

# Seek The Old Paths

*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."*  
(Jeremiah 6:16)

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## PRESENT DAY ILLUMINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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**W**hat does it mean to illuminate? It means to enlighten, inform, bring light where there is darkness, reveal what has not been revealed, give information that permits understanding. We contend there is illumination by the Holy Spirit today, but not as some think.

Before Jesus was crucified, He outlined the work of the Holy Spirit in John 14,15,16 when speaking to the apostles. He promised to send "them" the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit involved "them" and their preaching. The Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, guiding the apostles into all the truth, bringing to their remembrance what He had taught them, all in order to glorify Christ. This was a promise, not to everyone, but to the apostles. It was a promise the Lord kept beginning at Pentecost. That day the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and they spoke as the Spirit guided. If this promise was not fulfilled to them, then Christ broke His Word. But the Scripture affirms that "total truth," once a mystery, has been revealed and we have the full revelation of God's will given to man during the lifetime of the apostles.

### THE BIBLE

The Biblical evidence of this truth is in Acts 20:27 where Paul

said he preached the whole counsel of God. Jude 3 teaches Christians are to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Galatians 1:6-9 pronounces God's curse on those who teach differently from what the apostles taught. Second Peter 1:3 affirms they received all things that pertain to life and godliness. Second Timothy 3:16,17 says the Scripture furnishes us all things. First Corinthians 13:10 says miracles were to last until "that which is perfect" is come, meaning the full revelation of truth. Ephesians 3:3-5, Paul had the "mystery" revealed to him, he wrote it down by the Spirit, and one can read and understand what is now revealed although once unrevealed. Psalm 119:105 says *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."*

**Mankind is illuminated by the Holy Spirit today by and through the revealed, verbally inspired, infallible, inerrant, authoritative and all-sufficient Word of God, the Bible.**

### MEN SAY

But there is much dissatisfaction among men with the Bible. They resent being confined to the Word of God in the Bible. They want more from God; something in addition and different. Therefore, some claim revelations — illuminations since the "perfect law of liberty" was revealed.

Some religions are based almost entirely on the claims of latter-day revelations and continuous unfolding of additional and different truths since the Bible. Some claim to hold the Scriptures alongside their claimed new revelations. But this is impossible as the Bible itself teaches. Various individuals and churches claim visions, dreams and revelations that are special from what anyone else ever receives from God.

Many on the "electronic church" and the television personalities make such claims. For instance, **Pat Robertson** of the 700 Club constantly claims God is telling him something nobody else hears. He says God is healing somebody somewhere, here and there, he feels it, he knows it. He preaches a health and wealth message.

**Jim Baker** of the PTL Club once claimed to heal everybody on the top floor of an Atlanta hospital. Funny thing, however, nobody at the hospital ever knew anything about it. When that healing took place Baker shouted that the Holy Spirit had outdone Himself. Baker also once claimed to have received a special message from God right during his program (I was watching), and following a commercial he revealed what God had said. God told him that this was a special good time to

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**Present Day Illumination...**



## 1 "WHAT IS MEANT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT?"

The Holy Spirit is one of the most misunderstood subjects in the Bible. I had an elder ask me one time if the "Holy Spirit" and "Holy Ghost" are one and the same or different. I informed him they are one and the same — two phrases describing the same divine person. The Holy Spirit is a masculine personality and not an "it." We should refer to him as "He."

The Holy Spirit is DEITY, one of the three members of the Godhead. The word "Godhead" is a Bible term. We read of it in Acts 17:29, "*Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.*" Making up the Godhead are: **the Father** (John 6:27; Rom. 1:7; 15:6), **the Son** (John 5:18; Titus 2:13; II Peter 1:1) and **the Holy Spirit** (Matt. 3:16; Acts 5:3-4; Eph. 4:30). All three personalities are "God," — they each possess the nature and attributes of "deity." The "Father" is "God," the "Son" is "God" and the "Holy Spirit" is "God." They are divine, deity.

The Holy Spirit is not an influence or some mystical phenomenon. He is as real as the Father and the Son. The Bible is His Word (Eph. 6:17; II Peter 1:21) given by the direction of God the Father (John 16:13; II Tim. 3:16-17). His word (the Bible) will be used to judge all of mankind in the "last day" (John 12:48-50).

In Acts 5:3-4, the Holy Spirit is called "God." He is **eternal** — everlasting (Heb. 9:14), **omniscient** — all knowing (I Cor. 2:10-11), **omnipotent** — all powerful (Gen. 1:1-2,26), and **omnipresent** — everywhere (Psalm 139:7-11). The Spirit is spoken of as having many other attributes, some of which are: He **speaks** (I Tim. 4:1), has **knowledge** (I Cor. 2:11), has **affections** (Rom. 15:30), can be **grieved** (Eph. 4:30), can be **blasphemed** (Matt. 12:31-32), can

be **resisted** (Acts 7:51), can be **lied to** (Acts 5:3), He **makes intercession** for us (Rom. 8:26) and He **bears witness** (Rom. 8:16).

The Holy Spirit is referred to 264 times in the New Testament, using as many as 39 different names or terms. Since there is so much said about the Holy Spirit in the Bible, it is strange for there to be so much confusion and false teaching regarding him. Let us remember that God is not the author of confusion, man is (I Cor. 14:33)! Men are the ones that have twisted the Scriptures unto their own destruction. Granted, some Scriptures are harder to understand than others. And, it is these "*which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction*" (II Peter 3:16).

Study to show yourself approved of God (II Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11).

## 2 DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT LITERALLY DWELL IN THE PHYSICAL BODY OF A CHRISTIAN?

There is so much confusion and questioning concerning the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead just like God the Father and God the Son. Why isn't there confusion over the indwelling of the Father and the indwelling of the Son?

The FACT of deity dwelling in a Christian is not disputed. The Bible says they do. "*...Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*" (2 Cor. 6:16). God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, all three, dwell or abide in the Christian.

The question at hand is, HOW does deity dwell in a Christian? There are two possibilities. They either: 1) literally, personally, bodily, dwell in a Christian or they, 2) representatively, through a medium or

agent, dwell in a Christian.

The Bible answers this question in Ephesians 3:17, "*That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith....*" The Scripture says Christ dwells in our hearts and then tells us HOW He dwells in our hearts, "*by faith.*" The Holy Spirit dwells in a Christian the same as Christ dwells in a Christian — BY FAITH. The Bible says that faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).

The answer to our question above is NO. The Holy Spirit does not literally, personally, dwell in the physical body of a Christian. He dwells in us by or through faith — the Word of God.

The Word of God, the Bible, is the revealed Word of the Holy Spirit. It was given through Him (cf. 2 Peter 1:20-21). As His Word abides in us, so does the Holy Spirit abide in us. When we push the Word out of our heart and life, then the Holy Spirit is no longer present. Are you allowing the Word of the Spirit to abide in you? Obey the Lord today and live according to His inspired Word.

## 3 "HOW DOES THE SPIRIT DWELL IN MAN IN LIGHT OF Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 3:16 and II Tim. 1:14?"

From these three verses we learn the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian. What many fail to understand (or even consider) is **HOW** the Spirit dwells. This has led to much false teaching and thus caused many to stray from the Lord. Many conclude (without Bible evidence) this indwelling is personal and manifests itself in "tongues" and other miraculous powers. Such conclusions are foolish and fatal to one's salvation. These verses say nothing as to **HOW** the Spirit dwells in us.

Without the Bible we would not even know there is a Holy Spirit, HOW he dwells within the Christian or WHAT he does. It is difficult to understand such controversy over the "indwelling of the Spirit" when the Scriptures also plainly reveal both the indwelling of God (I John 4:15) and the indwelling of Christ (Rom. 8:10).

There are two possibilities as to how the Spirit dwells: *personally* or *representatively*. Ephesians 3:17 says Christ dwells in our hearts and he

does so “by faith.” Romans 10:17 says faith comes by hearing the word of God; and, if Christ so dwells, then must also the Father and the Holy Spirit. All these dwell exactly the same way — by (through) faith.

The Bible is the word of the Spirit (Luke 8:11; Eph. 6:17). When we let THE WORD have free course in our life so as to govern our mind and action, then God, Christ and the Holy Spirit are said to be leading us. This is what we do when we “walk by faith, not by sight” (II Cor. 5:7); that is, we walk according to the teaching of the Word. When we are “led by the Spirit” (Rom. 8:14), we are guided by the Spirit’s WORDS. When we walk “after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1) we live by the Spirit’s WORDS. The Spirit has always worked through WORDS!

#### 4 ARE THERE “MEASURES” OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Thayer (pg.408) says the word measure means: “determined extent, portion measured off, measure or limit.” It is evident the Holy Spirit worked through different individuals in the first century in varying degrees. While some could work miracles, others could not. All were not able to do the same things. The New Testament reveals four different “measures” of the Holy Spirit.

1) Jesus had the Spirit “**without**” measure. “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him” (John 3:34). Jesus had the Spirit without any limitation — in its fullness. He knew all and could do all. He was truly “God with us” (Matt. 1:23).

2) The “**baptismal**” measure. John the baptizer said, “...He that cometh after me is mightier than I,...he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost...” (Matt. 3:11). This was a promise made only to the apostles (John 14,15,16). Jesus said in Acts 1:4-5 that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a “promise” to be received and applies it to the apostles. The apostles received the baptismal measure on Pentecost ten days later (Acts 2:1-4).

From what is said in Acts 11:15-16, the Holy Spirit falling on the household of Cornelius reminded Peter of Matthew 3:11 and was an incident used by God to convince the

Jews that the Gentiles also had been granted repentance unto life (Acts 11:18). It is evident that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not a common or every day occurrence. Otherwise, why was such attention called to it?

3) The “**laying on of hands**” measure. “...Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given...” (Acts 8:17-18). The apostles were the only ones that had the ability to impart miraculous gifts to others. It was through the “laying on of the apostles’ hands.” The context of Acts 8:5-19 proves this is the case (see also Acts 6:6 & 19:6). Without the apostles living today, there can be no miraculous powers passed to others. It came only through their hands. First Corinthians 13 makes clear that miraculous gifts ended in the first century when the New Testament was completed.

4) The “**ordinary**” or “**non-miraculous**” measure. Those who obey the Gospel have the Holy Spirit. “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9-11). The Spirit is received through the “hearing of faith” (Gal. 3:2). “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

The “ordinary measure” is the only one that exists today, thus we walk “after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1,4). That is, we live according to the teaching of the Spirit that is revealed in the Bible (John 12:48; II Peter 1:20-21).

#### 5 “HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT WORK TODAY?”

That the Holy Spirit works in the hearts and lives of people, we certainly acknowledge. There’s no real controversy over this. The controversy comes mainly over HOW the Spirit works. A careful reading and examination of scripture reveals He works exactly the same way in both the alien sinner and the Christian. HOW then does he work? He works BY and THROUGH his WORD, the Bible! Let us remember, we would not even know there is a Spirit unless it was revealed to us in the Bible.

There are only two possible ways in which the Holy Spirit can work in

one’s life: **directly** (exerting personal force upon us) or **indirectly** (working through an instrument, a means).

The answer to our question is that He does not work “directly,” instead, he works “indirectly” through the use of an instrument. The instrument he uses is the BIBLE. The Spirit’s WORD abiding in one’s heart and being obeyed in one’s life brings about all that is needed to be pleasing to God. “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed” (John 8:31). It is the Spirit’s WORD that is His sword (Eph. 6:17) and through which He exerts His power (Heb. 4:12). Let us illustrate: A man uses an axe to chop wood. The energy is inherent in the man; but, it is transmitted through the axe to the timber, and the axe is the means by which the energy of the man is applied to the wood. Similarly, the Holy Spirit, in both conversion and sanctification, operates on human hearts; but, He does so through the medium of the WORD which is His instrument. And, as there is no direct impact between the man and the wood, neither is there direct impact between the Spirit and the human heart. The Holy Spirit’s influence is brought about by means of the WORD of God.

The Bible plainly teaches the Holy Spirit ALWAYS operated through WORDS in both conversion and sanctification and NOT by any DIRECT influence upon the human heart. The Gospel is all-sufficient (II Peter 1:3; II Tim. 3:16-17). The WORD has the power to **convert** (Rom. 1:16), **save** (James 1:21), **purify** (I Peter 1:23), **sanctify** (John 17:17), and **cleanse** (John 15:3). If the Spirit operates today separate and apart from His Word as some claim, then He must supply something His inspired word does not supply. He must supply something that man cannot acquire by exercising his free-moral agency in obedience to the Truth. If this is true, then the Bible is not all sufficient!

The Holy Spirit operates or works then, through the means of His inspired word; so that when we read of the WORD doing a particular thing, we understand it is the Spirit doing it through the MEANS of HIS WORD.

According to some, the Spirit

works in a special way other than the Scriptures; if so, my question is, "What does he do and how does he do it?"

**He CANNOT deliver unto us MORE REVELATION**, for He has already given all that is needed in the inspired Word (Jude 3; II Peter 1:3; II Tim. 3:16-17).

**He CANNOT lead us contrary to HIS WORD**, for if He did, He would contradict Himself (Gal. 1:6-9).

**He CANNOT cause one to OBEY THE GOSPEL**, for such would contradict the free-moral agency of man (II Cor. 5:10).

What DOES he do or CAN he do that is not provided by his Word, the Bible? And, if someone claims that He does/can, then by what means will he use to prove it?! The "better felt (experienced) than told" idea is a figment of man's imagination.

We are told to "try the spirits" (I John 4:1) and "prove all things" (I Thess. 5:21). If a doctrine cannot be found in the Bible, then it matters not what one may "see with their own eyes" or "experience in their own life." The WORD says, "We walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7). Faith comes by hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). If God's word does not teach it, then it's not true. Faith is real, it is not just a "feeling" or a "belief." It is based upon evidence (Heb. 11:1).

Note what the Holy Spirit provides for us THROUGH his WORD: He **produces faith** (Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31), **gives understanding** (Psalm 119:104), **converts** (I Peter 1:23), **saves** (I Cor. 15:1-2), **sanctifies** (John 17:17), **cleanses** (John 15:3), **purifies** (I Peter 1:22), **quickens** (John 6:63; Psalm 119:50), **enlightens** (Psalm 119:130), **leads** (Psalm 73:24; 119:105), **comforts** (Rom. 15:4), **produces spiritual growth** (II Peter 3:18), **produces fruit** (Col. 1:5-6), **strengthens** (Rev. 12:11), **regulates our lives** (I Tim. 3:14-15), **warns** (admonishes, I Cor. 4:14), **guards and makes wise** (II Tim. 3:13-15), **stirs up** (II Peter 1:12-13), and **exhorts** (I Peter 5:12).

It is very interesting that throughout the Bible when you read of the Spirit doing a thing, it is said that the WORD OF GOD does it. In Ephesians 6:17 we read that the "sword of the Spirit" is the "word of God." A sword is simply a tool

used to accomplish a task. "For the **word of God** is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

The Spirit works, but he does so through the use of an instrument, which is HIS WORD. Notice the chart below that gives some examples of the Spirit working through his word, the Bible.

Other scriptures show WHAT the Spirit does as well as HOW he does it. There need not be any confusion over this subject! If we will follow the Bible instead of our thinking (or what we think we experience) we would be obeying II Corinthians 5:7 which says, "For we walk by faith, not by sight."

The Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "Thy law is the truth." "I have hope in thy word" (Psalm 119:105, 142, 81).

## 6 DOES JOHN 6:44 TEACH WE MUST WAIT FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO "DRAW" OR "CALL" US?

John 6:44 reads, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Many refer to this verse in an effort to sup-

port their man-made doctrine which says that only those whom the Lord "calls" in some mystical way can be saved. This devilish system of Calvinism teaches that man is totally passive and cannot do anything until God zaps him with some special anointing, thereby enabling him to believe. Such an idea is foreign to the scriptures.

The next verse, John 6:45, reveals HOW God draws men unto him. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all **taught** of God. **Every man** therefore that hath **heard**, and hath **learned** of the Father, **cometh** unto me." The means or method by which God "calls" or "draws" all men is the **Gospel**. "Whereunto he called you **by our gospel...**" (2 Thess. 2:14). There is no special, mystical anointing of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the **gospel** of Christ: for **IT** is the **power of God** unto salvation to **every one** that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

The preaching of the Gospel is God's power, his drawing power, to save (1 Cor. 1:18-21). Therefore, all men, at any moment, have the ability to respond to God's Gospel call. Alien sinners are saved by God's grace when they respond in faithful obedience to the Gospel (Matt. 7:21). God is always ready for men to repent and obey (Acts 17:30; 3:19).

### THE SPIRIT

Witnesses (Rom. 8:16)  
Instructs (Neh. 9:20)  
Teaches (John 14:26)  
Convicts (John 16:8)  
Begets (II Cor. 3:6)  
Saves (Titus 3:5)  
Sanctifies (I Cor. 6:11)  
Cleanses (I Cor. 6:11)  
Washes (I Cor. 6:11)  
Comforts (Acts 9:31)  
Gives Love (Rom. 5:5)  
Leads (Rom. 8:14)  
Indwelling (Rom. 8:11)  
Strengthens (Eph. 3:16)  
Power (Rom. 15:13)  
In Resurrection (Rom. 8:11)  
Born of the Spirit (John 3:5,8)

### THE WORD

Witnesses (John 5:39)  
Instructs (II Tim. 3:16)  
Teaches (John 6:45)  
Convicts (Titus 1:9)  
Begets (James 1:18)  
Saves (James 1:21)  
Sanctifies (John 17:17)  
Cleanses (John 15:3)  
Washes (Eph. 5:26)  
Comforts (I Thess. 4:18)  
Gives Love (I John 2:5)  
Leads (Psalm 119:105)  
Indwelling (Col. 3:16)  
Strengthens (Acts 20:32)  
Power (Heb. 1:3)  
In Resurrection (John 5:28-29)  
Born of the Word (I Peter 1:23)

Salvation is available for **all** men, not just a select few. Jesus died for **every** man (Heb. 2:9). God is “...longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance**” (2 Peter 3:9). “*Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*” (1 Tim. 2:4). The invitation is open to all, 24 hours a day. There’s no such thing as waiting on God’s “special call.”

One cannot get to heaven any other way than by God’s way, which is obedience to the Gospel call (Heb. 5:9). Those who attempt to do so are counted as thieves and robbers. “*He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber*” (John 10:1).

God’s way is spelled out in the Gospel. Men must **believe** and **obey** (Mark 16:16). Saving faith is alive, not dead, and proves itself by obedience to the Gospel. It is a faith which works (James 2:14-26). “Faith alone” or “faith without works,” is no faith at all. The demons have faith. Faith without works is a damning faith!

## 7 COULD THOSE WHO HAD SPIRITUAL GIFTS CONTROL THE GIFT OR DID IT SOMETIMES TAKE CONTROL?

This question arises as a result of those who “claim” miraculous gifts from the Holy Spirit. In the assemblies of those who believe such manifestations, there is often a frenzied display of undisciplined emotion. There are many outbursts of movement and shouting as a result of what they claim as the “Holy Ghost” moving among them. Many claim to “speak in tongues.” These occasions are filled with confusion, disorder and chaos. One can hardly concentrate and meditate upon the word of God. It is hardly an atmosphere conducive to worshipping God.

If the Holy Spirit were directing such services, there would be no confusion and disorder. The scripture, given by direction of the Holy Spirit, says, “*Let all things be done decently and in order.*” “*For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints*” (I Cor. 14:40,33). The very subject of confusion and disorder was part of the reason the epistle of I Corinthians was

written. The saints were told that such disorder and confusion did not come from God! The point made was that **THEY HAD CONTROL** of the spirit within them. There was no reason at all for their doing things as they were. They were to take turns and do things orderly (I Cor. 14:27,31,40).

The miraculous power within those that possessed it did not take control of the person and speak. It did not cause confusion and chaos. They were themselves to blame for their disorder for “...**the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets**” (I Cor. 14:32). That is, the one who had a spiritual gift was able to control it!

Jesus said true worship is directed “in spirit and in truth.” “*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth*” (John 4:24). To worship God “in spirit” is worship directed by the proper mind, attitude and intellect. This part of worship is from the heart, the seat of man’s conscience and being. To worship God “in truth” is worship directed by the proper actions and deeds. It is worship directed according to the Truth, God’s revealed will. It is not left up to man to worship God entirely upon his own emotion and imagination. God prescribed worship is from the heart AND actions dictated from God’s Word.

Miraculous gifts are no longer available today as prophesied in I Corinthians 13:8-10. The “baby things” (miraculous gifts) have been done away at the coming of the completed revelation of God’s will.

## 8 SOME CLAIM THEY HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT. IS IT TRUE?

No, it is not true. The authority of the scriptures will not allow it. I can only give an answer regarding what the Bible says and the Bible does not say Holy Spirit baptism is administered today.

Many people prefer to believe what **they think** they experience or see. To them, what they think they experience is worth more than a whole stack of Bibles. However, when it comes to spiritual things, Galatians 1:8 warns us not to believe anything or anyone when they do not

speak by the authority of the scriptures. “*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach ANY OTHER GOSPEL unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*” II Corinthians 5:7 says we “*walk by faith, not by sight.*” Faith comes by hearing God’s word according to Romans 10:17. “*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*” Therefore, we walk or live according to faith, i.e., according to God’s word, not according to what seems right in our own eyes. Proverbs 14:12 warns, “*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*” Let’s follow God’s way.

The twelve apostles were the only ones who received the promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:5 Jesus said to the twelve, “*For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*” Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit unto the 12 apostles to **guide them** unto “all truth” (John 16:13). The baptism of the Holy Spirit was never promised to anyone today. There’s no reason for it. The Revelation of God’s word is complete (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3; Jude 3). There is no more to be given.

This subject is settled by Ephesians 4:5 for all who respect the Scriptures. It says, there is “**ONE BAPTISM.**” What is the “one baptism?” It is not “Holy Spirit” baptism! It is the baptism of the great commission: “water baptism.” Jesus said in Matthew 28:19 “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, BAPTIZING them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*” Those who believe and teach that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for people today also practice water baptism. **They can’t have both!** Now, which is it going to be: Holy Spirit baptism or water baptism? The Bible says there’s only one, not two, and that’s “water baptism.”

## 9 WHAT IS THE BAPTISM OF FIRE?

John the Baptist made reference to the “baptism of fire” in Matthew 3:11, “*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he*

shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (see also Luke 3:16). Some preach and pray for people to receive the "baptism of fire" today and believe it to be something desired. However, the context of the passage clearly shows the baptism of fire is not that which anyone should desire, but rather seek to avoid!

In the context, John is discussing two kinds of fruit: good and bad. "...Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" (Matt. 3:10). Likewise in verse 12 he discusses two kinds of fruit: wheat and chaff. "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his **wheat** into the garner; but he will burn up the **chaff** with unquenchable **fire**."

The two figures used in verses 10 and 12 clearly represent the two kinds of people in John's audience. He separates the good from the bad, the wheat from the chaff, the righteous from the wicked. Not everyone in his audience would receive the "baptism of fire" but some would. Nor would everyone in his audience receive the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" but some would. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled with the twelve apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) and Cornelius (Acts 10). There is no record of it being received by anyone else. The baptism of fire will be received by the wicked — those who "know not God" and "obey not the gospel" (II Thess. 1:7-9).

Some, however, believe the apostles received the baptism of fire when "...there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:3). But, there is no "baptism of fire" in this verse because these "tongues" were not "fire" but "**like as of fire**." And, they were not immersed in fire, it merely "sat upon each of them."

It is clearly the wicked who receive the "baptism of fire" by God's divine wrath which ends with unquenchable fire in the final judgment. The parable of the tares vividly describes the Lord separating the good from the bad. He will take the wicked "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:42). Such punishment is described as a "baptism of fire." Surely no one would desire such a dreadful event.

## Present Day Illumination...

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ask for donations.

**Oral Roberts** once claimed to have seen a 900 foot Jesus rising above his hospital. (Wonder why there is a need of a hospital since Roberts claims to be a miracle worker and can heal everything from gout to cancer.) He once claimed God would take his life if he did not raise four and one half million dollars for his projects. He has millions from naive, gullible, Biblically ignorant people. I have visited his crusades and know first hand of his vicious deception. I have talked with those he "healed." He is a colossal fraud.

**Mary Baker Eddy**, founder of Christian Science, claimed special revelation and founded that religious movement on such things.

## OTHER CLAIMS

The **Mormon Church** stands on the claimed special latter-day revelation of Joseph Smith. The president of the Mormon Church still claims to receive messages from God. If that be true, one can never really know if the message of the Mormons who come to your house is true or not because their message is subject to change as God speaks to their president. It is not surprising that Smith wrote disparagingly of the Bible and that Mormons use the Bible only as an entrance to get into homes to propagate their religious lies.

**Ellen G. White**, founder of **Seventh-Day Adventism**, claimed special revelations about the Sabbath. They believe in continuous revelation, as do **Jehovah's Witnesses**.

The **Catholic Church** is built on special claims of special revelations.

The **doctrine of Calvinism** demands that there be special operations of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the Word of God. Baptists are strong Calvinists. One Primitive Baptist preacher told me when they assemble they have not studied but wait until the Spirit moves them. Once during a campaign against alcoholic beverages he claimed God told him to have a big rally in the city auditorium, but from

some experience I warned against such a rally lest it flop because of rain, and the facility being too large, the liquor people would gain rather than lose from such an event. He later agreed. I just had to ask him why he took my word over that of his special revelation. Baptists claim that what they happen to think of has been placed there by the Holy Spirit. They are sincere, but have no understanding of the illumination of the Spirit.

**Lynn Anderson**, formerly of Highland Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, openly prayed that God would enlighten the Word as if the Bible was a dead letter on its pages and needed a push from the Spirit.

**Pat Boone** said one cannot understand the Bible until you have the Spirit's experience. He said once it happens to you, you will know it. There are some teachers in colleges operated by members of the church of Christ who hold to the same or similar false views.

There was a woman evangelist in Jackson, Tennessee who told me she talked with God nearly every day like Moses and God talked at the burning bush. She was unable to give me even one single direct quotation from the Lord's mouth, however. In Memphis, over television, a Baptist preacher claimed to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and to the same degree as the apostles.

**Don Finto**, of the once Belmont Church of Christ in Nashville, Tennessee, said over television that what he was saying was no longer Don Finto, but "I was God in Don Finto." A visitor to my office once came asking for help to restore his marriage. His problem arose because his wife claimed God told her to move to California. She did, leaving her husband and family.

Feelings, nudges, special instructions on what to preach, where to preach, where to park the car, what to say, seeking signs from God, this is what one hears repeatedly today. People who study these matters could add instance after instance to what I have said.

## ANSWER THE QUESTION

The unanswered and unanswerable question is, "If God is speaking to all these people as they claim,

**why do they not speak alike, speak the same things and teach the same messages?** Why are they still divided? Is the Holy Spirit sending contradictory messages? Is He inconsistent with the very Scripture He gave? Or, are the claimants deceived or just flat out lying?" **Jimmy Swaggart** denies **Oral Roberts** heard God tell him he would die unless monies were raised. But why should we believe Jimmy any more than Oral? Both claim the Holy Spirit guides them! Ephesians 4:4,5 teaches there is "one faith." Men of faith who subscribe to "the faith" are willing to take God's Word and take God at His Word without demanding, claiming, or advocating something more, less, special and different.

In Luke 16, we read where the rich man in torment wanted Abraham to arrange for his brothers to receive God's warning in some special manner. Abraham's answer was that they had Moses and the prophets. Let them hear what God has already revealed. But many want something more and their desire for something more leads them to claim something more.

The Truth is, Deity illuminates through the Gospel (I Cor. 2:13). We are told to speak as the oracles of God (I Peter 4:11). We shall be judged by the Word of Christ (John 12:48) and His Word is in the inspired Scriptures.

**WHAT IS LACKING?**

I am motivated to ask, What if God did actually give somebody a special revelation? What would it accomplish? What would be the purpose of it? Would it change His Word some way? If so, it would deny First

Peter 1:25 that says *His Word will endure forever*. Will it add to it or take from it? If so, it violates all the many passages that condemn doing that very thing. Will it reveal truth thus far withheld from man? If so, Jesus did not keep His promise to the apostles. Will it give us an inspired interpretation of the Scriptures? If so, having given us the Bible which we could not understand without inspired interpretation, would He have to give us another inspired interpretation to help us understand His inspired interpretation? Could not God provide adequate revelation from the first? He said He would, and He did. I believe Him. If He could not, can we be sure He can now? If He did not, why does He hold man responsible?

Finally, what evidence is presented by these who claim their special revelations to verify that they have received what they claim? The apostles performed miraculous works to prove they were speaking from God. They confirmed the Word in that manner (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:3,4). Their miracles were real, verified, even not denied by their enemies because their enemies were confounded by them. They made the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, the dead to rise. They struck people blind, were unharmed by vipers who bit them. Their healings were instantaneous and complete. They were not involved in some psychosomatically caused problem that can be corrected under the influence of hyperemotionalism. Those who claim such powers today do not do what was done by those of the first century as recorded in Scripture.

Where goes the claim, must go the demonstration. The demonstra-

tion is lacking. Such claimants are false teachers and false prophets teaching false doctrine. They are people who are malcontent with the Word of God and deceive millions, raking in millions of dollars into their coffers. We are not left in darkness regarding the will of God. The Word lights, illuminates, leads, guides, directs, converts and sustains. By and through the Word the Holy Spirit operates, not apart from it. Thank God for His grace and mercy in His inspired revelation, the Scriptures!

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For those who have internet access, there are many good web sites available we would like to let you know about. Many of you may remember brother Jim Boyd's publication a few years ago entitled: "A Burning Fire." Many of those lessons are now available in audio format as well as two of his books. Check these out.

- [www.aburningfire.net](http://www.aburningfire.net)
- [www.pioneerpreachers.com](http://www.pioneerpreachers.com)
- [www.eecc.org](http://www.eecc.org)
- [www.seektheoldpaths.com](http://www.seektheoldpaths.com)



## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

include the previous volumes for this is my first time of writing. The materials will be used to God's own glory. I will be grateful if my request is granted" ...**Nimkare Clement Markus, Adamawa State, Nigeria**. "I was given *Seek the Old Paths* by a friend and think it is wonderful! I would like it sent to me if you would. Also, I would like it sent to a good friend of mine, and to my son & daughter. Thank you and God bless this good work" ...**Mildred Kemp, Union City, TN**. "Please send your paper. Thanks for proclaiming the truth. I wish there were more like you" ...**Harold B. Stow, Fruitport, MI**. "Please stop sending me *Seek the Old Paths*. Thank you" ...**Robert Cole, Mocksville, NC**. "My mother, Mrs. Rosie Fields, was a subscriber to your paper for quite some time. My mother passed away last April and I have allowed her subscription to continue because I enjoy the articles. If you would like to switch it to my name I would be pleased to continue to receive the paper. You may send it to the address below. Thank you" ...**Jim Fields, Tuckerman, AR**. "Would you please add my name and address to your mailing list? A sister in Christ has shared it with me. I have enjoyed reading so very much" ...**Mrs. C. Raven Buckingham, Gray, TN**. "Would you please put me on your mailing list to receive your publication? Thanks" ...**Steve Condra, Sheffield, AL**. "I worship at Eisenhower in Odessa. I am so grateful to have such sound preachers, eldership and congregation. So many are now having special services with denominations. Some so called sound congregations send their young people to the summer encampment at Red River, New Mexico. So glad Bro. Jerry Brewer has exposed them. Love *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Ed Armstrong, Pecos, TX**. "I would like to receive your monthly publication. Please put me on your mailing list. I also enjoy your website" ...**Irene M. Aschen, Brookfield, CT**. "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. I received a copy of *STOP* from Brother James D. Cox. I am very happy to see that there are still people that stand for the truth. Please keep it up and please I will also be very happy if you will add me in your mailing list because the article is very insightful and sound scripturally. Thank you my earnest prayer is that you will not be found wanting in heaven where the reward shall be received (amen)" ...**Julius Nwankwo, Nigeria, West Africa**. "I enjoy reading the articles in *Seek the Old Paths*. I appreciate the stand you take for the truth and attempt to keep the brotherhood informed of some who are trying to change that church Christ died for. Keep up the good work" ...**Carl & Virginia Thomsen, Texarkana, TX**. "I recently received a copy of *Seek the Old Paths* and enjoyed it so much. Would you please add me to your mailing list to receive your publication regularly? Thank you so much!" ...**Carl L. Wright, Tipton, IN**. "Once again let me thank you for the wonderful way you are defending the truth of God's Word. Please continue this good work and let not the words of men cause you to be ashamed. I know you are not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ nor am I ashamed of you. May God bless!" ...**Jack Lawyer, Conway, AR**. "I have a copy of your *Seek the Old Paths* publication and I would like to be placed on the list to receive it personally. Your publication has been helpful. Thank you for your time and efforts" ...**Dale Steele, Minerva, OH**. "I am delighted by your paper and its interesting topics. I am a preacher leading a very young congregation of 20 members. As a preacher I am well convinced that my continuous reading of the paper will help me build up a strong faith in the Lord. Again it will help me teach others also, during Bible classes. For the above reasons and benefits, I wish to request humbly so that I can receive the paper monthly. Hoping to hear from you" ...**Ralph Owusu, Nkwanta, V/R, Ghana**. "Please discontinue my subscription to your publication. I am unaware how I was placed on your subscribers list. Thank you" ...**Mark Shields, Sr., Fairbanks, AK**. "I appreciate the work you are doing. Thank you" ...**Jimmy Clark, Grand Prairie, TX**. "In a time when many liberals are causing havoc within the church I praise God for faithful and sound publications like yours that does not mind blowing the whistle on those who would pervert the gospel. Keep the faith" ...**Brant Stubblefield, Lindsay, OK**. "I greet you in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ. *Seek the Old Paths* is an educative magazine. I am therefore requesting you to include me on your monthly mailing list for the same magazine. You may send me any literature that can assist me in my preaching and Bible teaching" ...**Maxwell Moonga,**

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. With the hope that you are abounding in God's work. I write to request for your Christian publication which is of good benefit in the brotherhood, for it edifies. I will therefore, like to be added to your mailing list, so as to be receiving the materials every month. If possible, I will like you to

**Zambia, Africa**. "I receive your paper and enjoy it so much. Keep up the good work. God bless you all" ...**Edith Henderson, Flint, MI**. "I have been enjoying reading your paper that my 92 year old grandmother receives each month. I am writing to request that you start sending them to me, so that I may share them with my friends. Thank you and God bless your work!" ...**Debbie Hobson, Flint, MI**. "We appreciate your stand for the truth. May God bless you" ...**Floyd & Phyllis Roe, Cushing, OK**. "I enjoy your wonderful monthly publication, standing and defending the word of God. Thanks again for sending me your publication" ...**Reba Chism Miller, Plumerville, AR**. "I really enjoy all I have read" ...**Barabara Cote, Ludowici, GA**. "My husband and I both enjoy the publication" ...**Dianne Smith, Hollister, MO**. "Peace be to all of you who are in Christ Name. Thank God for sending me your monthly publication. Please continue sending one. I enjoy reading every page of it. Lots of encouragement for Christians like me. Continue the good works and may God bless you with His special favor and wonderful peace. God bless us all. God bless AMERICA. God bless Philippines" ...**Mrs. Corazon G. Santiago, Van Nuys, CA**. "I would like to thank the East End Church of Christ for their monthly publication of *Seek the Old Paths*" ...**John H. Lewis, Saratoga, AR**. "Hope things are going well with you at this time. You know that your efforts are appreciated and you should be encouraged to keep up the good work you are doing. Again, thank you" ...**Robert Price, Jacksonville, FL**. "I was receiving *STOP* until last January and I moved and did not receive it anymore. Would you put my new address on your mailing list. *STOP* is a wonderful paper that tells the truth. May the Word of God continue to reach the lost" ...**Dale Stovall, Imboden, AR**. "I recently came upon a copy of the August 2001 issue of *Seek the Old Paths*. I was very much impressed with your writings concerning divorce and remarriage. It is the first correct handling of the subject that I have heard in the churches of Christ or read of in any of the periodicals in many a day. I would like to be placed on your mailing list" ...**Larry Perry, Seymour, TN**.

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