

How to Use God's Holy Spirit II

Fred R. Coulter—December 20, 1993

Living in the world we're living in today we really need to understand how to use God's Holy Spirit. Let's just review some very basic things.

How one receives the Holy Spirit:

That is basic and fundamental. The Holy Spirit is not given, as many people believe today, that you just take a zipper on your heart and open your heart and the Lord comes in.

It doesn't work that way. You have to repent and be baptized, then God will give the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Let's see there is also a *condition* for receiving the Holy Spirit.

1. God is not going to give the Holy Spirit to those who do not obey Him
2. God is not going to give the Holy Spirit to someone who is not going to make it into the Kingdom of God

When you receive the Holy Spirit God is giving that commitment that you are going to be in the Kingdom of God. The only thing that can keep you from getting in there is not God, but *you—each individual!* And there are many times that people get so confused and go through so many problems and difficulties—not only in the world but also in the Church—that they just kind of give up. They think that maybe God has given up on them. No! God has not given up on them, because Jesus said, 'None of them are going to slip out of My hand or the Father's hand.'

This becomes a very important thing, one of the conditions for receiving the Holy Spirit. This was right after they had gone through what they went through in prison and the Sanhedrin telling them not to preach 'in that name' anymore.

Acts 5:29: "But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, 'We are obligated to obey God rather than men.... [That's the whole key in receiving the Holy Spirit: *obeying God rather than men!*] ...The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by hanging Him* on a tree'" (vs 29-30).

By the way, concerning the recent accord between the Vatican and Israel—how many have read the book *Judaism and the Vatican*; the whole thing was to try and get the Catholic Church to say that the Jews did not kill Jesus (that was the main thing)—they have signed it. It explicitly stated that the Catholic Church will assist the Jews in doing away with anti-Semitism. I thought that was really a profound part of the agreement.

The Apostle Peter didn't sign that. He said, "...Whom you killed *by hanging Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel" (vs 30-31). There we have:

- repentance
- forgiveness of sin

put that in with:

- repent and be baptized (Acts 2)

put that together with

- receiving the laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit (Acts 8)

Verse 32: "And we are His witnesses of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him." That is saying to the Sanhedrin that 'you're not obeying God and you don't have the Spirit of God.'

Acts 7:51—Stephen gave this witness: "O stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You do always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so also *do* you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, of Whom you have become the betrayers and murderers" (vs 51-52). And he accuses them of killing Jesus Christ. So, they got so angry that they got into a biting contest and went out there and gnashed on his flesh, then had him stoned while Saul (who became the Apostle Paul) was standing there agreeing and consenting with it. In order to receive the Holy Spirit:

- you have to *repent*
- you have to *be baptized*
- you have to have *hands laid on* you
- you have to be *willing to obey* God

That's the whole thing that is important there.

What does this do for a person?

- Does it make them perfect? *No!*
- Is it going to run their lives? *No!*

We're going to see that *the Holy Spirit will lead you.*

- It's not going to drive you!
- It's not going to push you!
- It's not going to pull you!

It will lead you as you choose to follow God!

- What does it do?

It brings what the New Testament calls 'the circumcision of the spirit!' Having the carnal mind

circumcised as it were, which then is removing the hostility toward God!

Too many times we get our feelings involved and other people get hostile toward us and we get feelings that aren't right, even though we have God's Holy Spirit. It's not a matter that God is doing it or causing the problem, or that we're not converted. It's just that it is a frustration and problem at that particular time.

Romans 2:28: "For he is not a Jew who is *one* outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is external in *the* flesh; rather, he is a Jew who is *one* inwardly, and circumcision is of *the* heart, in *the* spirit and not in *the* letter; whose praise is not from men but from God" (vs 28-29). That's the circumcision in Christ that is called 'the circumcision made without hands' (Col. 2).

What is the Holy Spirit for us?

It's a guarantee and promise from God! That's why it's important for us to realize that—in spite of our mistakes and problems—

- we have the grace of God for forgiveness
- we have the love of God for forgiveness
- we have the love of to lead us
- we have the Spirit of God to lead us

—God has given an absolute commitment by the receipt of the Holy Spirit. There are times when it gets a little thin because we're not staying close to God like we ought to, so then we need to 'stir up' the Spirit of God, which is in us.

Here is the absolute commitment, 2-Corinthians 1:21 "But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us... [the receiving of the Holy Spirit is called *an anointing*] ...is God, Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (vs 21-22). God has made a commitment—the commitment from the God of Truth, absolute Truth; God of love; God of faith. He can help us at any time, though we do what is commonly called in the Bible *backsliding*.

Attributes of the Holy Spirit:

Let's see some of the attributes that the Holy Spirit has. Let's see something very important concerning the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh..." Living your life as just a carnal, ordinary, everyday human being; all tied up in the world, all wrapped up in the world, caring nothing about God, caring nothing about anything but what you are doing. That is the carnal mind, minding the things of the flesh.

"...but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you" (v 9). When the Spirit

of God is given, through begetting it unites with the spirit of our mind and then we become God's own chosen, selected, called out, consecrated saint.

It's really something! And it's being pressed on my mind more and more as I'm studying and doing things in writing and so forth. It's really something when you stop and think about it: ***God the Father Himself has personally called you!*** 'None can come to Me except the Father draw him' (John 6:44). God the Father Himself has given you the begetting of His Holy Spirit so that you can be a very child of God. God the Father Himself hears and answers your prayers. That's something when you really begin to put all of it together!

I'm beginning to see and understand and realize it more and more that the reason the Church of God is in all the problems that it is in is because it's not focusing on loving God and using the Spirit of God. Rather, too many are focused in on a particular doctrine. The one we're recycling now is the postponements and calendar.

Or they get focused in on some other doctrine or way or whatever it is and they miss the love of God, miss the grace of God, miss the mercy of God. So, you have a lot of frustrated Christians out there that really want to do better, they really want to go ahead and do things, but they can't do it because they somehow feel limited and constrained by the circumstances they are in.

Nevertheless, I just have to say with the people I've seen and visited and talked to in traveling, all the people of God have gone through so many things and, yet, are trying as much as they can to be faithful to God. You've got to conclude that they have the Holy Spirit of God in them for them to go through so many different things. Some of the horror stories are really something! Some people have not had to go through as much as others.

"...*the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you.... [There's a distinct absolute division. God does not give just part of His Holy Spirit to some of the people to help them along and encourage them. No!] ...But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him" (v 9). There is a distinct division that God makes.

I've run across those who have not been converted, though they have tried. Some of it is not their fault. Some of it is that they really need to make a full, total commitment to God in spite of all circumstances. I'm not the one to judge whether a person is converted or not—I'm not God. When people ask me if they have the Spirit of God. I say, 'If you don't think you do, maybe you ought to fast and pray and ask God to reveal to you whether the Spirit of God is *in* you or *with* you.' I think there are a lot of people who have the Spirit of God *with*

them, but not *in* them. If that's the case then you need to go ahead and be baptized properly and really have the Spirit of God so it is *in* you. But if it is *in you* then you belong to Christ. You are His! That's why the Bible talks about a slave or bond-slave and so forth.

Verse 10: "But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness.... [the righteousness which comes from God.] ...Now, if the Spirit of Him Who raised Jesus from *the* dead is dwelling within you, He Who raised Christ from *the* dead will also quicken... [make alive] ...your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwells within you" (vs 10-11). There's the whole promise and commitment from God.

We need to claim those promises. We need to ask God to help us stir up the Spirit of God. We need to—because of our human weakness—go to God and ask Him to help us overcome those things. But I know this: I feel that if we focus in more on the love of God—which is the greatest thing—we'll be able to overcome a lot of the problems and difficulties that we tried to overcome just on our own.

You almost have to live that to experience it, to see it. There are certain things that I see that I've had to do, that I've had to change, and I many times have tried to change it: I'm going to do better; I'm going really resolve to do better. Well, if I don't really understand how much God has loved me and what He has done for me, then I have a hard time really overcoming myself. Then I wonder why can't I overcome? Why can't I change this? Why can't I do that? *The reason, I have found, is that I don't understand God's love for me and what He's done for me, and why He's done it for me.* I hope I can grow in that so I can let God's Spirit do some changing in me. I need changing as well as anybody else.

There are many, many things talking about the Holy Spirit in the book of Isaiah. If we really let the mind of Christ *in us*—let God's Spirit be in us—with the **spirit of love, faith** and all of that that comes from God's way. But it also gives us other things, too. Talking about God's way:

1. **Spirit of judgment**
2. **Spirit of burning**

Isaiah 4:4: "When the LORD shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from its midst by the **spirit of judgment**, and by the **spirit of burning**." Sometimes the Spirit of God has to be very sharp, powerful and sometimes kind of hot. God is the One Who can make it that way.

I talked to a man on my trip to Pasadena and he said that he went to Jerusalem, to the Wailing

Wall, and he said, 'This is Catholic.' I said, 'You really don't understand what you're saying with that statement. You'll find out in some of the sermons we have in the series *Scripturalism vs Judaism*.

It is talking about Christ. With the Spirit of God Who do we have in us? *Christ!* We need to grow in these kind of attributes, too. This is all a part of using the Holy Spirit of God.

Isaiah 11:1: "And there shall come forth a shoot out from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him..." (vs 1-2). Didn't that happen in John 1? John baptized Him and was told, 'The One you see the Holy Spirit come upon as a dove, that is the One'? *Yes!* Was not Jesus led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil for 40 days and 40 nights, and He was full of the Holy Spirit? *Yes!*

3. **Spirit of wisdom**
4. **Spirit of understanding**
5. **Spirit of counsel**
6. **Spirit of might**
7. **Spirit of knowledge**
8. **Spirit of the fear of God**

"...**the spirit of wisdom**... [read the Gospels and you will see *wisdom*] ...**and understanding**, the **spirit of counsel and might**, the **spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD**. And His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. And He shall not judge according to the sight of His eyes, nor after the hearing of His ears. But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth..." (vs 2-4)—which He's going to do when He returns. All of that is part of the Spirit of God and part of the things that God's Spirit will do for us.

9. **Spirit of grace**
10. **Spirit of supplication**

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour upon the house of David... [That's a very interesting statement—isn't it? {see sermon on *Tabernacle of David*} ...and upon the people of Jerusalem, the **spirit of grace and of supplication**...." All of that is very, very important in relationship to Christ and the Truth of God.

Then it continues on with the prophecy of Christ: "...And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only *son*, and shall be in bitterness over Him, as the bitterness over the firstborn" (vs 10).

There's going to come a time when God begins to deal with the Jews in Jerusalem, and that

day is going to come! When He pours out the **Spirit of repentance** upon them, it is going to be something! I don't know just exactly how that's going to fall. I don't know exactly how the events are going to work out leading up to that time, but we know that Zech. 3 talks about the high priest at Jerusalem who is led to repentance, and Zech. 4 talks about Zerubbabel and these two become the 'two olive trees that stand before the Lord of the whole earth'—which ties in with Rev. 11 and the two witnesses.

Maybe at that time is when God is going to pour out the Spirit upon those who are in Jerusalem. That's going to be quite an event! If you know anything about the Jews, once they're smitten they'll go full throttle. It's going to be quite a thing when that happens!

Let's come to the New Testament and perhaps the most important thing we will cover concerning the Spirit of God. In writing the first edition of *Lord, What Should I Do?* the thing that really struck me—and I'm coming to see this more and more—is that too many people to develop doctrine handle the Word of God deceitfully. That's how they come up with false doctrines and they use Scriptures that are true. You need to think on that, because that is really something!

You quote a Scripture and you quote another Scripture—which is true—and then you come to the wrong conclusion because you misapply it. That can happen. But here is the most important thing concerning the Spirit of God.

Spirit of the Truth:

John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments." And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: **Even the Spirit of the Truth...**" (vs 15-17). That becomes very, very important. If we let the Spirit of Truth really lead us and really guide us and we properly divide the Word of God—humbly seeking God's way—God will lead us into all the Truth that He wants us to have. It is called ***the Spirit of Truth.***

That's why we need to have the Spirit of God in our mind, so we can overcome our own deceitfulness—right? Doesn't the Apostle Paul say, 'Lie not to one another.' Have Christians lied to one another? *Yes!* Have you told lies? *Yes!* If I ask you if you told a lie this past week, we might all raise our hand, because we're not letting the God of absolute Truth lead us in everything we need to be led in.

However, we have one caveat with that that we need to understand: ***we are to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves.'*** For people who

are out in the world, I don't carry my shotgun, pull it out, this is my anti-Christmas shotgun.

Example: I was invited to a Christmas party for last night. Being Friday night I didn't show up and I got the call. I didn't tell them that I wouldn't go to your 'stinkin' rotten Christmas party.' That would be truth, but it also says in Ephesians that we're to 'speak the truth in love.' I said, 'I'm sorry, I just couldn't be there.' That was an acceptable answer for him. I didn't lie. I was not misleading him. I was telling him the absolute truth of what he could bear. This man being a gun-ho Catholic pretty well figures that if you're against Christmas, you're against God.

When the time comes and I need to witness to him, I will. But in the meantime I can tell him that I just 'couldn't be there'—which was a fact.

1. because I didn't necessarily want to be there
2. because it was Friday night, the Sabbath and I wasn't going to be there

That's the ***Spirit of wisdom and understanding.***

But for us is called "...the **Spirit of Truth**, which the world cannot receive... [Why can't the world receive it? *The world can't stand pure Truth!*] ...because it perceives it not, nor knows it..." (v 17). That's why they love their Christmas. What does Christmas re-enforce to the carnal mind? *That they can do by telling lies!* Everything that Christmas has is based on lies!

They can't stand the Truth of God! That's why the world cannot receive it. Why? What do you have to do to receive it? *Repent, be baptized, keep the commandments of God, obey His voice!*

"...but you know it because it dwells with you... [I think there are a lot of people in that category, that the Spirit of God is dwelling with them.] ..and shall be **within** you" (v 17). That's what happens when you repent, are baptized and receive the laying on of hands and receive the Holy Spirit of God. It is now *in* you, and with that you become a child of God.

What you desire in your whole spiritual life is the Truth. Christ is the Truth, the Way and the Life—correct? *Christ in you!* Notice how all of these things refer back to *Christ in you!*

Spirit of Holiness:

Romans 1:3: "Concerning His Son; Who came from *the* seed of David according to *the* flesh, Who was declared *the* Son of God with power, according to *the* **Spirit of Holiness...**" (vs 3-4). That's what it is to do for us. That's why we are called *Holy Brethren*. Not that we of ourselves are Holy, but because of the Holy Spirit.

“...by *the* resurrection from *the* dead—Jesus Christ our Lord” (v 4). That’s going to be quite a thing when that happens; when the resurrection from the dead takes place that is going to be absolutely a marvelous thing! Every time we go passed a graveyard that is full of tombstones we always joke back and forth—Delores and I—wondering if there’s going to be a lot of unconscious people when the first thing they do when they’re resurrected is hit the tombstone. No it won’t because they’ll be a spirit being.

Just an aside: Did the stone have to be rolled away from the tomb of Christ in order for Him to be resurrected? *NO!* Most people believe that. It had to be rolled away for what purpose? *So that they could see that He wasn’t there!* That’s the only reason. The angel did that because of the women coming out there. They couldn’t have done that.

Quite an interesting statement here, and this is very important for us to know and understand. In God’s love, mercy and patience, He puts up with an awful lot—doesn’t He? *Yes, He does!* An awful lot of things that we do, *God knows!* He *leads us* to repentance so we can understand it.

Spirit of Life:

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...” That’s a pretty powerful statement—*isn’t it?* *Yes, it is!* No condemnation. Why? *Because if we are in Christ Jesus and loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and being,* then we stand before God as Christ stands before God. How does Christ stand? *Pure! Blameless! Sinless! Perfect!*

Therefore, for God to inspire us to want to be in the Family of God, it says “...*there is* now no condemnation.” That’s not to go out and sin; we all understand that. But that is to inspire us! I’m coming to see more and more and understand more and more that God is not going to get us into the Kingdom of God by beating us over the head with His commandments.

He’s going to inspire us to want to be in the Kingdom of God, and we need to be inspired because God does not condemn us, but just has given His Spirit so that we can have free access to Him. Really think on that! Really spend some time meditating on that!

If you’re driving around in a car and you’re tired of listening to tapes, music, etc. You just get tired of it. I just turn the thing off and say, ‘O God, spare me from this!’ Let me just drive in silence and just think on some of the things that God has done. You look back and one of the ways that I find is very helpful, I look back and think about all the things that God has delivered me from, and all the of the

stupidity that God has saved me from, then I look at all the stupidity that God has allowed me to do so that I can understand that only He can save me. Believe me, I’ve got a long list of stupidity! All of us do! That’s why it’s good to know that there is no condemnation. God is not going to get you into the Kingdom of God by condemning you into it, or beating you into it. *He wants to inspire you into it!* May we, as ministers, all learn that lesson!

“...who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the **Spirit of Life**... [having the Spirit of God is having the Spirit of life. That’s why Christ said, ‘He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *has eternal life!*’] ...in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death” (vs 1-2). In other words, we don’t have to be governed by all the carnal appetites of the ‘law of sin an death.’

God did a marvelous thing here, v 3: “For what *was* impossible for the Law to do... [I remember reading in this magazine *The W.A.* {put out by one of the Churches of God} that if everyone would follow the Ten Commandments we would have a near utopia on earth. No you wouldn’t, because the world has had the Ten Commandments for how long? Why would you not have a utopia on earth? *Because of human nature and because of Satan the devil!*

Satan the devil has to be removed. It doesn’t matter how many of the people know the Ten Commandments, unless Satan is removed you’re not going to get rid of sin. Did David sin with Bathsheba and all that he did? *Yes!* Did Solomon do it? *Yes,* and he gave an open door to Satan—didn’t he? *Yes!*

No! You’re not going to have a utopia on this earth before the return of Christ. That’s a mistake that a lot of the religionists like Pat Robertson make. They feel that they can make the politics good enough so that we can have a Christian nation. It won’t happen!

But human beings are that way, and God has put us under subjection to Satan the devil—we didn’t ask for it. We didn’t go up to God and say, ‘O God, I want to be born into a world that is run by Satan.’ We had no say-so. We were born into it and here we are. I’m thankful we were born here instead of there—wherever there may be. So, here’s what God did.

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the Law to do in that it was weak through the flesh, God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

How many times have you heard someone say: Not only do you need to repent of your sins, but you have to repent of what you are. Have you heard

that? that always bothered me from the point of view: How can I repent of what I am if God gave me the 'law of sin and death' in me? That's a pretty hard thing to do! Why must we do it? *Because God—Who is Holy and righteous and perfect—divested Himself to become a human being born of the virgin Mary who willing took upon Himself the 'law of sin and death!'* Yet, never sinned! That's what it means to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh. We really cannot repent of what we are—with the 'law of sin and death' in us—and understand the powerful thing that that is unless we understand what Christ has done.

That takes an awful lot of love, an awful lot of powerful concern. We had quite an experience going into San Francisco recently and we saw all the middle-class bums. What are the middle-class bums? *Those who hold jobs and live in an apartment, but go out and beg for money at night!*

We could tell them because they had on good pants and good shoes and a good shirt, rattling their little cup out here. There were a couple who were really needy. I gave some money to one that I was convinced was really needy. Then you look at all of these others out there and you think: disgusting, miserable, rotten, terrible, horrible people! Some of them are.

Would you give up your life and your place and go live as one of them? *Have a hard time doing it—wouldn't you?* I would! I would have a real difficult time doing that! If that is kind of repulsive to your mind, just understand that it's only a small degree of what Jesus did giving up God to become a human being, to take within His own human flesh the 'law of sin and death.' I think if we can comprehend and understand that even more, then we will understand why God does not condemn us, but also at the same time, why in the final analysis, God will lead us to repent of what we are. ***What we are is not what God wants us to be!*** That will take some thinking on. It's taken me all these years to understand it a little bit.

Don't worry about if you don't understand it now. Ask God to help you understand it. I hope to understand it even more in the future. That's really something when you think about what Christ has given up to save us from the 'law of sin and death.'

So, it is the Spirit of Life from Christ, and that's what the Holy Spirit does for us: It gives us life—*eternal life!* Let's also understand what it is from God. This is something! This is tremendous! Absolutely tremendous!

Spirit of Sonship:

Verse 15: "Now, you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear..." Why have we,

as ministers, not understood this and we have tried to run churches on fear? *You can't do that!* How can you develop the love of God if you put fear into the brethren all the time? How can you develop the love of God if you're going around fearful all the time? *You can't do it!*

So, Paul is saying, "...you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear... [that's the way the world is] ...but you have received **the Spirit of sonship**... [Being the very sons of God; that's what it's talking about—to be the sons and daughters of God. That is absolutely mind-boggling when you really sit down and think about it.] ...whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father'" (v 15).

The greatest being in the universe! Is God humble? *Yes, God is humble!* What does He want to be called? *Father!* That's what He wants to be called. No great names like he had to reveal under the Old Testament, because they couldn't come into a Father/son relationship because they didn't have the Spirit of God to do that. This is what God wants to be called: *Father!* Isn't that something?

That tells you about God's humility, love and the relationship that God wants us to have with Him! It is the Spirit of the life of Christ; the Spirit of sonship.

Spirit of Meekness:

This is something we need to grow in. I was talking a person and the woman asked why we had to have all of these false doctrines and all of this stuff that we have to through and everything. I said that I think the real reason is—I didn't get it for years—that we're dealing with the vanity of the minister and he wants to have something new, different and special. That's why you're having a problem with it.

1-Corinthians 4:21: "What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a **Spirit of meekness?**" Part of the fruits of the Holy Spirit—right?

Verse 7: "...And what do you have that you did not receive?..." ***Nothing!*** What do you have spiritually that you didn't receive from God? ***Nothing!*** All of it came from God:

- His love
- His Spirit
- His faith
- His calling

If we can all remember that, that will help us!

Spirit of Faith:

Lot's of times the question will come out: Why aren't there more miracles in the Church? *Again, I think we need to focus in on the Spirit of*

God and the love of God! I think I'm beginning to understand that the more that we really comprehend the love of God, the more that those things may come, because we're not going to be all 'hung up' on it.

2-Corinthians 4:13: "And having the same **Spirit of faith**, according as it is written, 'I believed, therefore I have spoken,' we also believe..."

(go to the next track)

As you can see we are progressing through the New Testament and I think that's the best way to do it, rather than go back and forth.

Spirit of Promise:

Ephesians 1:12: "That we might be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the **Word of the Truth**, the **Gospel of your salvation**; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy **Spirit of promise**" (vs 12-13).

- the Spirit of Truth
- the Word of Truth
- the Gospel of Truth
- the Gospel of your salvation
- the Spirit of Promise

If you have the Holy Spirit and you are sealed with the Spirit of Truth—which is the Spirit of Promise that comes from God the Father—is God going to see you into the Kingdom of God? *Yes!* What has He provided?

- The whole life and sacrifice of Christ!
- Direct access to Him!
- Calling Him Father!
- Grace, mercy, forgiveness!
- His Word inspired by His Holy Spirit!

God gives a promise! Can God lie? *NO! It's impossible for God to lie!*

If you have the Spirit of God and it is the Spirit of Promise, you're going to make it into the Kingdom of God! Really think on that! It is most difficult to commit the unpardonable sin! Most difficult! God made it that way. That's why when we sin inadvertently we need to go to God and ask Him to forgive us. He will! Instantly!

"...the **Holy Spirit of Promise**, which is the earnest of our inheritance... [2 Cor. 1] ...until the redemption..." (vs 13-14). It's not just a promise for part of the time; it's not like us. We can make what we think are promises and then we kind of weasel out of them sometimes and don't keep them or change it or whatever. God is not like that!

"...the Spirit of Promise...until the redemption... [the buying back] ...of the purchased possession... [Us! What paid for us? How was the

Church paid for?] ...to the praise of His glory" (vs 13-14).

If you want something to think on sometime, or if you're kind of down and discouraged, think on this: **God has called us to be the praise of His glory!** Think on that! That's really mind-boggling! Isn't that something that the angels are going to praise God for, the glory that God is going to give us? That is something!

We'll see what purchased the Church. This is all relating to receiving the Holy Spirit through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. There's a great debate now: What is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God? If you aren't preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, you're not a Church of God. I found that most of them that say that don't understand the most important part of the Gospel.

Gospel of the Grace of God:

Acts 20:24: "But I myself do not take any of these things into account, nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to fully testify the **Gospel of the Grace of God.**" You cannot preach the Gospel without grace. You cannot live a Christian life without grace. You have no comprehension of growing, overcoming or yielding to God the Father and Jesus Christ unless you understand about the grace of God.

That's why in every care package we put in the series on the *Grace of God*. Almost everyone writes back and tells me they have never understood it until they have gone through those sermons. When you understand the grace of God and what Christ has done for you, that is one of the most liberating—from the point of view of getting rid of guilt—things that can possibly happen to you. That's what Paul preached. He said that he's going preach, "...testify the Gospel of the Grace of God."

Verse 25: "And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God..." So you have

- The Gospel of Grace
- The Gospel of the Kingdom

"...will see my face no more" (v 25). What happens when you preach the Kingdom of God and people repent? *You have people in the Church!* Most of the New Testament and all of the writings of the Apostle Paul have to do with feeding the flock. When there's turmoil and difficulties within the Church of God, then that becomes the most important part of preaching the Gospel, so they can understand the love and grace and forgiveness of God.

Most people are at loose ends within the Church of God because they don't know that. When

they are able to be strengthened then we in turn can reach out and reach more new people—but not until then.

Verse 26: “Wherefore **I testify to you on this day**... [this must have been some meeting with those elders from Ephesus who came down to Miletus to see Paul as he was on his way up to Jerusalem.] ...that I am pure from the blood of all, for I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood” (vs 26-28).

Everyone needs to think on that concerning people in the Church of God.

- Who do they belong to? *They belong to God the Father!*
- Who gave them the Holy Spirit? *God the Father!*
- Who died for them? *Jesus Christ!*
- Through Whom do they have their sins forgiven? *The blood of Jesus Christ!*

They are the purchased possession of God! Therefore, every minister is to be a steward. A steward means that *you handle someone's property and wealth for their benefit*; without any benefit to you. That's what it means; it's a purchased possession; purchased with His own blood.

Verse 29: “For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.” Same problems we're up against today—all the vanity of the ministers. May we all be spared from ministerial vanity; myself included. May I spare myself from my own vanity. Only through God's Spirit can it be done.

We did see the play *Phantom of the Opera*, which was pretty good. I viewed it like the heroine was the Church of God being assaulted by Satan. In the final analysis the Church is saved. I thought that it was interesting that what if you were one of the actors and they plan on running this thing for three years. Every night for three years and a matinee on Sunday as well as Sunday night—double duty on Sunday—what if you had to say the same words and sing the same songs and go through the same routine everyday for three years.

I asked Delores about that and she said that when Johnny Wiessmuller finally retired—the one who did Tarzan—he went to a rest home, the biggest problem they had was that he would give the Tarzan yell all the time.

What happens is that when people believe their own propaganda or believe all the compliments that people heap upon you, you're in trouble. As

ministers you're all in trouble when that happens. That's why we need to give all the glory to God.

- It's the Church of God
- He's called them
- He's given His Spirit
- Christ purchased it with His own blood

Paul says right here that “...grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves” (vs 29-30). Paul prophesied it would happen then and we're going through the same exact thing today.

What do we have right here? *We have the prescription on how to overcome it—right? Let it all be in God's hands!* That's what it has to be. Let God send to you—whomever you are as a minister—whomever God will send! Don't go out and fight over the brethren of God as if they are possessions.

I remember one man said, 'I'm the rightful heir.' Another one of his competitors in the ministry said, 'I am the rightful heir.' My comment was: **Since when did the people of God become the possessions of the ministry? You're the purchased possession of Christ!**

We're going to see part of what it is that we need to do in growing and using God's Spirit. We all ride high and low; I don't know anyone who doesn't have ups and downs. Anybody here have a perfectly stable life; always happy, always joyful, always loving God, never sinning, never having any problems? *None of us!* We all have our ups and downs, and I think that it is something that is misleading the brethren when the ministers are not honest with the brethren to let them know they have their own faults and mistakes, too.

Every minister needs the prayers of the brethren just like the brethren need the prayers of the ministry. When we get to these low points, especially this time of year because Satan is invading and just taking over the whole world whole hog and it gets a little discouraging. Here's what we need to do:

2-Timothy 1:5: “When I remember the unfeigned faith *that is* in you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice—and I am convinced that *it dwells* in you also. For this reason, I admonish you to **stir up the gift of God...**” (vs 5-6). We have *our* responsibility!

How do we *stir it up*? *Sometimes we just have to go to God and say, 'Help me, God, so I can!'* you stir up the gift of God:

- by God's Word
- by God's Truth

- by studying
- by drawing close to God in prayer
- by understanding how great and magnificent God the Father is and Jesus Christ

That's how we stir up the gift "...that is in you by the laying on of my hands" (v 6). I'm sure he's also talking about the gift of grace for the ministry at this particular point.

- **Spirit of love!**
- **Spirit of power!**
- **Spirit of a sound mind!**

Verse 7: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear... [again, notice how against fear and the bondage of fear that the Apostle Paul always was] ...**but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness.**" That's what we need, all of these; every one of these, so that we can live our lives in the way that God wants us to.

We have to stir it up! If you feel so down and out about the whole thing, just go to God and say, 'God, look, I'm here, I'm feeling down and out, I feel totally carnal, I feel just like hanging on a thread. Help me and strengthen me and help me to stir up Your Spirit.' Go to the Psalms and read a Psalm everyday before you start praying. Really learn how to come to God in prayer, beseeching prayer.

He'll hear you! You don't have to shout loud and long. Doesn't have to be that. You can do it quietly. Remember the mother of Samuel. She was praying fervently to herself and it kind of spilled over a little bit and Eli said that she was drunk. She said, 'No, I'm disappointed and in bitterness of heart; I have no children.' Eli was embarrassed and said, 'God grant you your wish. God grant you your request' and she had Samuel and six other children after that.

Sometimes we have to go to God just like Hannah, the mother of Samuel and say, 'God, here it is! It's a terrible mess.' When you do there are going to be tears and you'd better have a hanky nearby. If it's really a bad scene, maybe you'd better have a box of Kleenex there, because you'll need more than a hanky. Sometimes that's necessary, too. Life is that way. But we can stir it up and ask God to bless us with these things.

Then Paul said after this, v 8: "Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but jointly suffer with me for the sake of the Gospel, according to the power of God." The Apostle Paul had every right to be bitter, disillusioned and against God. Why? *Because every church he raised up went against him!*

He was left alone and the only one that was with him was Luke, but he knew that God was true and he knew what was going to happen. I just imagine that the Apostle Paul really felt kind of down in many ways, even though he knew that he was going to be saved. He gave the prophesy that the 'grievous wolves would rise up among the ministers' and so forth.

He's writing to Timothy, encouraging him, telling him what to do and so forth. ***We need to stir up the Spirit of God that is within us!***

- Spirit of love!
- Spirit of power!
- Spirit of a sound mind!

Here is a warning against the unpardonable sin. Hebrews is really quite a book. Let me just give you a little something to think on: Carl Franklin thinks — and I think he's quite right in this: Why didn't the book of Hebrews start out like Paul started all of his epistles? '*Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ unto the brethren in Jerusalem...*'

If you understand the riot they had when he went to Jerusalem you would know that Paul couldn't get them to read one thing that he had written. What was actually happening here was that the Jews in Jerusalem were abandoning Christianity and going back to the temple worship and animal sacrifices. That's why he is so particularly emphasizing those things in the book of Hebrews.

But Carl thinks that the Epistle of James was put on as a cover letter or introduction to the book of Hebrews and that's why James has no 'Amen.' It went directly right into the book of Hebrews, which by all analysis and study are the teachings of Paul written by Luke. There is no authentic verified authorship of it. I think that's the best explanation of it that I have ever heard as to why the book of Hebrews is the way it is.

Hebrews 10:28_[transcriber's correction]: "*Consider this: anyone who rejects the law of Moses dies without mercy under the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much worse punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which he was sanctified, as an unholy thing, and has scorned the Spirit of grace?"* (vs 28-29).

After what we've gone through you can see how difficult it is to really commit the unpardonable sin. I mean,

- you have to reject Christ
- you have to reject the grace of God
- you have to reject the Spirit of God
- you have to reject everything that God the Father and Jesus Christ stand for

in order to commit the unpardonable sin. When you do you're despising the Spirit of grace.

Spirit of Prophecy:

Revelation 19:10—this is John when he saw the angel who brought him the knowledge of the book of Revelation: “And I fell at his feet to worship him. Then he said to me, ‘See *that you do not do this!* I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the **Spirit of Prophecy.**’”

We'll have to think on that one a little bit more. When you think of all the prophecies that we've gone through that have not been true. Maybe we're missing something here. The **Spirit of Prophecy** could also be inspired speaking, not just prophesying events.

Here in this particular case the angel talking to John who had the whole vision of the book of Revelation through the **Spirit of Prophecy**. Wasn't it Christ Who gave it to him? *Yes, it was!*

So maybe there's a little more to this verse than maybe we have understood, but I would have to say that the track record, for most Churches of God that I know of, in prophecy hasn't been too good. So, maybe that was telling us something also. Maybe something is missing because of *the lack of*

- the love God
- the grace of God
- really trusting in God in faith

I don't know, I just put it out there and say 'what if.' We need to consider that those things are true. If they are, then we need to ask God to help us understand the things that are taking place in the Spirit of Prophecy, if we have the full testimony of Jesus Christ.

All Scriptures from The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 5:29-32
- 2) Acts 7:51-52
- 3) Romans 2:28-29
- 4) 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- 5) Romans 8:9-11
- 6) Isaiah 4:4
- 7) Isaiah 11:1-4
- 8) Zechariah 12:10
- 9) John 14:15-17
- 10) Romans 1:3-4
- 11) Romans 8:1-3, 15
- 12) 1 Corinthians 4:21, 7
- 13) 2 Corinthians 4:13

- 14) Ephesians 1:12-14
- 15) Acts 20:24-30
- 16) 2 Timothy 1:5-8
- 17) Hebrews 10:28-29
- 18) Revelation 19:10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted

- Acts 2:38; 8
- Colossians 2
- John 6:44; 1
- Zechariah 3; 4
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- *Judaism and the Vatican* by Vicomte Leon de Poncins
- *Lord, What Should I Do?* (1st ed.) by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo

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