

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

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*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.*

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*"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).*

## SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

### "MOUNT ZION"

The word "Zion" is precious to God's people, for it speaks to them of their God and of His habitation, or dwelling place. It is "unto Mount Zion" that we have "come" (Heb. 12:22) in Christ Jesus; "the city of the living God." Here there is "righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). There is found Divine intimacy and rich fellowship - eternal life; which is to "know God and His Son whom He hath sent" (John 17:3). This is the holiest place for the redeemed - Mount Zion - where the Lord dwells, speaking to and strengthening His people. Here is victory, strength, revelation, and comfort. Here is beneficial exhortation and instruction; for the "Lord dwelleth in Zion" (Psa. 9:11; 76:2; Joel 3:21). Let me summon you to the rich mount of Zion "which He (God) loved" (Psa. 78:68). *How glorious it is to live here in the "heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22), amidst an "innumerable company of angels", "the spirits of just men made perfect", together with "God the Judge of all", "Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant", and "the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12:22-25).* Here there is a real spiritual cognizance of the Lord, a benefiting from angelic ministries, a fusion with the redeemed of all ages, the blessing of Christ's heavenly ministry, and a thorough cleansing in the blood! This is the "heavenly places" to which we have been raised in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3; 2:6). This is the "heavenly Jerusalem" which is "the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26). It is the Divine Temple - the people of God who have been "builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:20-22). *Here is our mount of transfiguration, where Jesus only is seen in resplendent glory and majesty; where none question His authority, and all submit to Him, admitting; "Lord it is good for us to be here"! Here is where the ministries of the Law and the Prophets, seen in Moses and Elijah, have their real meaning; where they are gloriously brought into Jesus, who Himself is the "Spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10).* How I praise the Lord that we have been enabled, by grace, to build our tabernacles of eternity here! Mount Zion is exactly what it indicates - a "Mount" - it is a high place, literally meaning "elevated." Truly this is a good description of our grace in Christ; we have been "elevated"; brought up, as it were, from the earth, the flesh, and sin! We have been "raised" together with Christ, glorious contemplation (Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12). Why should we not continue to rejoice in this glorious and most stupendous resurrection in Christ? Is not the air cleaner, and joys greater, the love more profound, the peace more swelling, in this high and elevated atmosphere of grace? Let us seek to appreciate more fully "Mount Zion", the dwelling place of God; and, by His grace, of His people also!

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# The Word of Truth

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## "MOUNT ZION"

(From page 1)

"Zion" has a rich heritage in meaning. Prior to the development of the physical Zion by King David, it was the habitation of the Jebusites; enemies of the Lord and His people. It was a "stronghold", and was stubbornly held by the enemies of God until David mightily "took the stronghold of Zion" and of it made a great "fort" of defence (II Sam. 5:6-10). Being a high point, it made a most excellent place for defence and protection, where the enemies could be seen approaching, and the trickeries of low-level fighting were not a problem. It was there that David waxed mighty and grew great (II Sam. 5:11). Zion was, from David's victory, called "the city of David" (I Kgs. 8:1; II Chron. 5:2), thus indicating its association with victory, conquest, and power. From that time, it was revered most highly as the habitation of the Lord. It was here that the temple was built, for it was comprised of stone; a solid place for building. It was on a ridge between Kidron (commonly known as "the valley of Jehosaphat" — Joel 3:2) and the Tyropeoean Valleys of Jerusalem. It was near the only known spring of water there, Gihon, which is memorable as the place of the anointing and proclamation of Solomon as king (I Kgs. 1:33, 38, 45). This spring is also referred to by some as the Virgin Fountain, because of the purity of its waters. It was to this blessed Mount Zion that David brought the ark of the covenant; esteemed as typical of the very presence of the Lord Himself (II Samuel 6). A rich meaning, then, has this blessed mount to we who have been "saved" (I Cor. 1:18-21)! It speaks of highness, of solidity, of defence, of victory, of exaltation over valleys, of pureness, of living water! Little wonder that it is referred to so often by the men who were moved of the Holy Spirit to testify to us (II Pet. 1:20-21).

The Lord is pictured as loving these "gates of Zion" (Psa. 87:2), and how truly does He! This is His own habitation; the abode of His people; yea, His very people themselves! There they stand "with the Lamb" on "Zion" (Rev. 14:1), having shared in His great spoil of the enemy (Col.

2:15). On the one hand is the valley of iniquity from which they have been raised, and on the other the pit of despair from whence they have been lifted (Psa. 40:1-3). Beneath them lies that solid rock; yea, that foundation Rock, which hath been laid "in Zion" (Rom. 9:33). Too, upon this mount springs forth the water of everlasting life (John 4:14), yielding forth its fresh and untainted life continually. How I praise God for this spiritual mount; above, strong, and rich with vitality. Surely it is evident to all that dwell there that "The Lord hath chosen Zion" (Psa. 132:13). He promised to build it (Psa. 102:16), and to save it (Psa. 69:35), and He hath done the same! Hallelujah! Ascend the Mount; "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following" (Psa. 48:12-13). Salvation has been "appointed" unto her for walls "and bulwarks" (Isa. 26:1), and she is an impregnable city. The "gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). She is truly a "city of refuge" into which you may run and be safe. Here, in the physical Zion, was the inner-sanctum of Jerusalem, and how the Lord did cherish it. But, the fulfillment of that physical Zion, the spiritual Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, is cherished far more, as was exhibited by the terrible purchase price He gave for it: even "His own blood" (Acts 20:28). David bought the threshing floor for money; the Father bought the Son's threshing floor (Matt. 3:12) with blood, even the "precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:19).

Numerous messages were sent to Zion; let them be sent to you: "Thou art my people" (Isa. 51:16); "The God reigneth" (Isa. 52:7); "Be glad, ye children of Zion" (Joel 2:23); "I am jealous for Zion" (Zech. 1:14); "The Lord shall yet comfort Zion" (Zech. 1:17); "I will place salvation in Zion" (Isa. 46:13). When Israel was taken into captivity in Babylon, it is recorded that they pondered and lamented their removal from Zion; "By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down, and we wept when we remembered Zion" (Psa. 137:1). Aye, and for one that has tasted of the "Mount Zion" to which we have "come" to be found in captivity brings great weeping and lamentation also, as he remembers the favor and grace of His Lord, which has been presently obscured by his captivity! Those who had dwelt in the high and holy place knew of its blessedness, and wept bitterly at the thought of no longer being there. How precious was that high and holy hill to them! And, if a physical location could so enrich the heart, how much more the eternal mount, the everlasting hill to which we have come!

Zion, to me, speaks of a high spiritual plain — of a heavenly dwelling; away from flesh, away from earth, away from all that defiles! It may only be reached "in the Spirit", and affords each who dwells there a most refreshing season with the Lord. This is the highest point of dwelling in the new life; it is where the mature and growing ones dwell. It is above the valleys, close to the life giving streams, on the solid rock where shifting sands and eroding pillars are not found! It speaks of steadfastness, of strength, of establishment, of perfection, of being "no more children,

tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine" Eph. 4:15). **There, praise is uninhibited;** "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion" (Psa. 65:1). It is there that the Lord's greatness is truly appreciated; "The Lord is great in Zion" (Psa. 99:2). Here is where the victorious Lamb "stands" with His people (Rev. 14:1), and here is where the true children are born (Isa. 66:8). The true Foundation Stone, Jesus Christ, is laid here (Isa. 28:16; I Pet. 2:6), and is deeply appreciated and utilized. Here the work of the Lord is declared (Jer. 51:10), and His Name is proclaimed (Psa. 102:21). On Mount Zion the sinners are truly "afraid" (Isa. 33:14), and those that "dwell in ease" are given great woes (Amos 6:1). **Zion in this case represents that portion of God's people that dwells in the highest place; the "mountain of holiness" (Jer. 31:23). "Hosannas" and "glories" are heard "IN THE HIGHEST" (Matt. 21:9; Mk. 11:10; Luke 2:14; 19:38), and wisdom's voice is clearer heard there (Prov. 9:3). I certainly do not mean to imply that the only saints are the ones that dwell on this high rock of the city; but the only joyful and strong ones are all found there! It is no virtue to dwell on the outskirts of the city, where the displeasing elements sift in to drag spirits down and press the heart down with doubts and fears. Better to rise up high, and enter the temple on the hill!**

So many of God's people — perhaps even you — choose to dwell on a lower plain where the dust of despair and the fog of fear settles, blinding the eyes, creating darkness, and robbing of the light. They do not know about Mount Zion on the other end of the city, where the rich and precious fellowship is enjoyed. They ask many things of the Lord, but seem to receive no answer. Doubts and troubles goad them like needles along their low path, and sorrow and grief are tasted in measures almost unbearable. Yet, they will not climb the hill! **They do not seem to be aware that their hardship is the necessity for the low-road.** They either are ignorant of, or simply will not ascend into the Holy Place and the Holy Hill. Content to be bound with the girdle of infirmity and the ropes of weakness, they blunder through countless woods of "won'ts" and deserts of "don'ts". They are restricted by their own affections (II Cor. 6:12), choosing limitation to largeness and failing to faith. But, Mount Zion still stands; its gates are open wide, and the Lord is beckoning His people to "come with singing" (Isa. 51:11). Why should you wallow in despair and stumble in darkness of unfamiliarity, when the Lord Jesus has opened up the way? **Why ought your mind to be cluttered up with imaginations, false conceptions, suspicions, malice, envy, and ignorance, when the Lord has built a strong road all the way to the top of the hill, and offers to guide you there in peace.** Why must you spend your money for that which is not bread (Isa. 55:1-3)? Why not seek a higher, a more invigorating spiritual atmosphere? one where your soul can flourish as the cedars of Lebanon, and grow tall into the very bosom of the Father. Let me encourage you to seek a higher plain; to stretch forth; to reach out for the very pinnacle of spiritual experience; of fellowship with the Lord!

## BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

**"Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18)**

We are enjoined of the Lord Himself to "be filled with the Spirit"! This makes the matter of primary importance, for it is obviously the will of God! **Our excitement, motivation, strength, wisdom, and insight are to spring out of a freshness of the Holy Spirit!** We are to be taken up with His life, and with His thoughts. Our entire persons are to be permeated with the Divine life, and not with the life of "Adam", the "old man" (Eph. 4:22). God is not interested in our conception of things, or in our abilities to probe out the meaning of Divine counsels with the finite mind. **Men's programs, artificial means of spiritual excitement, and carnal devices, are only an abomination unto Him with whom we have to do!** We are to "be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18); emptied of every vestige of self, and filled up with the Person of God; so that we may be able to **truthfully confess:** "We have the mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16). Is not the church meant to be the "habitation of God THROUGH THE SPIRIT" (Eph. 2:22); and are not believers personally the "temples of the Holy Ghost" (I Cor. 6:19-20). We are "not our own; we have been bought with a price". **In Christ Jesus, we are equipped to possess the Holy Spirit; and possessed of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to contain Christ and abide in God!** Oh, that more were vitally concerned with this matter of being "filled with the Spirit"; **of being dominated by the new nature;** of being possessed by the very life of God — motivated, constrained, and led by the influence of our Father through the Holy Spirit, and in the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Holy Spirit is often shunned in many circles today, because He is offensive to them; after all, the Lord Himself declared of Him; "whom the world CANNOT receive, because it hath not seen Him nor known Him" (John 14:17). **But God has made abundantly clear that the role of His Spirit is essential to the development of the believer.** It is the Spirit that strengthens and empowers us, as it is written; "I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord" (Micah 3:8); "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8); "strengthened with all might by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16). It is the Holy Spirit that witnesses to us of the truth of God and Christ; "We are His witnesses . . . and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him" (Acts 5:32). It is that blessed Holy Spirit which sheds the love of God throughout our persons; "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom. 5:5). He is graciously given to us of God to help our infirmities; "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26). The three chief elements of the Kingdom of God, righteousness, peace, and joy, are to be found "in the Holy Ghost"; "For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). Hope, that great "anchor of the soul" (Heb. 6:19), may abound within us by the Holy Spirit's ministry; "Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy in believing,

that ye may abound in hope, **through the power of the Holy Ghost**" (Rom. 15:13). The revelation of God's purposes is through the ministration of the Spirit; "But God hath revealed them unto us by **His Spirit**" (I Cor. 2:9-10); "But we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might **know** the things that are freely given to us of God" (I Cor. 2:12).

It is of the Spirit that we "reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:8), and it is also through Him that we have "access unto the Father" (Eph. 2:18). The Holy Spirit is the great author of unity within the body of Christ; therefore it is called the "unity of the Spirit" (Eph. 4:3). **It is He that brings forth the fruit** that is becoming of godliness, and which brings glory to the Lord; "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23). All of his fruit is "in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph. 5:9). When it comes to the Word of God, it is the Spirit's Sword (Eph. 6:17); He wields it within men's hearts, cutting away the flesh, and baring their thoughts and intents before the Lord God Almighty! Fellowship (Phil. 2:1), love (Col. 1:8) the preaching of the Gospel (I Thess. 1:5) — all of these are to be "in the Spirit"; i.e., **within the confines of His influence and instruction**. None but a fool would ignore the necessity of the believer being "filled with the Spirit" — **without His abundant ministry, we are neither equipped to serve God nor to worship Him. All is chaff that is not produced by Him; there is no fruit apart from His, that grows upon the "true Vine", together with His attendant branches** (John 15).

The filling with the Spirit is a most controversial subject among religious enthusiasts; primarily because each man is forming an evaluation of that filling purely upon the basis of his own limited experience. **It is always dangerous to fence in Divine truth to conform to your own experience**. Rest assured that your experience is not exhaustive; God has not displayed all of His magnanimous wisdom within you alone; there are still mighty areas of work and power which have been, and shall continue to be, exhibited apart from you! **No man's experience is exclusive**; he may not compel all other men to imitate his own possession of the Spirit; yet, I find this to be a most dangerous tendency. Paul did not say "Be filled with the Spirit like I am filled with the Spirit"; he said, "Be filled with the Spirit"; **obtain a personal filling that will minister peculiarly to you! This filling with the Spirit may not be considered separate from His ministries!** If the Holy Spirit ministers within the heart of the believer, then **to be filled with the Spirit involves a broader and more full ministration within**; it is the Spirit operating within an unlimited and unhindered glory. **It involves a filling with power and spiritual strength to execute the will of the Lord and stand against the wiles of the Devil**. It touches the matter of **full confidence**, as He ministers the heavenly witness to the hearts of God's people. There is a **fullness of love**, and a **full-help** in all of our infirmities. There is an **abundant measure** of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, a **full assurance** of hope, and a **keen and great insight** into the mind of the Lord. There comes an **overflowing measure** of access to God; communion and fellow-

ship that never before had been tasted. Life everlasting is ministered in **full measure**, so that we are enabled to "walk in the light as He is in the light" (I Jno. 1:7).

**Unless there is an abundant measure of these things — power and strength, assurance, love, help in infirmities, righteousness, peace, joy, love, meekness, gentleness, faith, peace, kindness, goodness, access to the Lord, and fellowship with His Son — there has been no filling with the Spirit**. He fills us not merely in an emotional experience, but **in His capacity as the heavenly Minister!** Many people who are seeking what they call "the filling of the Holy Spirit", actually have no desire for these things which we have mentioned; and yet, these are the ministries of the Holy Spirit. **Can any expect to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit fail to perform the ministries which the Father Himself has commanded Him to fulfill?** The filling with the Spirit is not so much an event, as it is a condition; it is not a mere point in time, but a description of a state. **To be filled with the Spirit is to be dominated by the mind of Christ; to have the flesh in total subjection in order that worship and service might be unencumbered**. We are thus brought under the total dominion of the Lord; flesh is abridged, and the "inner man", being "strengthened" with true might, is enabled to gain the ascendancy. It is certainly to be understood that much of our lives are, unfortunately, spent in distinction from such characteristics; but it ought not to be. This is the admonition of the Lord; **"Be filled with the Spirit!"** Though there may be valleys, and pitfalls; weary days and times of doubt and fear, yet ought we aspire to attain unto the "fullness of the stature of the measure of Christ"; to be "filled with the Spirit"; totally under His guidance and tutelage; i.e., **aware and appreciative of His ministries**. **Those areas of your life that are yet led by the carnal nature need to be permeated with the Holy Spirit**. This is a part of the filling with the Spirit.

Generally, the filling with the Spirit is confused with a mere event; a high moment of refreshing which has particular external characteristics. **These characteristics, when genuinely spiritual, are not the filling, but are the outworkings of it**. Yet, I continually see people seeking the signs rather than the reality; the evidence rather than the fact! Once it is seen that these evidences are, in fact, merely evidences of a greater spiritual reality, it will be understood why no particular set of them may be exclusively identified as the evidence of the Spirit's filling. **The point of being "filled with the Spirit" is this; that we become fully motivated, led, and used of the Lord**. This is wrought entirely apart from human wisdom, and outside of the realm of carnal ingenuity. **Whatever characteristics and extraordinary evidences that are wrought at this time are not meant to draw attention to themselves, but rather to the Lord**. Great pains must be made to make this clear, as did Peter in Acts 3.

The filling of the people of God with the Spirit is also appropriately called the "baptism of fire" (Matt. 3:11-12) because **there is a consumption of fleshly thoughts and ambitions; a purging of the heart by faith in order to the INDWELLING**

**of the Spirit of God.** There are myriads who have never actually been cleansed and filled with the Spirit, religious though they are. They have never been brought into **total** agreement with God; they do not think as our Lord, nor act as He. They stand aloof from His Presence and question His judgments. In short, they "have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:5). Such are they that fight against being "**filled with the Spirit**" (Eph. 5:18), thus making God a liar, and fitting themselves for everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His power (II Thess. 1:9).

Men are prone to systematize the workings of God, and use purely human explanations for purely Holy things. The general procedure is to take an instance in Scripture, upon which there has not been any specific teaching, but only a relating of events, and make that example the criterion for all of God's moves. For instance, there are several places in Scripture which reveal that people filled with the Holy Spirit spake in tongues with which they had formerly been unfamiliar (Acts 2; 10; 19). **The Holy Spirit has not given us any explicit teaching on this point, as to what we may precisely expect when a person is filled with the Spirit** — He has only related what happened to some in some instances. Yet, people — sophists by nature — take these high happenings, and say that unless this precise sign is evidenced, there has not been a filling of the person with the Holy Spirit. **Now, they cannot substantiate their teaching — it is wholly erroneous. The Lord did not say this — they have, and therefore they must assume the full responsibility for it.**

You cannot put the work of God into a mould — He is greater than that! **God is not systematic after the human definition.** His works are "divers" and "manifold". His "way is in the sea", not easily traceable, because He does not follow precise patterns and forms. If He did, then all who opposed the church of the living God, if they were converted, would be brought low by being stricken blind, as was Paul (Acts 9). Everyone who was commissioned to speak the Gospel to a people against whom he was prejudiced, would be called forth by a vision of animals from heaven, as was Peter (Acts 10). Everyone, then, who was called of the Lord to follow Him, would first prepare a feast to the honor of the Caller, as did Matthew (Luke 5). **But God does not work by systems; His ways cannot be outlined, and put into pamphlets so that men may meticulously check them to assure their accuracy!** He worked differently with Matthew than with Philip; different with Peter than with James and John. This is what is so glorious about it; it makes it personal. God will work within you personally in such a way as will produce a well-spring of joy and love within. You will be able to assuredly say with Paul; "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved ME and gave Himself for ME" (Gal. 2:20). **When, therefore, we speak of the filling with the Spirit, we are not speaking of an event that may be specifically identified by a certain set of evidences.** Our God works in no other area like this; why should He here, in this immensely personal work. Now, we certainly are not so foolish as to discount any

of the means which were employed in the Scriptures of discerning this great work; but we do insist that **none claim their experience to be exclusive**, and to the exclusion of all others. Let none be guilty of saying; "He hasn't been filled with the Spirit" simply because that one hasn't experienced the same evidence as himself!

It is my purpose here to show the various places in Scripture where men were filled with the Spirit. Long have I heard people say; "Everyone that was filled with the Spirit spake in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." **That simply is not true**, and ought to be exposed for what it is — a carnal attempt to systematize the **WORKINGS of God**; and that because of a **lack of faith**. It is said of the Lord in past days; "God, who in **SUNDRY** times and **DIVERS MANNERS** spake in times past unto the Fathers by the prophets . . ." (Heb. 1:1); and it is **characteristic of our Lord to use diversity in His appearances.** Surely none that have familiarized themselves with the Scriptures could think otherwise. Samson, Gideon, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, Apollos, Timothy, and John the beloved — each one was dealt with in a personal way to the glory of God; filled with the Spirit and enabled to set forth the truth of God.

The Scriptures relate to us of Elisabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, being filled with the Spirit. In the sixth month after her conception, her cousin, Mary, the mother of Jesus, came to visit her. Upon seeing her, the Word declares; "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and **Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost**: and she spake out in a loud voice, and said; "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me? . . ." (Luke 1:41-43). As the Spirit filled her heart, she was enabled to accurately declare the case of Mary; **she was given perception, and an insight into the truth.** She also prophesied, to the comfort of Mary; "There shall be a performance of those things told her of the Lord" (Luke 1:45). Now one might well declare that everyone filled with the Spirit would immediately diagnose the case before them, upon the basis of the Scripture; but would that make it true? God forbid! **Her case was not meant to be the standard of God's dealings with men through the Spirit.** It was Elisabeth's husband, Zacharias, that was also filled with the Holy Spirit. It is said of Him; "And his father **Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost**, and prephesied, saying; Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of David . . ." (Luke 1:67-79). He went on to declare the ministry of his own son, John the Baptist, together with the great liberating ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, his filling was not typical of all fillings in so far as evidences are concerned! Under the influence of the Holy Spirit the veil of the carnal mind was pulled aside, and **he was able to see clearly the truth of God, and speak it forth.** The principle was that he was under the influence of the Lord, who spoke through him. The manifestation of the principle was the peculiar speech

which he uttered, uninfluenced by his carnal reasoning, and devoid of the "flesh." But, we should be most foolish to suppose that everyone filled with the Spirit would speak in precisely the same words as he. You cannot systematize God like that.

It is said of our blessed Lord; "And **Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost** returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the Devil" (Luke 4:1-2). Now everyone that is filled with the Spirit, even as our Lord, is led by that same Spirit; **but they are not all led into a wilderness to be tempted of the Devil!** We need to learn to think in principles; according to the rule of faith! **Let us insist that those that are filled be led; but let us not dictate the course in which they are led, or the specific actions which they are led to perform.**

The book of Acts is filled with instances of the Holy Spirit pervading men's hearts and minds. They will serve to illustrate to us that God's manners are divers; and that the Spirit cannot be bottled up, and identified by one particular set of signs or wonders. In Acts 2:4, the early disciples were "**all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and spake in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance". Now, that is a valid sign, and no one has a right to gainsay it; **but it is not an exclusive sign**, and none have a right to so declare it! In Acts 4:8, Peter "**filled with the Holy Ghost** said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel . . ." (Acts 4:8-12). It was at this place that Peter interpreted the healing of the impotent man which had formerly lay at the gate which is called Beautiful (Acts 3:1-6). He declared it to be the work of God through Jesus Christ, and proclaimed Jesus as the only foundation upon which men can build. **He was loosed of all fleshly infirmity which would have hindered him in proclaiming the "truth as it is in Christ Jesus", and wisely and boldly declared the "whole counsel of God."**

The early church, upon hearing of the threatenings that were made against Peter and John, gathered together and lifted up their voice to God with one accord, seeking from Him boldness to declare the Word in the face of the most fierce opposition. The answer came when the house was shaken where they were at, and "**they were all filled with the Holy Ghost**, and spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31). Here, the Holy Spirit so filled them as to render the threats of men but mere rubbish; to be discarded in favor of the commandment of the Lord. Such boldness is much needed today, and the baptism of the Spirit will bring it in some measure. But let us not be guilty of dictating that measure! As the church advanced in the Lord, daily increasing as the "Lord added unto the church such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47), there arose an unfortunate murmuring among the Grecian widows against the Hebrew widows, because they were neglected in the daily ministrations of food (Acts 6:1-2). The Apostles, not feeling it reasonable to "leave the Word of God to serve tables" (Acts 6:2), admonished the brethren to "choose out seven men of honest report, **full of the Holy Ghost** and wisdom" (Acts 6:3). In this instance, the fullness of the Spirit was exhibited in wisdom and discretion, as they handled the administration of food to

the needy. They did not select men on the basis of a peculiar event in their life, but on their manner of life! Anyone connected with the religious Babylon of our day is surely aware of the need of the Spirit's fullness to wisely adjudicate the business matters of the fellowship. Yet, who would dare to say that all men filled with the Spirit will be used in such a capacity.

Stephen, one of those who was chosen to fill the office of daily minister, was "**full of the Holy Ghost**", and it is recorded that he "**did great wonders and miracles among the people**" (Acts 6:8). Certainly a most marvelous ministry; though **not an exclusive one**, nor the only manifestation of the fullness of the Spirit. Who would care to affirm that everyone "**full of the Holy Ghost**" would perform great wonders and miracles? Stephen, as he stood before the Sanhedrin, was again "**filled with the Holy Ghost**" and "**looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God**" (Acts 7:55). Marvelous manifestation; yet have all who were filled of the Spirit seen it? Was this not peculiarly adapted to his present needs? **Was there not a lifting of his heart and mind out of the flesh, in order that he might be better ready to be received into heaven?** Such an experience, it is admitted, is to be coveted in our closing hours; yet who would care to affirm that all who failed to have it were not actually filled with the Spirit? Barnabas, a man of faith, and used exceedingly of the Lord, was "**full of the Holy Ghost**" and so exhorted people to "cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:24-25), yet, this is certainly not the exclusive identification of a man filled with the Spirit, though it is one of the good marks.

And, who can forget that memorable time when Paul was ministering the Word of God to Sergius Paulus, a "prudent man", and was confronted with Elymas, the sorcerer, who sought to "withstand" them and sought to "turn away the deputy (Sergius Paulus) from the faith." It was during this encounter that it is written; "Then Saul (who is also called Paul) **filled with the Holy Ghost**, set his eyes upon him, and said; O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the Devil, thou enemy of righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand" (Acts 13:7-11). What a mighty transport out of the flesh that was; into the very counsel chambers of God whereby he was gloriously enabled to declare the mind of the Lord **prior** to the work. Praise the Lord! **Such was an evidence of the filling** with the Spirit, and wherever it is wrought today, it is still an evidence of the filling of the Spirit! But it is not the exclusive evidence!

In giving instruction to the church at Ephesus, Paul admonished; "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but **BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**" (Eph. 5:18). That is a command, then, of the Lord! The end of that command, or the evidence of its fulfillment, is evinced in the following words; "Speaking one to another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual sings, singing and mak-

ing melody in your hearts unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:19 ASV). There is also the matter of "giving thanks", it is continued, and of "submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God" (Eph. 5:20-21). Once again, it is seen that the Lord desires for us to be out of the flesh and into the Spirit; away from earth, and into heaven! We are to rise up and away from the mundane, where we may have everlasting concourse with the Lord God of our salvation!

If you desire to be filled with the Spirit, the promise is that the Lord will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him (Luke 11:13). **You must expect to be lifted out of the flesh when it happens; we insist upon that. To be filled with the Spirit, you must be emptied of yourself! There will be no indulgence provided for the "flesh"; nothing that will cause the flesh to glory in the sight of God. There will be a genuine flood of worship, insight, praise, and adoration for the Lord, which will be evidenced in one or more of a number of ways. It is not the sign of the filling that interests us, but the filling itself. Let the signs of it take care of themselves! Take it for granted that when one is filled with the Spirit there is such a uniqueness about it that you shall know! It is not primarily an emotional experience, although it will, in all probability, touch your emotions like nothing ever has. This is an experience of the heart, where the mind of Jesus, and the mind of the Spirit permeate your own! It is a time when you are dominated by the will of the Lord; when rebellion ceases, when fear subsides, when boldness rises forth, when self is forgotten! It is only the Spirit filled man that can properly preach, pray, sing, discern, or worship! This is why we are enjoined of the Lord to "BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."** Let faith fill all of your heart, and be not faithless, but believing!

Do not say that you have already been filled with the Spirit; seek a greater filling! **Is there not yet some part of your personality, your heart, your thought life, your word-life, that has not been brought under the influence and direction of the Spirit of God? "BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT!"** Is your praise life virtually dead? Can you find nothing to credit to our wonderful Lord? Is there no thanksgiving within your heart? Are you unable to sing and teach, with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, the people of God? Are you unable to make melody in your heart to the Lord? Is your comprehension of reality decidedly short of what it should be? **"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT!"** Do not associate this exhortation with what men have said; **it is what the Lord has said!** It is His command, and it is your duty to obey it! Seek grace to believe, for to be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with faith, as Peter declared in Acts 15:8-9. It will bring purity and cleanliness, praise the Lord. You shall then be endued with power, and able to subdue all that would hinder you in serving the Lord and fulfilling His Word. **To be filled with the Spirit of God is to be filled with the power of God; with the mind of God; with the thoughts of God; with the desires of God. It is to be in subjection to God; it is to be unresponsive to the desires of the "old man".** Is that not what you desire? Is that not what you are hungering for? **"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT."**

## THE MINISTRY OF FOLLOWING

"... follow on ..." (Hosea 6:3)

When the Apostle Paul declared; "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark . . ." (Phil. 3:13, 14a), he conveyed the truth of a daily need for greater wisdom, greater strength, greater grace! Contemporary religion, it appears, emphasizes an arrival rather than a journey, a relaxation rather than a pressing forward, a sitting position rather than a running condition. Denominations, having ceased to grow spiritually beyond their doctrines and dogmas, together with the formed creeds, written and unwritten, have crystallized their "positions" into formal statements of faith. These must be subscribed to by any new adherents, and are considered to be the real test of belief. In their little sectarian sky the sun rises no higher, the day grows no brighter, the warmth waxes no greater. It is considered a reproach if views are ever changed, or if even the remotest hint that a formed position now seems questionable arises. Their polished clergy are not known for their insight into the truth, or for their perception into spiritual things; they are merely those who have expended more than an ordinary amount of energy in getting their "position" well in mind, and being able to defend it with some measure of skill. **I greatly fear that this fleshly approach to religion is actually the cause for much of the anti-God and anti-religious movements that are abroad in the land.** Not only is the Devil raising up insurrection against Christ and His church, but honest minded people are rebelling against the forms of religion that are prevalent all around: forms that are totally without power — mere doctrinal positions and emphases which can neither save nor bring peace and joy to the heart!

Any living thing grows, changes its shape, (though not its essential elements) and rises to new heights and dimensions. The same is true of the child of God. **While the Truth which He embraces does not grow nor change, but is immutable, yet the saint's apprehension of the Truth is broadened, and His faith grows** (II Thess. 1:3). The eyes of his understanding are opened wider in order that he might see more of the great world of reality given to us by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:18-20). Consequently, there is frequently necessitated changes of conception, which make allowance for a more whole-hearted acceptance of the truth "as it is in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 4:20-21). **It is no disgrace to admit to growth; to come to a point where more of the truth is seen than was before.** In my own case, I find continual spiritual construction work transpiring in my thinking. It is not a "tossing too and fro by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14) that I am speaking of, but a growth "in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18) People who have never really grown in grace find it alarming that I do not speak as in former years.

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And, a word of caution; do not make your filling the standard of all fillings! You are not that unique!

Should a grown man continue to speak as a child? Will his spiritual vocabulary and insight never be increased? Yet, many expect this very thing in the realm of faith — but that is only because they have little or no faith themselves. They must rely upon the past altogether, rather than pressing forward, and reaching out for the prize set before us in Christ Jesus.

**A growing vibrant Christian is a misfit in the churches today**, for he poses a threat to their creedal statements and doctrinal boundaries. There is a preconceived mold created by denominations into which each prospective devotee must fit. If he grows beyond the shape of that mold he is considered dangerous; a rabble-rouser, and an insurrectionist. They have no objections to him being zealous, or very eager — just as long as that zeal and eagerness is channeled toward the betterment of the organization. If it is just for Truth, and for the Lord Jesus Christ, then it shall invariably lead to complications, because their positions are, at various points, at variance with Christ. **Some of Jesus they want — but not all of Him, for that would destroy their little system and their name in the world!** Each denomination possesses fleshly restrictions; the Baptists with their very limited view of faith and grace; the Methodists with their pious form without power; the Presbyterians with their meticulous local autonomy, but no leading of the Spirit; the Christian Church with their finely devised “plan of salvation”, but no means of power; the Episcopalians with their adoration of the church fathers, and no relish for the Heavenly Father; the Holiness groups with their precise formulas for conduct, yet no genuine renewal of affections; the Pentecostals with their warped conception of the Holy Spirit, and absence of spiritual wisdom — **each one has a crystalized concept of certain things which will not admit to any further development or understanding.** At this point it is necessary to say that we are not at all teaching rubber-theology that bends and stretches with the times — God forbid! The great fundamentals of the faith are unchangeable, Praise the Lord; the Truth can never be altered, improved upon, or changed! We would deplore any denial of this. I am speaking of the APPREHENSION of the truth! The grasping of truth with the understanding; the vision of things as they really are in Christ Jesus; of the grace that is available to behold the things of the Spirit of God in their full-orbed beauty; of the growth that brings broader scope and more definitive application of these truths to our lives! There are some texts in Scripture which must be lived with for a lifetime, for instance, before any satisfying understanding is given. Verses on grace, works, baptism, falling away, the silence of women in the church, suffering, preaching, sin, election, obedience: these are broad subjects, and eternal in their scope. **They must be approached with a worshipful mind, and in all humility, with a spirit of awe.** We must not be quick to jam these texts of Scripture into little sectarian molds in order to alleviate the difficulties that they appear to have. Such texts as Rom. 8:28-32; Titus 2:11-14; Eph. 2:8-10; I Cor. 15:34-37; Mark 16:16; I Pet. 3:21, and others, have amazingly distant horizons; and yet I see

people continually interpreting them in view of **their church teaching**; or the historical position which their particular denomination has taken. Of what matter are those things? Who cares what your church believes: **what bearing does that have upon the truth of God?** Have you not “received the love of the truth” (II Thess. 2:10)? If the Truth is not at variance with your church-position, that is good; but if it is, you have no choice but to embrace the truth and let the lie go! Do not attempt to evade this responsibility! It will confront you time and time again if you are addicted to the study of God’s Word, prayer, and insight into the providential ministries of God in your life! **It is no disgrace to abandon a lie and embrace the truth — regardless of the consequences which it may entail upon you!** Do not approach the Word of God with a standard of interpretation in mind! a set rule that you intend to apply which will, magically, bring to you the true answer. Rather, approach it in prayer and faith, beseeching God for wisdom (James 1: 5-6).

Now, let the Word of God speak to your heart; it is “quick and powerful” (Heb. 4:12): **“Follow on to know the Lord”** (Hosea 6:3); **“Follow those things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another”** (Rom. 14:19); **“Follow after charity”** (I Cor. 14:1); **“Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness”** (I Tim. 6:11); **“Ever follow that which is good”** (I Thess. 5:15); **“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”** (Heb. 12:14); **“Christ hath left us an example, that we should follow in His steps”** (I Pet. 2:21); **“Be followers of God as dear children”** (Eph. 5:2); **“Follow the Lord”** (I Sam. 12:14). These are the real keys to growth. The person that is not growing, has ceased in some or all of these areas to obey the command of the Lord to “follow on”! If you desire a fullness of life; a growth of understanding, an expanding and growing faith, then “follow” — press forward — in these areas, as the Spirit has commanded: the knowledge of the Lord, peaceful things, edification, righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, good things, peace with all men, holiness, Jesus, God the Father! See if your life is not enriched! There is yet advancement in all of these areas to be had — for you! Do not settle down inside a denominational fence! Do not become stunted in your growth because of that delusion which says you have found all that is to be found! You are not God, and because of this, you will **always** be in a following capacity. But, Praise the Lord, God is not a man, but God, and therefore shall always be in the **leading** capacity! Avail yourself of His guidance!