall not spend much time in proving the divinity and personality of the Holy Spirit. They are points which are written in Scripture as with a sunbeam. I am utterly at a loss to understand how any honest-minded reader of the Bible can fail to see them. Above all, I am unable to comprehend how any unprejudiced reader of the Bible can regard the Spirit as nothing more than "an influence or principle." We find it written in the New Testament, that the Holy Spirit was "seen descending in a bodily shape." (Luke iii. 22.) He commanded disciples to do acts, and lifted them through the air by His own power. (Acts viii. 29-39.) He sent forth the first preachers to the Gentiles. (Acts xiii. 2.) He spake to the Churches. (Rev. ii. 7.) He maketh intercession. (Rom. viii. 26.) He searcheth all things, teacheth all things, and guideth into all truth. (1 Cor. ii. 10; John xiv. 26; xvi. 13.) He is another Comforter distinct from Christ. (John xiv.

¹ "There is a general omission in the saints of God, in their not giving the Holy Spirit that glory that is due to His person, and for His great work of salvation in us; insomuch that we have in our hearts almost lost this Third Person. We give daily in our thoughts, prayers, affections and speeches, an honour to the Father and the Son. But who directs the aims of his praise (more than in that general way of doxology we use to close our prayers with) unto God the Holy Spirit? He is a Person in the Godhead, equal with the Father and the Son. The work He doth for us, in its kind, is as great as those of the Father or the Son. Therefore, by the equity of all law, a proportionable honour is due to Him,"—*Thomas Goodwin on the Work of the Holy Spirit.* 1704.

16.) He has personal affections ascribed to Him. (Isaiah lxiii. 10; Ephes. iv. 30; Rom. xv. 30.) He has a mind, will, and power of His own. (Rom. viii. 27; 1 Cor. xii. 11; Rom. xv. 13.) He has baptism administered in His name together with the Father and the Son. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) And whosoever shall blaspheme Him hath never forgiveness, and is in danger of eternal damnation. (Mark iii. 29.)

I make no comment on these passages. They speak for themselves. I only use the words of Ambrose Serle in saying, that “Two and two making four, does not appear more clear and conclusive than that the Holy Spirit is a living divine Agent, working with consciousness, will, and power. If people will not be persuaded by these testimonies, neither would they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”²

I repeat that I will not spend time in dwelling on proofs of the Holy Spirit’s divinity and personality. I will rather confine all I have to say on this branch of my subject to two general remarks.

For one thing, I ask my readers to remark carefully that *in every step of the grand work of man’s redemption the Bible assigns a prominent place to God the Holy Spirit.*

What do you think of the incarnation of Christ? You know we cannot over-rate its importance. Well it is written that when our Lord was conceived of the Virgin Mary, “the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her.” (Luke i. 35.)

What do you think of the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ? You know that none ever did what He did, lived as He lived, and spake as He spake. Well! it is written that the Spirit “descended from heaven like a dove and abode upon Him,”—that “God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit,”—that “the Father gave not the Spirit by measure unto him,” and that He was “full of the Holy Spirit.” (John i. 32; Acts x. 38; John iii. 34; Luke iv. 1.)

What do you think of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ on the cross? Its value is simply unspeakable. No wonder St. Paul says, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross.” (Gal. vi. 14.) Well! it is written, “Through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God.” (Heb. ix. 14.)

What do you think of the resurrection of Christ? It was the seal and topstone of all His work. He was “raised again for our justification.” (Rom. iv. 25.) Well! it is written that “He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” (1 Pet. iii. 18.)

What do you think of the departure of Christ from this world, when He ascended up into heaven? It was a tremendous trial to His disciples.

² Serle’s *Horæ Solitariae*.

They were left like a little orphan family, in the midst of cruel enemies. Well! what was the grand promise wherewith our Saviour cheered them the night before He died? “I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth.” (John xiv. 16, 17.)

What do you think of the mission of the apostles to preach the Gospel? We Gentiles owe to it all our religious light and knowledge. Well! they were obliged to tarry at Jerusalem and “wait for the promise of the Father.” They were unfit to go forth till they were filled with the Holy Spirit,” upon the day of Pentecost. (Acts i. 4; ii. 4.)

What do you think of the Scripture, which is written for our learning? You know that our earth without a sun would be but a faint emblem of a world without a Bible. Well! we are informed that in writing that Scripture, “Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Pet. i. 21.) “The things which we speak,” says St. Paul, “we speak in the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth.” (1 Cor. ii. 13)

What do you think of the whole dispensation under which we Christians live? You know its privileges as far exceed those of the Jews as twilight is exceeded by noonday. Well! we are especially told that it is the “ministration of the Spirit.” (2 Cor. iii. 8.)³

I place these texts before my readers as matter for private meditation. I pass on to the other general remark I promised to make.

I ask you then to remark carefully, that *whatever individual Christians have, are, and enjoy, in contradistinction to the worldly and unconverted, they owe to the agency of God the Holy Spirit.* By Him they are first called, quickened, and made alive. Of Him they are born again, and made new creatures. By Him they are convinced of sin, guided into all truth and led to Christ. By Him they are sealed unto the day of redemption. He dwells in them as His living temples. He witnesses with their spirits,—gives them the Spirit of adoption, makes them to cry Abba Father, and makes intercession for them. By Him they are sanctified. By Him the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts. Through His power they abound in hope. Through Him they wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. Through Him they mortify the deeds of their bodies. After Him they walk. In Him they live. In a word, all that believers have from grace to glory,—all that they are from the first moment they believe to

³ I would not for a moment have any one suppose that I think Old Testament believers had not the Holy Spirit. On the contrary I hold that there has never been a whit of spiritual life among men, excepting from the Holy Spirit,—and that the Holy Spirit made Abel and Noah what they were no less really than He made St. Paul. All I mean to assert is, that the Holy Spirit is so much more fully revealed and largely poured out under the New Testament than under the Old, that the New Testament dispensation is emphatically and peculiarly called the “ministration of the Spirit.” The difference between the two dispensations is only one of degree.

the day they depart to be with Christ,—all, all, all may be traced to the work of God the Holy Spirit. (John vi. 63; iii. 8; xvi. 9, 10; Eph. iv. 30; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Rom. viii. 15, 16, 26; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Rom. v. 5; xv. 13; Gal. v. 5, 25; Rom. viii. 1, 13.)

I may not tarry longer on this branch of my subject. I trust I have said enough to prove that I did not use words without meaning, when I spoke of the importance attached in Scripture to the work of the Spirit of God.

Before I pass on let me entreat all who read this paper to make sure that they hold sound doctrine concerning the work of the Holy Spirit.⁴ Give Him the honour due unto His name. Give Him in your religion the place and the dignity which Scripture assigns to Him. Settle it in your minds that the work of all three Persons in the blessed Trinity, is absolutely and equally needful to the salvation of every saved soul. The election of God the Father, and the atoning blood of God the Son, are the foundation stones of our faith. But from them must never be separated the applicatory work of God the Holy Spirit. The Father chooses. The Son mediates, absolves, justifies, and intercedes. The Holy Spirit applies the whole work to man's soul. Always together in Scripture, never separated in Scripture, let the offices of the three Persons in the Trinity never be wrenched asunder and disjoined in your Christianity. What God hath so beautifully joined together let no man dare to put asunder.

Accept a brotherly caution against all kinds of Christian teaching, falsely so called, which, either directly or indirectly, dishonour the work of the Holy Spirit. Beware of *the error, on one side*, which practically substitutes church-membership and participation of the sacraments for the Spirit. Let no man make you believe that to be baptized and go to the Lord's Table, is any sure proof that you have the Spirit of Christ.—Beware of *the error, on the other side*, which proudly substitutes the inward light, so called, and the scraps of conscience which remain in every man after the fall, for the saving grace of the Holy Spirit.⁵ Let no man

⁴“To give the Holy Spirit divine worship, if he be not God, is idolatry; and to withhold it, if He is God, is a heinous sin. To be well informed on this point, is of the last importance.”—*Hurion on the Holy Spirit*. 1731.

⁵“It is not the natural light of conscience, nor that improved by the Word, which converts any man to God, although this is the best spring of most men's practical part of religion. But it is faith, bringing in a new light into conscience, and so conscience lighting its taper at that sun which humbleth for sin in another manner, and drives men to Christ, sanctifieth, changeth, and writes the law in the heart. And this you will find to be the state of difference between Augustine, and the Pelagians, and semi-Pelagians, which the whole stream and current of his writings against them hold forth. They would have had the light of natural conscience, and the seeds of natural virtues in men (as in philosophers), being improved and manured by the revelation of the Word, to be that grace which the Scripture speaks of. He proclaims all their virtues, and their use of natural light to be sins, because deficient of holiness, and requires for us not only the

make you believe that as a matter of course, since Christ died, all men and women have within them the Spirit of Christ.—I touch on these points gently. I should be sorry to write one needless word of controversy. But I do say to everyone who prizes real Christianity in these days, “Be very jealous about the real work and office of the third Person of the Trinity.” Try the spirits whether they be of God. Prove diligently the many divers and strange doctrines which now infect the Church. And let the subject brought before you this day be one of your principal tests. Try every new doctrine of these latter times by two simple questions. Ask first, “Where is the Lamb?” And ask secondly, “Where is the Holy Spirit?”

II. The second point I propose to consider, is the *necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to man’s salvation*.

I invite special attention to this part of the subject. Let it be a settled thing in our minds that the matter we are considering in this paper is no mere speculative question in religion, about which it signifies little what we believe. On the contrary, it lies at the very foundation of all saving Christianity. Wrong about the Holy Spirit and His offices, we are wrong to all eternity.

The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit arises from the total corruption of human nature. We are all by nature “dead in sins.” (Eph. ii. 1.) However shrewd, and clever, and wise in the things of this world, we are all dead towards God. The eyes of our understanding are blinded. We see nothing aright. Our wills, affections, and inclinations are alienated from Him who made us. “The carnal mind is enmity against God.” (Rom. viii. 7.) We have naturally neither faith, nor fear, nor love, nor holiness. In short, left to ourselves, we should never be saved.

Without the Holy Spirit *no man ever turns to God, repents, believes, and obeys*.—Intellectual training and secular education alone make no true Christians. Acquaintance with fine arts and science leads no one to heaven. Pictures and statues never brought one soul to God. The “tender strokes of art” never prepared any man or woman for the judgment day.⁶ They bind up no broken heart; they heal no wounded conscience. The Greeks had their Zeuxis and Parrhasius, their Phidias and Praxiteles, masters as great in their day as any in modern times; yet the Greeks knew nothing of the way of peace with God. They were sunk in gross

revelation of the objects of faith, which else natural light could not find out, but a new light to see them withal.”—*Thomas Goodwin on the Work of the Holy Spirit*. 1704.

⁶ “To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,”—was the motto which in large letters caught the eye on entering the Manchester Exhibition of Fine Arts, at the extreme end of the building.

idolatry, and bowed down to the works of their own hands.—The most zealous efforts of ministers alone cannot make men Christians. The ablest scriptural reasoning has no effect on the mind; the most fervent pulpit eloquence will not move the heart; the naked truth alone will not lead the will. We who are ministers know this well by painful experience. We can show men the fountain of living waters, but we cannot make them drink. We see many a one sitting under our pulpits year after year, and hearing hundreds of sermons, full of Gospel truth, without the slightest result. We mark him year after year, unaffected and unmoved by every Scriptural argument,—cold as the stones on which he treads as he enters our church,—unmoved as the marble statue which adorns the tomb against the wall,—dead as the old dry oak of which his pew is made,—feelingless as the painted glass in the windows, through which the sun shines on his head. We look at him with wonder and sorrow, and remember Xavier’s words as he looked at China: “Oh, rock, rock! when wilt thou open?” And we learn by such cases as these, that nothing will make a Christian but the introduction into the heart of a new nature, a new principle, and a Divine seed from above.

What is it then that man needs?—We need to be “born again:” and this new birth we must receive of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of life must quicken us. The Spirit must renew us. The Spirit must take away from us the heart of stone. The Spirit must put in us the heart of flesh. A new act of creation must take place. A new being must be called into existence. Without all this we cannot be saved. Here lies the main part of our need of the Holy Spirit. “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” (John iii. 3.) No salvation without a new birth!⁷

Let us dismiss from our minds for ever the common idea that natural theology, moral suasion, logical arguments, or even an exhibition of Gospel truth, are sufficient of themselves to turn a sinner from his sins, if once brought to bear upon him. It is a strong delusion. They will not do so. The heart of man is far harder than we fancy: the old Adam is much more strong than we suppose. The ships which run aground at half-ebb, will never stir till the tide flows: the heart of man will never look to Christ, repent, and believe, till the Holy Spirit comes down upon it. Till that takes place, our inner nature is like the earth before the present order of creation began,—“without form and void, and darkness

⁷ “This is that which gives unto the ministry of the Gospel both its glory and its efficacy. Take away the Spirit from the Gospel, and you render it a dead letter, and leave the New Testament of no more use unto Christians than the Old Testament is unto the Jews.”—*Owen on the Holy Spirit*.

“In the power of the Holy Spirit resteth all ability to know God and to please Him. It is He that purifieth the mind by His secret working. He enlighteneth the mind to conceive worthy thoughts of Almighty God.”—Homily for Rogation Week.

covering the face of the deep.” (Gen. i. 2.) The same power which said at the beginning, “Let there be light: and there was light,” must work a creating work in us, or we shall never rise to newness of life.

But I have something more to say yet on this branch of my subject. The necessity of the work of the Spirit to man’s salvation is a wide field, and I have yet another remark to make upon it.

I say then, that without the work of the Holy Spirit *no man could ever be fit to dwell with God in another world*. A fitness of some kind we must have. The mere pardon of our sins would be a worthless gift, unless accompanied by the gift of a new nature, a nature in harmony and in tune with that of God Himself. We need a meetness for heaven, as well as a title for heaven, and this meetness we must receive from the Holy Spirit. We must be made “partakers of the divine nature,” by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (2 Pet. i. 4.) The Spirit must sanctify our carnal natures, and make them love spiritual things. The Spirit must wean our affections from things below, and teach us to set them on things above. The Spirit must bend our stubborn wills, and teach them to be submissive to the will of God. The Spirit must write again the law of God on our inward man, and put His fear within us. The Spirit must transform us by the daily renewing of our minds, and implant in us the image of Him whose servants we profess to be. Here lies the other great part of our need of the Holy Spirit’s work. We need sanctification no less than justification. “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” (Heb. xii. 14.)

Once more I beseech my readers to dismiss from their minds the common idea, that men and women need nothing but pardon and absolution, in order to be prepared to meet God. It is a strong delusion, and one against which I desire with all my heart to place you on your guard. It is not enough, as many a poor ignorant Christian supposes on his death-bed, if God “pardons our sins and takes us to rest.” I say again most emphatically, it is *not enough*. The love of sin must be taken from us, as well as the guilt of sin removed; the desire of pleasing God must be implanted in us, as well as the fear of God’s judgment taken away; a love to holiness must be engrafted, as well as a dread of punishment removed. Heaven itself would be no heaven to us if we entered it without a new heart. An eternal Sabbath and the society of saints and angels could give us no happiness in heaven, unless the love of Sabbaths and of holy company had been first shed abroad in our hearts upon earth. Whether men will hear or forbear, the man who enters heaven must have the sanctification of the Spirit, as well as the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. To use the words of Owen, “When God designed the great and glorious work of recovering fallen man and saving sinners, He appointed in His infinite wisdom two great means. The one was the giving of His Son for

them; and the other was the giving of his Spirit unto them. And hereby was way made for the manifestation of the glory of the whole blessed Trinity.”⁸

I trust I have said enough to show the absolute necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit to the salvation of man’s soul. Man’s utter inability to turn to God without the Spirit,—man’s utter unmeetness for the joys of heaven, without the Spirit,—are two great foundation stones in revealed religion, which ought to be always deeply rooted in a Christian’s mind. Rightly understood, they will lead to one conclusion,—“Without the Spirit, no salvation!”

Would you like to know the reason why we who preach the Gospel, preach so often about *conversion*? We do it because of the necessities of men’s souls. We do it because we see plainly from the Word of God that nothing short of a thorough change of heart will ever meet the exigencies of your case. Your case is naturally desperate. Your danger is great. You need not only the atonement of Jesus Christ, but the quickening, sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, to make you a true Christian, and deliver you from hell. Fain would I lead to heaven all who read this volume! My heart’s desire and prayer to God is that you may be saved. But I know that none enter heaven without a heart to enjoy heaven, and this heart we must receive from God’s Spirit.

Shall I tell you plainly the reason why some receive these truths so coldly, and are so little affected by them? You hear us listless and unconcerned. You think us extreme and extravagant in our statements. And why is this? It is just because you do not see or know the disease of your own soul. You are not aware of your own sinfulness and weakness. Low and inadequate views of your spiritual disease, are sure to be accompanied by low and inadequate views of the remedy provided in the Gospel. What shall I say to you? I can only say, “The Lord awaken you! The Lord have mercy on your soul!” The day may come when the scales will fall from your eyes, when old things will pass away, and all things become new. And in that day I foretell and forewarn you confidently that the first truth you will grasp, next to the work of Christ, will be the absolute necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit.

III. The third thing I propose to consider, is *the manner in which the Holy Spirit works on the hearts of those who are saved.*

⁸ “God the Father had but two grand gifts to bestow; and when once they were given, He had left then nothing that was great (comparatively) to give, for they contained all good in them. These two gifts were His Son, who was His promise in the Old Testament, and the Spirit, the promise of the New.”—*Thomas Goodwin on the Work of the Holy Spirit*. 1704.

I approach this branch of my subject with much diffidence. I am very sensible that it is surrounded with difficulties, and involves many of the deepest things of God. But it is folly for mortal man to turn away from any truth in Christianity, merely because of difficulties. Better a thousand times receive with meekness what we cannot fully explain, and believe that what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. “Enough for us,” says an old divine, “if we sit in God’s court, without pretending to be of God’s counsel.”

In speaking of the manner of the Holy Spirit’s working, I shall simply state certain great leading facts. They are facts attested alike by Scripture and experience. They are facts patent to the eyes of every candid and well-instructed observer. They are facts which I believe it is impossible to gainsay.

(a) I say then that the Holy Spirit works on the heart of a man in a *mysterious manner*. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself tell us that in well-known words; “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” (John iii. 8.) We cannot explain how and in what way the Almighty Spirit comes into man, and operates upon him; but neither also can we explain a thousand things which are continually taking place in the natural world. We cannot explain how our wills work daily on our members, and make them walk, or move, or rest, at our discretion; yet no one ever thinks of disputing the fact. So ought it to be with the work of the Spirit. We ought to believe the fact, though we cannot explain the manner.

(b) I say furthermore, that the Holy Spirit works on the heart of a man *in a sovereign manner*. He comes to one and does not come to another. He often converts one in a family, while others are left alone. There were two thieves crucified with our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary. They saw the same Saviour dying, and heard the same words come from His lips. Yet only one repented and went to Paradise, while the other died in his sins.—There were many Pharisees besides Saul, who had a hand in Stephen’s murder; but Saul alone became an apostle.—There were many slave captains in John Newton’s time; yet none but he became a preacher of the Gospel.—We cannot account for this. But neither can we account for China being a heathen country, and England a Christian land: we only know that so it is.

(c) I say furthermore, that the Holy Spirit always works on the heart of a man in *such a manner as to be felt*. I do not for a moment say that the feelings which He produces are always understood by the person in whom they are produced. On the contrary, they are often a cause of anxiety, and conflict, and inward strife. All I maintain is that we have no

warrant of Scripture for supposing that there is an indwelling of the Spirit which is not felt at all. Where He is there will always be corresponding feelings.

(d) I say furthermore, that the Holy Spirit always works on the heart of a man in *such a manner as to be seen in the man's life*. I do not say that as soon as He comes into a man, that man becomes immediately an established Christian, a Christian in whose life and ways nothing but spirituality can be observed. But this I say,—that the Almighty Spirit is never present in a person's soul without producing some perceptible results in that person's conduct. He never sleeps. He is never idle. We have no warrant of Scripture for talking of "dormant grace." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him." (1 John iii. 9.) Where the Holy Spirit is, there will be something seen.

(e) I say furthermore, that the Holy Spirit always works on the heart of a man in an *irresistible manner*. I do not deny for a moment that there are sometimes spiritual strivings and workings of conscience in the minds of unconverted men, which finally come to nothing. But I say confidently, that when the Spirit really begins a work of conversion, He always carries that work to perfection. He effects miraculous changes. He turns the character upside down. He causes old things to pass away, and all things to become new. In a word, the Holy Spirit is Almighty. With Him nothing is impossible.

(f) I say, finally, under this head, that the Holy Spirit generally works on the heart of man *through the use of means*. The Word of God, preached or read, is generally employed by Him as an instrument in the conversion of a soul. He applies that Word to the conscience. He brings that Word home to the mind. This is His general course of procedure. There are instances, undoubtedly, in which people are converted "without the Word." (1 Pet. iii. 1.) But, as a general rule, God's truth is the sword of the Spirit. By it He teaches, and teaches nothing else but that which is written in the Word.

I commend these six points to the attention of all my readers. A right understanding of them supplies the best antidote to the many false and specious doctrines by which Satan labours to darken the blessed work of the Spirit.

(a) Is there a haughty, highminded person reading this paper, who in his pride of intellect rejects the work of the Holy Spirit, because of its mysteriousness and sovereignty? I tell you boldly that you must take up other ground than this before you dispute and deny our doctrine. Look to the heaven above you, and the earth beneath you, and deny, if you can, that there are *mysteries* there.—Look to the map of the world you live in, and the marvellous difference between the privileges of one nation and

another, and deny if you can, that there is *sovereignty* there.—Go and learn to be consistent. Submit that proud mind of yours to plain undeniable facts. Be clothed with the humility that becomes poor mortal man. Cast off that affectation of reasoning, under which you now try to smother your conscience. Dare to confess that the work of the Spirit may be mysterious and sovereign, and yet for all that it is true.

(b) Is there a Romanist, or semi-Romanist reading this paper, who tries to persuade himself that all baptized people, and members of the Church, as a matter of course, have the Spirit? I tell you plainly that you are deceiving yourself if you dream that the Spirit is in a man, when His presence cannot be seen. Go and learn this day that the presence of the Holy Spirit is to be tested, not by the name in the register, or the place in the family pew, but by the visible fruits in a man's life.

(c) Is there a worldly man reading this paper, who regards all claims to the indwelling of the Spirit as so much enthusiasm and fanaticism? I warn you also to take heed what you are about. No doubt there is plenty of hypocrisy and false profession in the Churches; no doubt there are thousands whose religious feelings are mere delusion. But bad money is no proof that there is no such thing as good coin: the abuse of a thing does not destroy the use of it. The Bible tells us plainly that there are certain hopes, and joys, and sorrows, and inward feelings, inseparable from the work of the Spirit of God. Go and learn this day that you have not received the Spirit, if His presence within you has not been felt.

(d) Is there an excuse-making indolent person reading this paper, who comforts himself with the thought that decided Christianity is an impossible thing, and that in a world like this he cannot serve Christ? Your excuses will not avail you. The power of the Holy Spirit is offered to you without money and without price. Go and learn this day that there is strength to be had for the asking. Through the Spirit, whom the Lord Jesus offers to give to you, all difficulties may be overcome.

Is there a fanatic reading this paper, who fancies that it matters nothing whether a man stays at home or goes to church, and that if a man is to be saved, he will be saved in spite of himself? I tell you also this day, that you have much to learn. Go and learn that the Holy Spirit ordinarily works through the use of means of grace, and that it is by "hearing" that faith generally comes into the soul." (Rom. x. 17.)

I leave this branch of my subject here, and pass on. I leave it with a sorrowful conviction that nothing in religion so shows the blindness of natural man as his inability to receive the teaching of Scripture on the manner of the Holy Spirit's operations. To quote the saying of our Divine Master,—“The world cannot receive Him.” (John xiv. 17.) To use the words of Ambrose Serle: “This operation of the Spirit hath been, and

ever will be, an incomprehensible business to those who have not known it in themselves. Like Nicodemus, and other masters in Israel, they will reason and re-reason, till they puzzle and perplex themselves, by darkening counsel without knowledge; and when they cannot make out the matter, will give the strongest proof of all that they know nothing of it, by fretting and raving, and calling hard names, and saying, in short, that there is no such thing.”

IV. I propose, in the last place, to consider *the marks and evidences by which the presence of the Holy Spirit in a man's heart may be known.*

Last as this point comes in order, it is anything but last in importance. In fact, it is that view of the Holy Spirit which demands the closest attention of every professing Christian. We have seen something of the *place* assigned to the Holy Spirit in the Bible. We have seen something of the absolute *necessity* of the Holy Spirit to a man's salvation. We have seen something of the *manner* of the Holy Spirit's operations. And now comes the mighty question, which ought to interest every reader “How are we to know whether we are partakers of the Holy Spirit? By what marks may we find out whether we have the Spirit of Christ?”

I will begin by taking it for granted that the question I have just asked may be answered. Where is the use of our Bibles, if we cannot find out whether we are in the way to heaven? Let it be a settled principle in our Christianity, that a man may know whether or not he has the Holy Spirit. Let us dismiss from our minds once and for ever the many unscriptural evidences of the Spirit's presence with which thousands content themselves. Reception of the sacraments and membership of the visible Church are no proofs whatever that we “have the Spirit of Christ.” In short, I call it a short cut to the grossest antinomianism to talk of a man having the Holy Spirit so long as he serves sin and the world.

The presence of the Holy Spirit in a man's heart can only be known by the fruits and effects He produces. Mysterious and invisible to mortal eye as His operations are, they always lead to certain visible and tangible results. Just as you know the compass-needle to be magnetized by its turning to the north,—just as you know there is life in a tree by its sap, buds, leaves and fruits,—just as you know there is a steersman on board a ship by its keeping a steady regular course,---just so you may know the Spirit to be in a man's heart by the influence He exercises over his thoughts, affections, opinions, habits, and life. I lay this down broadly and unhesitatingly. I find no safe ground to occupy excepting this. I see no safeguard against the wildest enthusiasm, excepting in this position. And I see it clearly marked out in our Lord Jesus Christ's words: “Every tree is known by his own fruit.” (Luke vi. 44.)

But what are the specific fruits by which the presence of the Spirit in the heart may be known? I find no difficulty in answering that question. The Holy Spirit always works after a certain definite pattern. Just as the bee always forms the cells of its comb in one regular hexagonal shape, so does the Spirit of God work on the heart of man with one uniform result. His work is the work of a master. The world may see no beauty in it: it is foolishness to the natural man. But “he that is spiritual discerneth all things.” (1 Cor. ii. 15.) A well-instructed Christian knows well the fruits of the Spirit of God. Let me briefly set them before you in order. They are all clear and unmistakable, “plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.” (Prov. viii. 9.)

(1) Where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be *deep conviction of sin, and true repentance for it*. It is His special office to convince of sin. (John xvi. 8.) He shows the exceeding holiness of God. He teaches the exceeding corruption and infirmity of our nature. He strips us of our blind self-righteousness. He opens our eyes to our awful guilt, folly and danger. He fills the heart with sorrow, contrition, and abhorrence for sin, as the abominable thing which God hateth. He that knows nothing of all this, and saunters carelessly through life, thoughtless about sin, and indifferent and unconcerned about his soul, is a dead man before God. He has not the Spirit of Christ.

(2) Where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be *lively faith in Jesus Christ*, as the only Saviour. It is His special office to testify of Christ, to take of the things of Christ and show them to man. (John xvi. 15.) He leads the soul which feels its sin, to Jesus and the atonement made by His blood. He shows the soul that Christ has suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. He points out to the sin-sick soul that we have only to receive Christ, believe in Christ, commit ourselves to Christ, and pardon, peace, and life eternal, are at once our own. He makes us see a beautiful fitness in Christ’s finished work of redemption to meet our spiritual necessities. He makes us willing to disclaim all merit of our own and to venture all on Jesus, looking to nothing, resting on nothing, trusting in nothing but Christ,—Christ,—Christ,—“delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.” (Rom. iv. 25.) He that knows nothing of all this, and builds on any other foundation, is dead before God. He has not the Spirit of Christ.

(3) Where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be *holiness of life and conversation*. He is the Spirit of holiness. (Rom. i. 4.) He is the sanctifying Spirit. He takes away the hard, carnal, worldly heart of man and puts in its place a tender, conscientious, spiritual heart, delighting in the law of God. He makes a man turn his face towards God, and desire above all things to please Him, and turn his back on the fashion of this

world, and no longer make that fashion his god. He sows in a man's heart the blessed seeds of "love, joy, meekness, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, temperance," and causes these seeds to spring up and bear pleasant fruit. (Gal. v. 22.) He that lacketh these things, and knows nothing of daily practical godliness, is dead before God. He has not the Spirit of Christ.

(4) Where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be *the habit of earnest private prayer*. He is the Spirit of grace and supplication. (Zech. xii. 10.) He works in the heart as the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. He makes a man feel that he must cry to God, and speak to God,—feebly, falteringly, weakly, it may be,—but cry he must about his soul. He makes it as natural to a man to pray as it is to an infant to breathe; with this one difference,—that the infant breathes without an effort, and the new-born soul prays with much conflict and strife. He that knows nothing of real, living, fervent, private prayer, and is content with some old form, or with no prayer at all, is dead before God. He has not the Spirit of Christ.

(5) Finally, where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be *love and reverence for God's Word*. He makes the new-born soul desire the sincere milk of the Word, just as the infant desires its natural food. He makes it "delight in the law of the Lord." (1 Pet. ii. 2; Psa. i. 2.) He shows man a fulness, and depth, and wisdom, and sufficiency in the Holy Scripture, which is utterly hid from a natural man's eyes. He draws him to the Word with an irresistible force, as the light and lantern, and manna, and sword, which are essential to a safe journey through this world. If the man cannot read He makes him love to hear: if he cannot hear He makes him love to meditate. But to the Word the Spirit always leads him. He that sees no special beauty in God's Bible, and takes no pleasure in reading, hearing, and understanding it, is dead before God. He has not the Spirit of Christ.

I place these five grand marks of the Spirit's presence before my readers, and confidently claim attention to them. I believe they will bear inspection. I am not afraid of their being searched, criticized, and cross-examined. Repentance toward God,—faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,—holiness of heart and life,—habits of real private prayer,—love and reverence toward God's Word,—these are the real proofs of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a man's soul. Where He is, these marks will be seen. Where He is not, these marks will be lacking.

I grant freely that the leadings of the Spirit, in some minute details, are not always uniform. The paths over which He conducts souls, are not always precisely one and the same. The experience that true Christians pass through in their beginnings is often somewhat various. This only I

maintain,—that the main road into which the Spirit leads people, and the *final results* which He at length produces, are always alike. In all true Christians, the five great marks I have already mentioned will always be found.

I grant freely that the degree and depth of the work of the Spirit in the heart may vary exceedingly. There is weak faith and strong faith,—weak love and strong love,—a bright hope and a dim hope,—a feeble obedience to Christ’s will, and a close following of the Lord. This only I maintain,—that the *main outlines* of religious character in all who have the Spirit, perfectly correspond. Life is life, whether strong or feeble. The infant in arms, though weak and dependent, is as real and true a representative of the great family of Adam as the strongest man alive.

Wherever you see these five great marks, you see a true Christian. Let that never be forgotten. I leave it to others to excommunicate and unchurch all who do not belong to their own pale, and do not worship after their own particular fashion. I have no sympathy with such narrow-mindedness. Show me a man who repents, and believes in Christ crucified,—who lives a holy life, and delights in his Bible and prayer,—and I desire to regard him as a brother. I see in him a member of the Holy Catholic Church, out of which there is no salvation. I behold in him an heir of that crown of glory which is incorruptible and fadeth not away. If he has the Holy Spirit, he has Christ. If he has Christ, he has God. If he has God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, all things are his. Who am I that I should turn my back on him, because we cannot see all things eye to eye?

Wherever these five great marks of the Spirit are wanting, we have just cause to be afraid about a man’s soul. Visible Churches may endorse him, sacraments may be administered to him, forms of prayer may be read over him, ministers may charitably speak of him as “a brother,”—but all this does not alter the real state of things. The man is in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Without the Spirit he is without Christ. Without Christ he is without God. Without God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, he is in imminent danger. The Lord have mercy upon his soul!

I hasten on now towards a conclusion. I desire to wind up all I have been saying by a few words of direct personal application.

(1) In the first place, let me *ask a question* of all who read this paper. It is a short and simple one, and grows naturally out of the subject. “Have you, or have you not, the Spirit of Christ?”

I am not afraid to ask this question. I will not be stopped by the commonplace remark that it is absurd, enthusiastic, unreasonable to ask such

questions in the present day. I take my stand on a plain declaration or Scripture. I find an inspired Apostle saying, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." I want to know what can be more reasonable than to press on your conscience the inquiry, "Have you the Spirit of Christ?"

I will not be stopped by the foolish observation, that no man can tell in this world whether or not he has the Spirit.. No man can tell! Then what was the Bible given to us for? Where is the use of the Scriptures if we cannot discover whether we are going to heaven or hell? The thing I ask can be known. The evidences of the Spirit's presence in the soul are simple, plain, and intelligible. No honest inquirer needs miss the way in this matter. You may find out whether you have the Holy Spirit.

I entreat you not to evade the question I have now asked. I beseech you to allow it to work inwardly in your heart. I charge you, as ever you would be saved, to give it an honest answer. Baptism, Church-membership, respectability, morality, outward correctness, are all excellent things. But do not be content with them. Go deeper: look further. "Have you received the Holy Spirit? Have you the Spirit of Christ?"⁹

(2) Let me, in the next place, offer a *solemn warning* to all who feel in their own consciences that they have not the Spirit of Christ. That warning is short and simple. If you have not the Spirit, you are not yet Christ's people: you are "none of His."

Think for a moment how much is involved in those few words, "none of His." You are not washed in Christ's blood! You are not clothed in His righteousness! You are not justified! You are not interceded for! Your sins are yet upon you! The devil claims you for his own! The pit opens her mouth for you! The torments of hell wait for you!

I have no desire to create needless fear. I only want sensible people to look calmly at things as they are. I only want one plain text of Scripture to be duly weighed. It is written, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." And I say in the sight of such a text, if you die without the Spirit, you had better never have been born.

(3) Let me, in the next place, give an *earnest invitation* to all who feel that they have not the Spirit. That invitation is short and simple. Go and cry to God this day in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and pray for the Holy Spirit to be poured down on your soul.

⁹ "It is a good sign of grace when a man is willing to search and examine himself, whether he be gracious or not. There is a certain instinct in a child of God, whereby he naturally desires to have the title of his legitimation tried; whereas a hypocrite dreads nothing more than to have his rottenness searched into."—*Bishop Hopkins*.

There is every possible encouragement to do this. There is warrant of Scripture for doing it. "Turn you at my reproof,—I will pour out my Spirit upon you. I will make known my words unto you."—"If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." (Prov. i. 23; Luke xi. 13.) There is warrant in the experience of thousands for doing it. Thousands will rise at the last day, and testify that when they prayed they were heard, and when they sought grace, they found it.—Above all, there is warrant in the person and character of our Lord Jesus Christ. He waits to be gracious. He invites sinners to come to Him. He rejects none that come. He gives "power to all who receive Him by faith and come to Him, to become the sons of God." (John i. 12.)

Go then to Jesus, as a needy, wanting, humble, contrite sinner, and you shall not go in vain. Cry to Him mightily about your soul, and you shall not cry to no purpose. Confess to Him your need, and guilt, and fear, and danger, and He will not despise you. Ask, and you shall receive. Seek, and you shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened to you. I testify to the chief of sinners this day, that there is enough in Christ, and to spare, for your soul. Come, come: come, this very day. Come to Christ!

(4) Let me, in the last place, give a parting *word of exhortation* to all readers of this paper who have received the Spirit of Christ,—to the penitent, the believing, the holy, the praying, the lovers of the Word of God. That exhortation shall consist of three simple things.

(a) For one thing, be *thankful* for the Spirit. Who has made you to differ? Whence came all these feeling in your heart, which thousands around you know not, and you yourself knew not at one time? To what do you owe that sense of sin, and that drawing towards Christ, and that hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that taste for the Bible and prayer, which, with all your doubts and infirmities, you find within your soul?

Did these things come of nature? Oh, no!—Did you learn these things in the schools of this world? Oh, no: no!—They are all of grace. Grace sowed them, grace watered them, grace began them, grace has kept them up. Learn to be more thankful. Praise God more every day you live: praise Him more in private, praise Him more in public, praise Him in your own family, praise Him above all in your own heart. This is the way to be in tune for heaven. The anthem there will be, "What hath God wrought?"

(b) For another thing, be *filled* with the Spirit. Seek to be more and more under His blessed influence. Strive to have every thought, and word, and action, and habit, brought under obedience to the leadings of

the Holy Spirit. Grieve Him not by inconsistencies and conformity to the world. Quench Him not by trifling with little infirmities and small besetting sins. Seek rather to have Him ruling and reigning more completely over you every week that you live. Pray that you may yearly grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ. This is the way to do good to the world. An eminent Christian is a North Foreland Light-house, seen far and wide by others, and doing good to myriads, whom he never knows.—This is the way to enjoy much inward comfort in this world, to have bright assurance in death, to leave broad evidences behind us, and at last to receive a great crown.

(c) Finally, *pray* daily for a great outpouring of the Spirit on the Church and on the world. This is the grand want of the day: it is the thing that we need far more than money, machinery, and men. The “company of preachers” in Christendom is far greater than it was in the days of St. Paul; but the actual spiritual work done in the earth, in proportion to the means used, is undoubtedly far less. We want more of the presence of the Holy Spirit,—more in the pulpit, and more in the congregation,—more in the pastoral visit, and more in the school. Where He is, there will be life, health, growth, and fruitfulness. Where He is not, all will be dead, tame, formal, sleepy, and cold. Then let everyone who desires to see an increase of pure and undefiled religion, pray daily for more of the presence of the Holy Spirit in every branch of the visible Church of Christ.