
Having the Spirit

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John Charles Ryle (1816-1900) was educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford where his career was unusually distinguished.

His first serious conviction came soon after he left Eton when his friend, Algernon Coote, rebuked him for swearing. Two years went by. Then in midsummer 1837, not long before his final examinations, he fell ill with severe chest inflammation. "That was the time," he wrote, "when I distinctly remember that I began to read my Bible and pray." He entered church one Sunday after the service had begun. Ephesians 2:8-9 was read and applied to his soul with particular emphasis. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." In due time, Ryle came to love the doctrines of free grace.

Ryle became curate of Exbury, Hampshire, 1841; rector of St. Thomas, Winchester, 1843; of Helmingham, Suffolk, 1844; vicar of Stradbroke, Suffolk, 1861; rural dean of Hoxne, 1869; honorary canon of Norwich, 1872; select preacher at Cambridge, 1873-74; at Oxford, 1874-76, 1879, 1880; dean designate of Salisbury, 1880; and bishop of Liverpool, 1880-1900.

Ryle marked out a conservative Calvinistic path for evangelical churchmen in days when much of the Church of England was drifting on the tides of liberalism or tractarianism. His successor at Liverpool, F.J. Chavasse, summed him up strikingly: "A man of granite with the heart of a child."

Having the Spirit

"Having not the Spirit."

—Jude 19

The text which heads this paper will tell you that there is such a thing as "not having the Spirit." This is the point which I press upon your attention.

I believe the point to be one of vital importance at all seasons. I hold it to be one of special importance in the present day. I consider that clear views about the work of the Holy Spirit are among the best preservatives against the many false doctrines which abound in our times. Suffer me then, to lay before you a few things, which by God's blessing, may throw light on the subject of having the Spirit.

1. Let me *explain the immense importance of "Having the Spirit."*
2. Let me *point out the great general principle by which alone the question can be tried— "Have you the Spirit?"*

3. Let me *describe the particular effects which the Spirit always produces on the souls in which He dwells.*

1. Let me, in the first place, *explain the immense importance of having the Spirit.*

It is absolutely necessary to make this point clear. Unless you see this I shall appear like one beating the air all through this paper. Once let your mind lay hold on this, and half the work I want to do is already done for your soul.

This is a deep subject, and one that must be handled with reverence. But where the Bible speaks with decision, there we may also speak with decision; and the words of the Bible have no meaning if the work of the Holy Spirit be not just as needful in order to make a man a true Christian, as the work of the Father or the work of the Son. "No man," we are told, "can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 12:3). True Christians, we are taught in Scripture, are "born of the Spirit." They live in the Spirit; they are led by the Spirit; by the Spirit they

mortify the deeds of the body; by one Spirit they have access through Jesus unto the Father. Their graces are all the fruit of the Spirit; they are the temple of the Holy Ghost; they are a habitation of God through the Spirit; they walk after the Spirit; they are strengthened by the Spirit. Through the Spirit they wait for the hope of righteousness by faith (John 3:6; Gal. 5:25; Rom. 8:13-14; Eph. 2:18; Gal. 5:22; 1 Cor. 6:19; Eph. 2:22; Rom. 8:4; Eph. 3:16; Gal. 5:5). These are plain scriptural expressions. Who will dare to gainsay them?

The truth is that the deep corruption of human nature would make salvation impossible if it were not for the work of the Spirit. Without Him the Father's love and the Son's redemption are set before us in vain. The Spirit must reveal them, the Spirit must apply them, or else we are lost souls.

Nothing less than the power of Him who moved on the face of the waters in the day of creation can ever raise us from our low estate. He who said, "Let there be light, and there was light," must speak the

word before any one of us will ever rise to newness of life. He who came down on the day of Pentecost, must come down on our poor dead souls, before they will ever see the kingdom of God. Mercies and afflictions may move the surface of our hearts, but they alone will never reach the inner man. Sacraments, services, and sermons may produce outward formality, and clothe us with a skin of religion, but there will be no life. Ministers may make communicants and fill churches with regular worshippers, but the almighty power of the Holy Ghost alone can make true Christians, and fill heaven with glorified saints.

Let this also be written in your memory, and never forgotten. No Holy Spirit—no true Christianity! You must have the Spirit *in* you, as well as Christ *for* you, if you are ever to be saved. God must be your loving Father, Jesus must be your *known* Redeemer, the Holy Ghost must be your *felt* Sanctifier, or else it will be better for you never to have been born.

I press the subject on the serious consideration of all who read these pages. I

trust I have said enough to show you that it is of vital importance to your soul to "have the Spirit." It is no abstruse and mysterious point of divinity; it is no trivial question of which the solution matters little one way or another. It is a subject in which is bound up the everlasting peace of your soul.

You may not like the tidings. You may call it enthusiasm, fanaticism, or extravagance. I take my stand on the plain teaching of the Bible. I say that God must dwell in your heart by the Spirit on earth, or you will never dwell with God in heaven.

"Ah," you may say, "I do not know much about it. I trust Christ will be merciful. I hope I shall go to heaven after all." I answer, No man ever yet tasted of Christ's mercy who did not also receive of His Spirit. No man was ever justified who was not also sanctified. No man ever went to heaven who was not led there by the Spirit.

2. Let me, in the second place, point out the *great general rule and principle by which*

the question may be decided, whether we have the Spirit.

I can quite understand that the idea of knowing whether we "have the Spirit" is disagreeable to many minds. I am not ignorant of the objections which Satan at once stirs up in the natural heart. "It is impossible to know it," says one person; "it is a deep thing, and beyond our reach." "It is too mysterious a thing to inquire into," says another; "we must be content to leave the subject in uncertainty." "It is wrong to pretend to know anything about it," says a third; "we were never meant to look into such questions. It is only fit for enthusiasts and fanatics to talk of having the Spirit." I hear such objections without being moved by them. I say that it can be known whether a man has the Spirit. It *can* be known, it *may* be known, it *ought* to be known. It needs no vision from heaven, no revelation from an angel to discern it; it needs nothing but calm inquiry by the light of God's Word. Let us enter upon that inquiry.

All men have not the Holy Spirit. I regard

the doctrine of an inward spiritual light enjoyed by all mankind as an unscriptural delusion. I believe the modern notion of universal inspiration to be a baseless dream. Without controversy, God has not left Himself without a witness in the heart of fallen man. He has left in every mind sufficient knowledge of right and wrong to make all men responsible and accountable. He has given to every child of Adam a *conscience*, but He has not given to every child of Adam the Holy Ghost. A man may have good wishes like Balaam, do many things like Herod, be almost persuaded like Agrippa, and tremble like Felix, and yet be as utterly destitute of the grace of the Spirit as these men were.

Paul tells us that before conversion men may "know God" in a certain sense, and have "thoughts accusing or excusing one another." But he also tells us that before conversion men are "without God" and "without Christ," have "no hope," and are "darkness" itself (Rom. 1:21; 2:15; Eph. 2:12; v. 8). The Lord Jesus Himself says of the Spirit, "The world seeth him not, nei-

ther knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17).

All members of churches and baptized persons have not the Spirit. I see no ground in Scripture for saying that every man who receives baptism receives the Holy Ghost, and that we ought to regard him as born of the Spirit. I dare not tell baptized people that they all have the Spirit, and that they only need "stir up the gift of God" within them in order to be saved. I see, on the contrary, that Jude speaks of members of the visible church in his day as "not having the Spirit." Some of them probably had been baptized by the hands of apostles, and admitted into full communion with the professing church. No matter! They "had not the Spirit" (Jude 19).

It is vain to attempt to evade the power of this single expression. It teaches plainly that "having the Spirit" is not the lot of every man, and not the portion of every member of the visible church of Christ. It shows the necessity of finding out some general rule and principle by which the

presence of the Spirit in a man may be ascertained. He does not dwell in every one. Baptism and church membership are no proofs of His presence. How, then, shall I know whether a man has the Spirit?

The presence of the Spirit in a man's soul can only be known by *the effects* which He produces. *The fruits* He causes to be brought forth in a man's heart and life are the only evidence which can be depended on. A man's faith, a man's opinions, and a man's practice are the witnesses we must examine, if we would find out whether a man has the Spirit. This is the rule of the Lord Jesus: "Every tree is known by his own fruit" (Luke 6:44).

The effects which the Holy Spirit produces may always be *seen*. The man of the world may not understand them. They may in many cases be feeble and indistinct; but where the Spirit is, He will not be hid. He is not idle when He enters the heart; He does not lie still; He does not sleep; He will make His presence known. He will shine out little by little through the windows of a man's daily habits and con-

versation, and manifest to the world that He is in him. A dormant, torpid, silent indwelling of the Spirit is a notion that pleases the minds of many. It is a notion for which I see no authority in the Word of God.

In whomsoever I see the effects and fruits of the Spirit, in that man I see one who has the Spirit. I believe it to be not only charitable to think so, but presumption to doubt it. I do not expect to behold the Holy Ghost with my bodily eyes, or to touch Him with my hands. But I need no angel to come down to show me where He dwells; I need no vision from heaven to tell me where I may find Him. Only show me a man in whom the fruits of the Spirit are to be seen, and I see one who "has the Spirit." I will not doubt the inward presence of the almighty *cause*, when I see the outward fact of an evident *effect*.

Can I see the wind on a stormy day? I cannot, but I can see the effects of its force and power. When I see the clouds driven before it, and the trees bending under it—when I hear it whistling through doors

and windows, or howling round the chimney tops, I do not for a moment doubt its existence. I say, "There is a wind." Just so it is with the presence of the Spirit in the soul.

Can I see the dew of heaven as it falls on a summer evening? I cannot. It comes down softly and gently, noiseless and imperceptible. But when I go forth in the morning after a cloudless night, and see every leaf sparkling with moisture, and feel every blade of grass damp and wet, I say at once, "There has been a dew." Just so it is with the presence of the Spirit in the soul.

I charge all my readers to remember this. Establish it as a settled principle in your mind, that if the Holy Ghost really is in a man, it will be *seen* in the effects He produces on his heart and life.

Beware of supposing that a man may have the Spirit when there is no outward evidence of His presence in the soul. It is a dangerous and unscriptural delusion to think so. We must never lose sight of the broad principles laid down for us in Scripture: "If we say that we have fellowship

with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." "In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (1 John 1:6; 3:10).

You have heard, I doubt not, of a wretched class of Christians called Antinomians. They are persons who boast of having an interest in Christ, and say they are pardoned and forgiven, while at the same time they live in willful sin and open breach of God's commandments. You have been told, I dare say, that such people are miserably deceived. They are going down to hell with a lie in their right hand. The true believer in Christ is "dead to sin." Every man that has real hope in Christ "purifieth himself even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).

But I will tell you of a delusion quite as dangerous as that of the Antinomians, and far more common. That delusion is to flatter yourself you have the Spirit dwelling in your heart, while there are no fruits of the Spirit to be seen in your life. I firmly believe that this delusion is ruining thousands, as surely as Antinomianism. It is just

as perilous to dishonor the Holy Ghost as it is to dishonor Christ. It is just as offensive to God to pretend to an interest in the work of the Spirit as it is to pretend to an interest in the work of Christ.

Once for all, I charge my readers to remember that the effects which the Spirit produces are the only trustworthy evidences of His presence. To talk of the Holy Ghost dwelling in you and yet being unseen in your life, is wild work indeed. It confounds the first principles of the gospel: it confounds light and darkness, nature and grace, conversion and the lack of conversion, faith and unbelief, the children of God and the children of the devil.

There is only one safe position in this matter. There is only one safe answer to the question, "How shall we decide who have the Spirit?" We must take our stand on the old principle laid down by our Lord Jesus Christ: "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). Where the Spirit is there will be fruit; he who has no fruit of the Spirit has not the Spirit. A work of the

Spirit unfelt, unseen, inoperative, is a positive delusion. Where the Spirit really is He will be felt, seen, and known.

3. Let me, in the last place, *describe the particular effects which the Spirit produces on the souls in which He dwells.*

I regard this part of the subject as the most important of all. Hitherto I have spoken generally of the great leading principles which must guide us in inquiring about the work of the Holy Ghost. I must now come closer, and speak of the special marks by which the presence of the Holy Ghost in any individual heart may be discerned. Happily, with the Bible for our light, these marks are not hard to find out.

Some things I wish to premise before entering fully into the subject. It is needful in order to clear the way.

(a) I grant freely that there are *some deep mysteries* about the work of the Spirit. I cannot explain the manner of His coming into the heart. "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 3:8).

(b) I grant freely that there are *great diversities* in the operations by which the Spirit carries on His work in men's souls. There are differences in the *ages* at which He begins to enter the heart. With some He begins young, as with John the Baptist and Timothy; with some He begins old, as with Manasseh and Zacchaeus. There are differences in the *feelings* which He first stirs up in the heart. He leads some by strong terror and alarm, like the jailer at Philippi. He leads some by gently opening their hearts to receive the truth, as Lydia, the seller of purple. There are differences in *the time occupied* in effecting this complete change of character. With some the change is immediate and sudden, as it was with Saul when he journeyed to Damascus; with others it is gradual and slow, as it was with Nicodemus the Pharisee. There are differences in *the instruments* He uses in first awakening the soul from its natural death. With some He uses a sermon, with others the Bible, with others a tract, with

others a friend's advice, with others a sickness or affliction, with others no one particular thing that can be distinctly traced. All this is most important to understand. To require all persons to be pinned down to one kind of experience is a most grievous mistake.

(c) I grant freely that the *beginnings of the Spirit's work are often small and imperceptible*. The seed from which the spiritual character is formed is often very minute at first. The fountain-head of the spiritual life, like that of many a mighty river, is frequently at its outset a little trickling stream. The beginnings therefore of the Spirit's work in a soul are generally overlooked by the world—very frequently not duly valued and encouraged by other Christians—and almost without exception thoroughly misunderstood by the soul itself which is the subject of them. *Let that never be forgotten*. The man in whom the Spirit begins to work is never hardly aware, till long afterwards, that his state of mind about the time of his conversion arose from the entrance of the Holy Spirit.

But still, after all these concessions and allowances, there are certain great leading effects which the Spirit produces on the soul in which He dwells, which are always one and the same. Those who have the Spirit may be led at first by different *paths*, but they are always brought, sooner or later, into one and the same narrow *way*. Their leading opinions in religion are the same; their leading desires are the same; their general walk is the same. They may differ from one another widely in their natural character, but their spiritual character, in its main features, is always one. The Holy Ghost always produces one general kind of effect. Shades and varieties there are no doubt in the experience of those on whose hearts He works, but the general outline of their faith and life is always the same.

What then are these general effects which the Spirit always produces on those who really have Him? What are the marks of His presence in the soul? This is the question which now remains to be considered. Let us try to set down these marks in order.

1. All who have the Spirit *are quickened by Him and made spiritually alive*. He is called in Scripture, "The Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:3). "It is the Spirit," says our Lord Jesus Christ, "that quickeneth" (John 6:63). We are all by nature dead in trespasses and sins. We have neither feeling nor interest about religion; we have neither faith, hope, fear, nor love. Our hearts are in a state of torpor; they are compared in Scripture to a stone. We may be alive about money, education, politics, or pleasure, but we are dead towards God. All this is changed when the Spirit comes into the heart. He raises us from this state of death, and makes us new creatures. He awakens the conscience, and inclines the will towards God. He causes old things to pass away, and all things to become new. He gives us a new heart; He makes us put off the old man and put on the new. He blows the trumpet in the ear of our slumbering faculties and sends us forth to walk the world as if we were new beings. How unlike was Lazarus shut up in the silent tomb, to Lazarus coming forth at our

Lord's command! How unlike was Jairus's daughter lying cold on her bed amidst weeping friends, to Jairus's daughter rising and speaking to her mother as she was prone to do! Just as unlike is the man in whom the Spirit dwells to what he was before the Spirit came into him.

I appeal to every thinking reader. Can he whose heart is manifestly full of everything but God—hard, cold, and insensible—be said to “have the Spirit”? Judge for yourself.

2. All who have the Spirit are *taught by Him*. He is called in Scripture, “The Spirit of wisdom and revelation” (Eph. 1:17). It was the promise of the Lord Jesus, “He shall teach you all things”; “He shall guide you into all truth.” (John 14:26; 16:13). We are all by nature ignorant of spiritual truth. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: they are foolishness to him” (1 Cor. 2:14). Our eyes are blinded. We neither know God, Christ, ourselves, the world, sin, heaven, nor hell as we ought. We see everything under false colors. The Spirit alters entirely this

state of things. He opens the eyes of our understanding; He illumines us; He calls us out of darkness into marvelous light; He takes away the veil; He shines into our hearts and makes us see things as they really are. No wonder that all true Christians are so remarkably agreed upon the essentials of true religion! The reason is that they have all been educated in one school—the school of the Holy Ghost. No wonder that true Christians can understand each other at once and find common ground of communion! They have been taught the same language by One whose lessons are never forgotten.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can he who is ignorant of the leading doctrines of the gospel and blind to his own state, be said to “have the Spirit”? Judge for yourself.

3. All who have the Spirit *are led by Him to the Scriptures*. This is the instrument by which He especially works on the soul. The Word is called “the sword of the Spirit.” Those who are born again are said to be “born by the Word” (Eph. 6:17; 1 Peter

1:23). All Scripture was written under His inspiration; He never teaches anything which is not written in Scripture. He causes the man in whom He dwells to “delight in the law of the Lord” (Ps. 1:2). Just as the infant desires the milk which nature has provided for it and refuses all other food, so does the soul which has the Spirit desire the sincere milk of the Word. Just as the Israelites fed on the manna in the wilderness, so are the children of God taught by the Holy Ghost to feed on the contents of the Bible.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can he who never reads the Bible or only reads it formally, be said to “have the Spirit”? Judge for yourself.

4. All who have the Spirit are *convinced by Him of sin*. This is a special office which the Lord Jesus promised He should fulfil. “When he is come, he shall reprove the world of sin” (John 16:8). He alone can open a man’s eyes to the real extent of his guilt and corruption before God. He always does this when He comes into the

soul. He puts us in our right place; He shows us the vileness of our own hearts and makes us cry with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He pulls down those proud, self-righteous, self-justifying notions with which we are all born and makes us feel as we ought to feel—"I am a bad man, and I deserve to be in hell." Ministers may alarm us for a little season; sickness may break the ice on our hearts; but the ice will soon freeze again if it is not thawed by the breath of the Spirit, and convictions not wrought by Him will pass away like the morning dew.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can the man who never feels the burden of his sins and knows not what it is to be humbled by the thought of them, "have the Spirit"? Judge for yourself.

5. All who have the Spirit *are led by Him to Christ for salvation*. It is one special part of His office to "testify of Christ," to "take of the things of Christ, and to show them to us" (John 15:26; 16:15). By nature we all think to work our own way to heaven: we fancy in our blindness that we can make

our peace with God. From this miserable blindness the Spirit delivers us. He shows us that in ourselves we are lost and hopeless, and that Christ is the only door by which we can enter heaven and be saved. He teaches us that nothing but the blood of Jesus can atone for sin, and that through His mediation alone God can be just and the justifier of the ungodly. He reveals to us the exquisite fitness and suitability to our souls of Christ's salvation. He unfolds to us the beauty of the glorious doctrine of justification by simple faith. He sheds abroad in our hearts that mighty love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Just as the dove flies to the well-known cleft of the rock, so does the soul of him who has the Spirit flee to Christ and rest on Him (Rom. 5:5).

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can he who knows nothing of faith in Christ, be said to "have the Spirit"? Judge for yourself.

6. All who have the Spirit *are by Him made holy*. He is "the Spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4). When He dwells in men, He

makes them follow after “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, faith, patience, temperance.” He makes it *natural* to them, through their new “divine nature,” to count all God’s precepts concerning all things to be right, and to “hate every false way” (2 Pet 1:4; Ps. 119:128). Sin is no more pleasant to them: it is their sorrow when tempted by it; it is their shame when they are overtaken by it. Their desire is to be free from it altogether. Their happiest times are when they are enabled to walk most closely with God; their saddest times are when they are furthest off from Him.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can those who do not even pretend to live strictly according to God’s will, be said to “have the Spirit”? Judge for yourself.

7. All those who have the Spirit *are spiritually minded*. To use the words of the Apostle Paul, “They that are after the Spirit, mind the things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5). The general tone, tenor, and bias of their minds is in favor of spiritual things. They do not serve God by fits and starts,

but habitually. They may be drawn aside by strong temptations; but the general tendency of their lives, ways, tastes, thoughts and habits is spiritual. You see it in the way they spend their leisure time, the company they love to keep, and their conduct in their own homes. And all is the result of the spiritual nature implanted in them by the Holy Ghost. Just as the caterpillar when it becomes a butterfly can no longer be content to crawl on earth, but will fly upwards and use its wings, so will the affections of the man who has the Spirit be ever reaching upwards toward God.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can those whose minds are wholly intent on the things of this world be said to "have the Spirit"? Judge for yourself.

8. All that have the Spirit *feel a conflict within them between the old nature and the new*. The words of Paul are true, more or less, of all the children of God: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). They feel a holy principle within their breasts,

which makes them delight in the law of God; but they feel another principle within, striving hard for the mastery and struggling to drag them downwards and backwards. Some feel this conflict more than others but all who have the Spirit are acquainted with it; and it is a token for good. It is a proof that the strong man armed no longer reigns within, as he once did, with undisputed sway. The presence of the Holy Ghost may be known by inward warfare as well as by inward peace. He that has been taught to rest and hope in Christ, will always be one who fights and wars with sin.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can he who knows nothing of inward conflict and is a servant to sin, the world, and his own self-will, be said to "have the Spirit"? Judge for yourself.

9. All who have the Spirit *love others who have the Spirit*. It is written of them by St. John, "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). The more they see of the Holy Ghost in any one, the more

dear he is to them. They regard him as a member of the same family, a child of the same Father, a subject of the same King, and a fellow-traveller with themselves in a foreign country towards the same fatherland. It is the glory of the Spirit to bring back something of that brotherly love which sin has so miserably chased out of the world. He makes men love one another for reasons which to the natural man are foolishness—for the sake of a common Savior, a common faith, a common service on earth, and the hope of a common home. He raises up friendships independent of blood, marriage, interest, business, or any worldly motive. He unites men by making them feel they are united to one great center, Jesus Christ.

I appeal again to every thinking reader. Can he who finds no pleasure in the company of spiritually minded persons, or even sneers at them as saints, be said to “have the Spirit”? Judge for yourself.

10. Finally, all who have the Spirit are *taught by Him to pray*. He is called in Scripture, “The Spirit of grace and supplication

(Zech 12:10). The elect of God are said to “cry to Him night and day” (Luke 18:7). They cannot help it. Their prayers may be poor, and weak, and wandering—but pray they must. Something within them tells them they must speak with God and lay their wants before Him. Just as the infant will cry when he or she feels pain or hunger, because it is his or her nature, so will the new nature implanted by the Holy Ghost oblige a man to pray. He has the Spirit of adoption and he must cry, “Abba, Father” (Gal. 4:6).

Once more I appeal to every thinking reader. Can the man who never prays at all, or is content with saying a few formal, heartless words, be said to “have the Spirit”? For the last time I say, Judge for yourself.

And now let me finish this paper by a few practical remarks which arise naturally out of the matter which it contains.

(a) Would you know, first of all, *what is your own immediate duty?* Listen, and I will tell you.

You ought to examine yourself calmly

about the subject which I have been trying to set before you. You ought to ask yourself seriously how the doctrine of the Holy Ghost affects your soul. Look away, I beseech you, for a few minutes, to higher things than the things of earth, and more important things than the things of time. Bear with me, while I ask you a plain question. I ask it solemnly and affectionately, as one who desires your salvation—Do you have you the Spirit?

Remember, I do not ask whether you think all I have been saying is true, right, and good. I ask whether you who are reading these lines, have within you the Holy Spirit?

Remember, I do not ask whether you believe that the Holy Ghost is given to the church of Christ, and that all who belong to the church are within reach of His operations. I ask whether you yourself have the Spirit in your own heart?

Remember, I do not ask whether you sometimes feel strivings of conscience, and good desires flitting about within you. I ask whether you have really experienced

the quickening and reviving work of the Spirit upon your heart?

Remember, I do not ask you to tell me the day or month when the Spirit began His work in you. It is enough for me if fruit trees bear fruit, without inquiring about the precise time when they were planted. But I do ask, Are you bringing forth any fruits of the Spirit?

Remember, I do not ask whether you are a perfect person and never feel anything evil within. But I do ask, gravely and seriously, whether you have about your heart and life the marks of the Spirit?

I hope you will not tell me you do not know what the marks of the Spirit are. I have described them plainly. I now repeat them briefly, and press them on your attention. 1. The Spirit quickens men's hearts. 2. The Spirit teaches men's minds. 3. The Spirit leads to the Word. 4. The Spirit convinces of sin. 5. The Spirit draws to Christ. 6. The Spirit sanctifies. 7. The Spirit makes men spiritually minded. 8. The Spirit produces inward conflict. 9. The Spirit makes men love the brethren. 10. The Spirit

teaches to pray. These are the great marks of the Holy Ghost's presence. Put the question to your conscience like a man—Has the Spirit done anything of this kind for your soul?

I charge you not to let many days pass away without trying to answer my question. I summon you, as a faithful watchman knocking at the door of your heart, to bring the matter to an issue. We live in an old, worn out, sin-laden world. Who can tell what "a day may bring forth?" Who shall live to see another year? Do you have the Spirit? (Prov. 27:1).

(b) Would you know, in the next place, what is *the grand defect of the Christianity of our times*? Listen to me, and I will tell you.

The grand defect I speak of is simply this—that the Christianity of many people is not real Christianity at all. I know that such an opinion sounds hard and shockingly uncharitable. I cannot help that; I am convinced that it is sadly true. I only want people's Christianity to be that of the Bible; but I doubt exceedingly, in many cases, whether it is so.

There are multitudes of people, I believe, who go to church or chapel every Sunday merely as a form. Their fathers or mothers went, and so they go; it is the fashion of the country to go, and so they go; it is the custom to attend a religious service and hear a sermon, and so they go. But as to real, vital, saving religion, they neither know nor care anything about it. They can give no account of the distinctive doctrines of the gospel. Justification, regeneration, and sanctification are words and names which they cannot explain. They may have a sort of vague idea that they ought to go to the Lord's Table, and may be able to say a few vague words about Christ, but they have no intelligent notion of the way of salvation. As to the Holy Ghost, they can scarcely say more about Him than that they have heard His name.

Now, if any reader of this paper is conscious that his religion is such as I have described, I will only warn him affectionately to remember that such religion is utterly *useless*. It will neither save, com-

fort, satisfy, nor sanctify his soul. And the plain advice I give him is to change it for something better without delay. Remember my words. It will not do at the last.

(c) Would you know, in the next place, *one truth in the Gospel about which we need to be specially jealous in this day?* Listen, and I will tell you.

The truth which I have in view is the truth about the work of the Holy Ghost. All truth no doubt is constantly assailed by Satan. I have no desire for a moment to exaggerate the office of the Spirit, and to exalt Him above the Sun and Center of the Gospel—Jesus Christ. But I do believe that, next to the priestly office of Christ, no truth in the present day is so frequently lost sight of, and so cunningly assailed, as the work of the Spirit. Some injure it by ignorant neglect: their talk is all about Christ. They can tell you something about “the Savior”; but if you ask them about that inward work of the Spirit which all who *really* know the Savior experience, they have not a word to say. Some injure the work of the Spirit by taking it all for

granted. Membership of the church, participation of the sacraments, become their substitutes for conversion and spiritual regeneration. Some injure the work of the Spirit by confounding it with the action of natural conscience. According to this low view, none but the most hardened and degraded of mankind are destitute of the Holy Ghost. Against all such departures from the truth let us watch and be on our guard. Let us beware of leaving the proportion of gospel statements. Let one of our chief watchwords in the present day be: No salvation without the inward work of the Spirit! No inward work of the Holy Spirit unless it can be seen, felt, and known! No saving work of the Spirit which does not show itself in repentance towards God and living faith towards Jesus Christ!

If you have the Spirit, seek to be "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). Drink deep of the living waters. Do not be content with a little religion. Pray that the Spirit may fill every corner and chamber of your heart, and that not an inch of room may be left in it for the world and the devil.

If you have the Spirit, "grieve not the Spirit" (Eph. 4:30). It is easy for believers to weaken their sense of His presence and deprive themselves of His comfort. Little sins not mortified, little bad habits of temper or of tongue not corrected, little compliances with the world, are all likely to offend the Holy Ghost. Oh, that believers would remember this! There is far more of "heaven on earth" to be enjoyed than many of them attain to, and why do they not attain to it? They do not watch sufficiently over their daily ways, and so the Spirit's work is dampened and hindered. The Spirit must be a thoroughly sanctifying Spirit if He is to be a comforter to your soul.

If you have the Spirit, labor to bring forth *all* "the fruits of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22). Read over the list which the apostle has drawn up, and see that no one of these fruits is neglected. Oh, that believers would seek for more "love," and more "joy!" Then would they do more good to all men; then would they feel happier themselves; then would they make religion more beautiful in the eyes of the world.

I commend the things that I have written to the serious attention of every reader of these pages. Let them not have been written in vain. Join with me in praying that the Spirit may be poured out from on high with more abundant influence than He has ever been yet. Pray that He may be poured out on all believers, at home and abroad, that they may be more united and more holy.

Pray, above all, that He may be poured out in abundant power on your own soul, that if you know not the truth you may be taught to know it, and that if you know it, you may know it better.

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