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## Introduction

After just completing my studies for a theological degree, my expectations are high. I stand conscious of my own weakness and immaturity, but eager to zealously engage myself in the Lord's harvest. However, as I re-enter the local Church from the halls of a theological seminary, I am confronted by a stark contrast. Thus far, no one has approached me with struggles about philosophy, textual criticism, or Hebrew grammar. Instead, loved ones have confronted me with situations about which I have studied very little, like financial troubles, divorce, and alcoholism. Frankly, my initial reaction is to reject the things I've worked to learn these past several years as irrelevant minutiae. Yet, I can't believe my Good Shepherd has had me invest so much time and money in acquiring an education in vain. Rather, I believe I have been equipped with tools to handle God's Word that I might both help my loved ones and help them to help themselves through the Scriptures.

Painful woes like financial need, marital infidelity, and abusive drinking ultimately drive me back to acknowledge the truthfulness of God's Word. Amidst a pseudo-painless, beautifully plastic Southern California culture, I must honestly face these real hurts. And as I study God's inscripturated message to man, He tells me that "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5.19). But He has sent His people "a Saviour and a Champion, and He will deliver them" (Isaiah 19.20). As we endure in faith, our hope is to hear the announcement, "Behold I am making all things new" (Revelation 21.5). Meanwhile, through Jesus "we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5.2). Through these precious promises we have enough calm for our troubled hearts to persevere, "perplexed but not despairing". Herein we have solid bedrock on which to build our lives, "struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4.8,9).

I want to be teachable, and a good listener, but my instincts tell me to reject quick and easy solutions to difficult problems as faddish and simplistic. Rather, I anticipate a life of diligent,



draining labor in God's Word, praying and living out its truth in reliance upon His power.

But here is an important point of transition. How am I going to communicate these truths as a minister of the Gospel? Burdened by the suffering and misery of so many saints more faithful than I, my temptation is to give them nothing more than a "Jesus loves you" sugar pill. But I am to have more than just a ministry of comfort. I am also told to rightly handle the word of truth, "for reproof, and for correction". Or only wanting to dazzle my hearers with eloquent pearls of theology will also hinder the work of the Gospel. For I would neglect my charge to minister the Word for "training in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3.16). Instead my calling is to labor "for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4.12).

To illustrate my understanding of this truth, imagine that I have asked you to share a meal with me. Perhaps we would agree for you to arrive at my home at 7 p.m. At that time, (if I could) I would seat you at my beautiful table spread with finest linen, china, and crystal. There we might enjoy a delicious seven course meal, a beautiful example of my culinary skills. I trust you would enjoy that very much. But as the evening ends, the meal, no matter how wonderful, is nothing more than an unrepeatable memory. What if, however, you were to arrive at 4 p.m. instead of 7. And upon your arrival, I told you to roll up your sleeves and cover your fine clothing with one of my old aprons as we entered my kitchen together. There I would subject you to a three hour crash-course in culinary art. I could show you that the tasty dish you imagined was so difficult to prepare can be enjoyed with a minimum of effort. In time, you could be sharing your tasty skills with your neighbors. Perhaps our relationship would change too. No longer would I be a culinary guru without whom you would be enslaved to blandness and junk food. Now you would realize you can do what I do, probably better! Like the old adage, "Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day, teach him to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime."

My limited observations of the Word ministry of the Church makes me fear that we have lost this concept of training God's people to rightly handle the Scriptures. Our neglect to give God's people



even some of basic principles of interpretation have turned Protestant Bible teachers into a new kind of Priesthood, upon whom the layman is ever dependent. Consequently, many saints have neglected personal study of Scripture because the Bible is too "confusing" and "complicated" for them; especially compared to the seeming ease with which the Preacher explains it. Some more "spiritual" disciples read the Bible with a hit-or-miss method of interpretation, carelessly trusting that "the Lord will lead." They reject careful study as divisive and cold, opting for the spontaneity and warmth of flying by the seat of their pants through the Scriptures. Surely, God will lead His people. But we should not think that He will do so at the expense of their faithful study. This kind of "do it now" philosophy is detrimental to long-range abiding in Christ. Yet, I think most of the blame lies with careless shepherds and not the confused sheep.

To soften the blow of my charges, I want to acknowledge certain qualifying factors. I realize that many Christians want a faith that is not so demanding. After all, it is easier to "believe what my Pastor believes." However, our task is to proclaim a Gospel which demands the obedience of Faith. When it comes right down to it, Christ's call may call us from devotion for our favorite shows and fast-lane pursuit of recreational fads to study the Word. In my zeal for training, I acknowledge that it will come through the work of Spirit-endowed Pastors and teachers. Also, I believe there is a difference between teaching and preaching. Thus, not every sermon will be able to hold all the cooking tips and the entree. However, in the full scope of the ministry to the people under our charge, we must attempt to give them both. Graciously, the Lord of the Church has given many of His people great ability to handle the Word simply through their reverent sitting at His feet and learning of Him. Also, many a faithful Pastor has unknowingly given His people these tools simply through being a good example to them in word and deed. Nevertheless, despite these qualifications, we must purpose to fulfill Paul's charge, "And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also"(2 Tim 2.2).



## Purpose

One area where these errors show themselves most glaringly is in the study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. I propose that the Charismatic vs. non-Charismatic schism that rifts the Church might never have occurred had God's people on both sides known more about how to handle God's word.

This study is to be viewed as only a first step. Admittedly, it carries all my cultural baggage and short-sightedness. This is the result of extensive teaching ministries among one Black lower-middle class, and three White upper-middle class, American congregations. This study has been received with enthusiasm and appreciation in these settings. I am seeking a way to help people feel comfortable in the study of the Word. Thus, I attempt "Doing a Theology of the Holy Spirit". The "Doing a Theology.." emphasizes putting forth some basic principles of Hermeneutics and Linguistics which apply to all of our study of Scripture. The "..of the Holy Spirit" makes specific application of these principles to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Specifically, the principles and applications will focus in these five areas:

- I The Need for Biblical Interpretation - the Spirit as Interpreter
- II Grammatical Interpretation - the Spirit and Inspiration
- III Historical Interpretation - the Spirit in History
- IV Christological Interpretation - the Spirit and Jesus
- V Confrontational Interpretation - the Spirit and the Believer



I. The Need of Biblical Interpretation - the Spirit as Interpreter

As Christians, we believe that God's Word speaks to us in all areas of life. The person who has the Scriptures "may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3.17). However, to tell a troubled individual to simply "read the Bible", for the solution to all their problems can leave them devastated. That is not to say the answers are not in the Book. It is rather to admit that understanding the Book can be tough sledding. Chances are our struggling friend may just quit when she can't see how the six-day Creation account speaks to her loneliness, etc. Even if we encourage people to begin in the New Testament, say the Gospel according to John, they may strike a similar obstacle. Several key passages underscore this fact.

A. Difficulty in Biblical Study

1) Luke 24.13 ff.

On Easter afternoon we find the Risen Jesus in the role of a Bible teacher to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Even the Risen Lord Himself is willing to bother with these two unfaithful disciples whom He knows are "foolish...and slow of heart to believe" (v. 25). Jesus is not above the tedium of follow-up work. Luke calls these "two of them" among the "all the rest" (vs. 13,9), they were among Christ's followers. Whether they had ever actually heard Christ teach cannot be proved. But they certainly were familiar with His teaching of the Scriptures. However, on this afternoon they stood completely ignorant of one of the most basic themes of the Old Testament according to Jesus, the sufferings and glory of the Messiah. Even these disciples were blind to seeing Jesus before He taught them, apart from His interpretation of the Scriptures.

2) Acts 8.26 ff.

Here we find another example of an individual having difficulty in understanding the Old Testament Scriptures. He was a convert to Judaism, an Ethiopian who served on the court of Queen Candace. On the desert road to Gaza he is encountered by an ambassador of



the Risen Lord Jesus, Philip. In response to Philip's question, "Do you understand what you are reading?" he says, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" (vs. 30,31). Philip explains the passage, what we know as Isaiah 53, to him. The Ethiopian eunuch believes in the Suffering Servant and proclaims his faith in baptism.

3) Acts 18.24 ff.

This section contains the record of the Lord's servant Apollos. Luke describes him as "eloquent...mighty in the Scriptures... speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus" (vs. 24,25). However, because he knew only the "baptism of John" it was necessary for Priscilla and Aquila to "take him aside and explain the way of God more accurately" (vs. 25,26). Apollos needed them to further explain how Christ fulfilled the Old Testament promises. Here even a disciple "mighty in the Scriptures" needs to be instructed in the truth of Christ.

4) 2 Peter 3.15,16

This passage amplifies what we have seen in the other three, that it is necessary that the Scriptures be interpreted. In addition, this passage adds two important points. First, Peter applies this principle to Paul's writings. Previously, all the passages we have seen have related immediately to the Old Testament. But we now realize there are similar complications concerning New Covenant revelation. Thus, Peter considers Pauline teaching on equal ground with the authoritative Old Testament. Whether the "all his letters" refers to all thirteen of Paul's New Testament letters, or just those with which Peter had been familiar, the principle is the same. Second, Peter shows that the difficulty in understanding is not solely the fault of the reader. Even apart from our own problems, the writings themselves are "hard to understand".

5) 2 Timothy 2.15

Paul exhorts Timothy to be careful how he handles the Scripture, that he not be ashamed. Coupled with this charge are serious warnings about the consequences of mis-handling Scripture (vs. 16 ff.).



Summarizing the five passages, whether we are dealing with Old or New Covenant revelation, the Scriptures need to be interpreted. We must admit that the task is not easy. Nevertheless, this task is not too difficult for the Holy Spirit. Indeed, He is very able.

## B. The Holy Spirit our Teacher

### 1) John 16.4-16

During this Upper Room discourse of the Lord Jesus a heavy sadness came to fill the room. Soon their Friend and Master would die and one of their number would be his betrayer. Nevertheless, He says, "it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Intercessor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you" (v. 7). In this discourse, the function of the "Spirit of Truth" is described variously; He "teaches and reminds" (14.26); "witnesses" (15.26); "convinces" (16.8); and "proclaims and speaks" (16.13). The common factor of all these terms is that the Spirit of God is an Interpreter. It is important to realize that these promises are directly addressed to the Apostles (cf. the "you" 14.26, 15.27, 16.2). Applied to this situation, the Interpretive work of the Spirit regards; that which Jesus has spoken (14.26); things concerning Jesus (15.26); things received from Jesus (16.14); things of the Father which belong to Jesus (16.15); thus, the Spirit has no message of His own but speaks Jesus' message (16.13). These passages are foundational to viewing the New Testament as "the word of God" (1 Thessalonians 2.13). These promises do apply to the Church indirectly as it is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 2.20). This coming of the Spirit of Truth was evidenced in the bold Apostolic preaching of sin, and righteousness, and judgement recorded in the book of Acts. Because of the unique endowment of the Spirit given to the Apostles, we have twenty-seven New Testament documents which provide us with God's final message.

### 2) 2 Corinthians 3

Accusations against the trustworthiness of the Apostle Paul provoked him to defend his reputation as a Minister of Christ. This chapter is bracketed by his declarations of "sincerity" (2.17) and "renouncing the things hidden...commending ourselves" (4.2). Fittingly, it is at this point that he explains his role as a



minister of the New Covenant. The Old Covenant mediated by Moses is "in letters engraved on stones" and characterized as a "ministry of death". While the New Covenant mediated by Christ is "of the Spirit" and "the Spirit gives life". Here Paul elaborates on the functional relationship between Jesus and the Spirit taught by John in the Upper Room Discourse. For it is only in Christ and through the Spirit that the veil is lifted from the Old Covenant (vs. 14-18). This is just as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus had earlier experienced. When they did not recognize Jesus they did not understand the Scriptures. But as "their eyes were opened and they recognized Him" they recalled how their hearts burned while He explained the Scriptures to them. So, prior to Christ's exaltation and His sending of the Spirit, the Scriptures were in some sense closed. His activity is what creates a greater openness. On this side of Pentecost Paul declares, "For as many may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes" (2 Corinthians 1.20). Thus, we can experience a transforming liberty through the Spirit who lifts the veil from our eyes. We can understand the Word of God through the New Covenant interpretive ministry of the Spirit.

### 3) 1 Corinthians 2.10-16

In one of Paul's earlier letters to this same congregation, he also found himself forced to defend himself. Specifically, he takes pains to assert that despite his own "weakness and fear" as a messenger; his message is one of "power and wisdom" (2.3;1.24). To preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified is considered a "demonstration of the Spirit and of power". Such preaching evidenced the fact that the Exalted Christ had sent His Spirit and He was at work through His messengers. It was the wisdom of God to send the Spirit as His own interpreter. And because we have the Spirit "we might know the things freely given to us by God" (v. 12). This work of the Spirit is linked to the Word of God. One rendering of the last phrase of verse 13 is "comparing spiritual things with spiritual things"; the meaning being a comparison of Scripture with Scripture.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Christian has the "mind of Christ" as he holds the Spirit-inspired Apostolic testimony. We are to appropriate the Spirit's insight to enable us to understand the Spirit's message. Of course, it is basic to this passage that you have received the Spirit of the Exalted Jesus to rightly understand His Word.



4) 1 John 2.20,27

This final passage sets forth beyond a shadow of doubt the sufficiency of the work of the Holy Spirit as Interpreter. John writes his "dear children" in the "last hour" (v. 18). Understood redemptive-historically, the phrase "last hour" signifies the final stage of God's great plan of Salvation in which we now live, waiting for Christ's glorious appearing to consummate all things. This particular congregation was plagued by some former members (v.19) who had come to deny Jesus (vs. 22,23). This denial came through saying that they needed more than what Jesus could provide. They needed "another teacher", apart from which their faith would be second rate (vs. 26,27). Nevertheless, John sternly argues that they hold fast to Christ, "continue in Him" (v. 28). The seriousness of the warning amplifies Paul's teaching in 2 Corinthians 3, to drift from Christ and His Spirit is to have a veil over your eyes in the reading of Scripture. But in Christ, John's children can stand confidently. For as they have Christ, they are anointed by His Spirit who "teaches them about all things." They are not to be enslaved by the grip of a human teacher when they are already taught of God.

In conclusion, we must appreciate the genuine difficulty in understanding the Scriptures. Indeed, the true understanding is impossible apart from an Interpreter. But God is for His people His own interpreter. As we live in this epoch of the History of God's Salvation, we have the fullness of the Spirit as our anointing that we might see Christ as we understand the Scriptures.



## II. Grammatical Interpretation - the Spirit and Inspiration

We have already established that it is necessary for the Bible to be interpreted. Further, we have seen that one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to interpret God's Word for us. Now we move from that general teaching to see more particularly how the Spirit enables us to understand the Scriptures.

Some non-Christians tend to shy from dialogue with Christians because the Christian seems to speak a whole different language. Even a "simple" Christian word like "sin" is often not understood by the non-Christian. "Hey man! You don't speak my language," too often this charge is levied against us by the world. What is even worse is that it is too often true. When the Church becomes a back-water movement speaking in an unknown code, we have drifted very far from our Lord's command to "Go into all the world..." Thus, though we may share the airwaves with the non-Christian media, the world does not watch our programs or listen to our tunes. The precedent for trying to be understood with the Gospel is the coming of the God-man Himself. We can be aided in our understanding of the Scriptures through knowing more about our language itself. Accordingly, we must be aware of various difficulties in language as we strive to understand our Scriptures.

### A. Word/Concept Problem

When we use a particular word we cannot be sure that our hearers understand the word in the way we intend. "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is the Master - that's all." <sup>2</sup> Each of us can attest to the fact that there is often a difference between the thoughts in our head and the words that come out of our mouth. How often have we been in a situation where we "can't find the right word"? As you read this paper now, there is a degree of difference between the meaning I have and the meaning you receive. In our study of Scripture, we must be aware of this word/concept problem. Let us look at some different ways of understanding three different words.



## 1) Faith

When we use the word faith, do we mean saving faith, intellectual assent, religion, the practice of our faith, or maybe indifference? For the Bible uses the same word to mean all these different things. Here is a small sampling of how the Greek word πιστεύω is translated:

1 John 5.1 - to believe in Jesus

2 Thessalonians 2.11 - to believe falsely

1 Thessalonians 2.4 - to be entrusted with the Gospel

James 2.19 - to give intellectual assent

A further complication is to ask, what are the literary contexts in which the word faith appears? That is, who is doing the believing and what is being believed.

## 2) Bark

Just to show the difficulty in a different form, consider this second example. How do we interpret the word bark? According to Webster's dictionary, you may be thinking of several things:<sup>3</sup>

"the outside covering of trees and some plants"; "a small sailing vessel"; "a form of medicine"; "to speak sharply"; "to advertise a show by shouting in public"; "material used in tanning or dyeing"; or perhaps "the characteristic sound that a dog makes". You can imagine the possible confusion in the use of this simple word!

Here is a phrase in which the word bark is used, "tonight I will bark". With this added information, you know that tonight I am either going to become a tree, go sailing, take medicine, speak sharply, advertise a show, do some tanning or dyeing, act like a dog, or any other variation of meaning. At this point you have difficulty really knowing what I plan to do, or perhaps you have recognized this phrase from Robert Frost's, "Canis Major";<sup>4</sup>

"...I'm a poor underdog, But tonight I will bark with the Great Overdog, That romps through the dark..."

## 3) Justification

Another illustration of this word/concept problem is often seen in the use of technical terms of Systematic Theology. Systematic Theologians study the whole scope of the Bible and outline its teaching under various headings. They ask what is the message of the whole Bible about, say, Justification. It is Systematic Theology



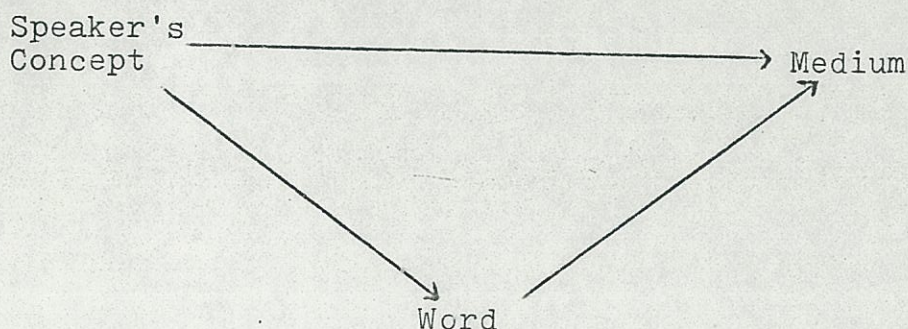
which provides Bible students with handy little definitions of various words like, "Justification is to be made just as if you have never sinned." Most often we think of this legal picture: a guilty sinner fully pardoned by a just God through the sacrifice of Jesus. This is indeed the Good News of the Bible. However, we must be careful to remember that the Bible is not a handbook of Systematic Theology. Rather it is a collection of historical narratives, genealogies, songs, poems, sermons, prayers, and letters. As we read through these writings, we cannot cram the full theological definition of a concept into every example. This is part of the problem of labeling theological doctrines with Biblical words like justification. Never is there a full one to one correspondence of a theological definition and the term itself. For example, forms of the Greek word for justify, δικαιω are used in various ways in the New Testament:

- a) Romans 3.24 - This is the sense of the word that is most widely emphasized by Christians. This is indeed the heart of the Gospel. The many volumes written about this concept have not exhausted its rich meaning. However, we must remember that this is a verse and not a volume. As the word is used here, it does not carry all the meaning of a systematic theologian's outline of the doctrine of justification.
- b) Romans 6.7 - What?!? You do not see how the word justify is used here? That is because your Bible probably does not use the word. The only translation I found that did was the American Standard. This might be reflective of the influence of systematic theology; because many systematic theologians' outlines of Romans teach that Chapter 3 explains justification and Chapter 6 explains sanctification. But Paul does not allow himself to fit in such hard and fast categories. He writes, "anyone who has died has been justified from sin." I will not attempt to explain the full meaning of the text here. Suffice it to say that we must<sup>be</sup> careful that we not let our systematic theology dictate our interpretation. Rather, theological outlines are to be constructed from faithful interpretation.
- c) 1 Timothy 3.16 - If you were not alarmed by the last citation, you are by now. Does this verse deny the teaching that Jesus is without sin? If he was sinless, why would he need to be justified?

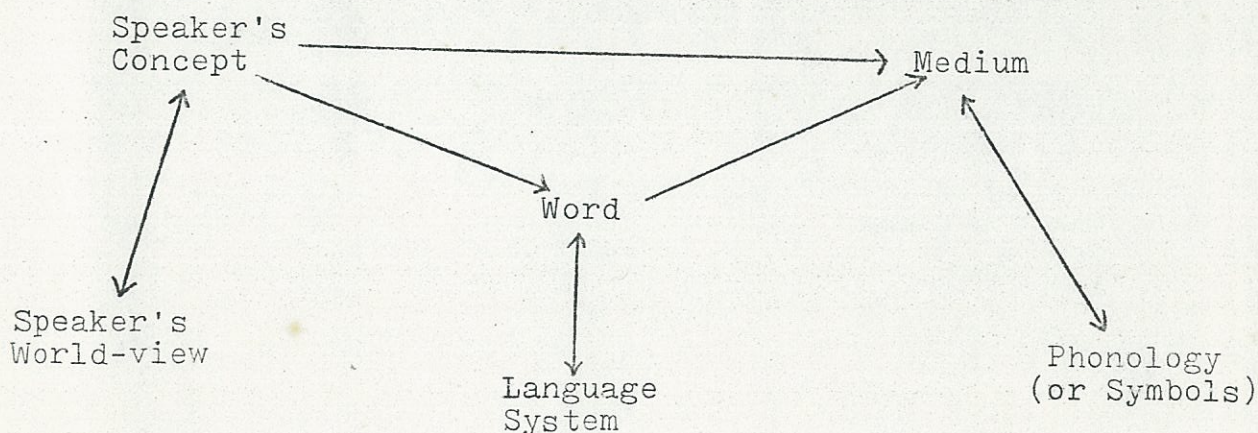


There is a conflict only as we try to cram the full systematic theology of a definition of justification into every occurrence of a form of the Greek word for justify. Rather, we must respect the text by striving to say only what it says - no more, no less.

#### B. Background Meaning of Words



The triangle diagram above<sup>5</sup> is designed to illustrate part of the process of communication. Beginning in the upper left hand corner, I start with a particular idea or concept. This is anything in my mind which I want to communicate. Believing that you are most familiar with word communication, instead of grunts and groans or something, I select a particular word. The word I select will not fully convey the thought in my head. Often there will be more detail to my concept which I will/can not put in to words. Finally, I select a medium through which to give you these words. In this situation, I am communicating through the medium of writing. Were we to meet face to face, I could use the medium of speech. Instead of scrawling my words in pen and ink I would blow them across my vocal cords. Each of the points on the triangle require some further background details:





My initial concept I wanted to communicate did not come from a vacuum. What I wanted to share, the way I wanted to share it, and the very fact that I wanted to share anything at all, reflects my entire comprehension of reality. My "world-view" stands behind every concept that enters my mind. Each person has a somewhat different world-view. For instance, I do not have the same view of reality that a black woman raised in Mozambique would have.

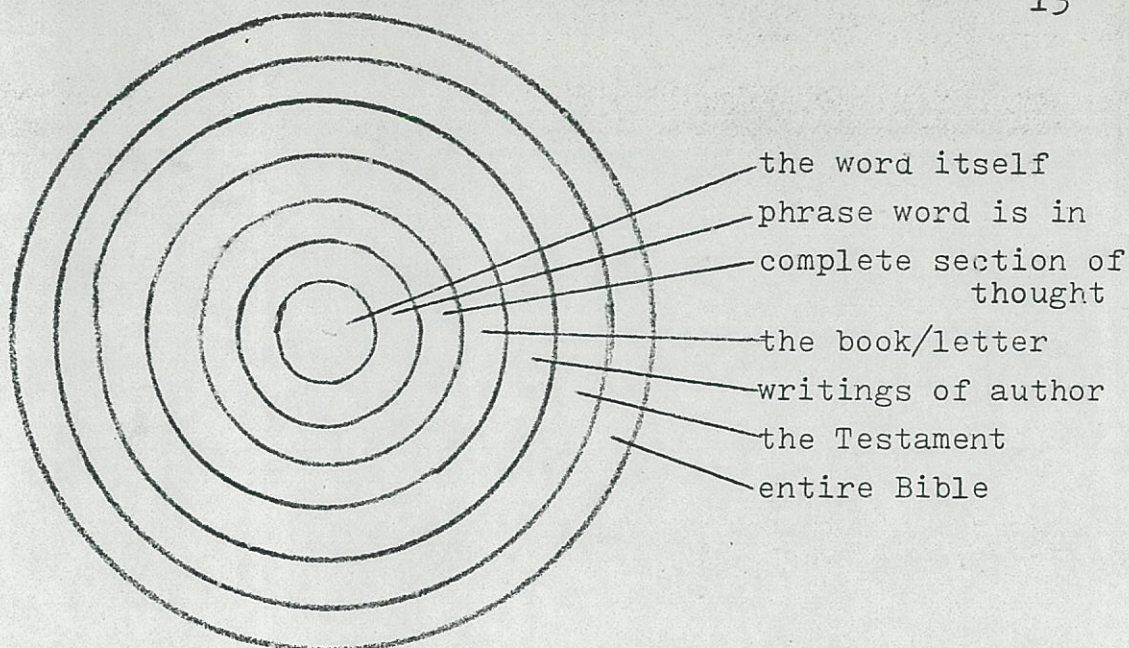
Standing behind the particular word I chose to convey my message is an entire language system. In this case it is the English language system. As we have seen in the word/concept problem, there are other possible words I could have selected to convey much the same meaning.

The medium which I employ to convey my message also has a diverse background. In writing, even the appearance of the paper I present, **and** the script I employ, conveys a message even apart from the content. Just glancing at the cover and arrangement of a book says something in itself. This fact was considered by the publishers of the New International version of the Bible who employed an artist just to make the book look as appealing as possible. If I chose speech to convey my message, the diverse study of phonology is important. The speaking noise, even apart from the content carries a message of its own. Consider the effectiveness of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky":<sup>6</sup> "Twas brillig, and the slithy toves Did gyre and gimble in the wabe: All mimsy were the borogoves, And the mome raths outgrabe...."

### C. Context

The complications with words themselves are compounded because we do not deal with words in isolation. In studying the Scriptures there are a series of contexts, each of which has a bearing on the interpretation. Part of this complex of contexts unfolds as follows: the word itself, the phrase the word is in, the complete section of thought, the entire letter or book, the full collection of writings by the same human author, the Testament in which the word is found, and the whole of Scripture itself. Each of these contexts help to shape the interpretation. Thus, it is impossible





to understand a word in isolation from its surroundings. Because of this complex of contexts, it is essential for the Bible student to faithfully read the Scriptures, both in sweeping overview and in detailed investigation. Through our life's work of comparing Scripture with Scripture, the Spirit will continually unfold new aspects of His truth.

#### D. Theological Complications

Besides the difficulties already cited, there are two theological complications that must also be mentioned. One is a result of our creatureliness, the other is the result of our sinfulness.

1) As creatures, a great gulf separates us from God our Creator. If the creature is going to know the Creator, the Creator God must take the initiative. Man will know God only if God makes Himself known to man. Thankfully, God has revealed Himself to us. God's revelation to man has taken various forms including: our conscience (Romans 1.19); the created world (Romans 1.20); the Bible (2 Timothy 3.16); and by God becoming man (John 14.9). Because of our creatureliness, we will never have an exhaustive understanding of God and His purposes. Scripture is not exhaustive truth, nevertheless it is true truth. The sheer limitations of our humanity make God's judgments "unsearchable" (Romans 11.33); the gift of His Son "inexpressible" (2 Corinthians 9.15); and our joy in Him "inexpressible" (1 Peter 1.8).

2) A further theological complication is a result of sin. Particularly, the sin of rebellious men who tried to raise a



standard for their own glory. The account of this sin is recorded in Genesis 11.1-8. God's just punishment of this rebellion was to "confuse their language so they will not understand each other" (Genesis 11.7). This event at the Tower of Babel has complicated the process of communication since then. Notice the judgment is more than just the creation of different languages. Rather, it is evidenced as people who speak the same language do not understand each other. All of the communication difficulties we have cited thus far are directly attributable to this event.

#### E. Basic Commitment

Realizing these grammatical and linguistic difficulties might provoke us to be less dogmatic in our view of the Bible's accuracy and authority. After all, there are so many interpretations, so many translations, so many disagreements. Some have suggested that the Bible is not really God's Word at all. I must say a word here about my basic commitment. Every fact we believe has a pre-supposition standing behind it. For instance, if you believe the reports on the Evening News program, you pre-suppose that the reporter is speaking truthfully, that his sources are accurate. This fact is so widely assumed that it is often not even questioned. When you come to my home, you will believe (I trust) that my roof will not fall on your head and my chairs will not collapse under your body. Such a pre-supposition is a starting point to everything we do, say, and think. For centuries the basic commitment of most people in Western society was that the Bible is the inspired, authoritative Word of God. However, over the past few centuries there has been a permeation of the thought that man stands secure, apart from any dependence on God, questioning whether there even is a God. Thus, the common consensus of our day is that there are no absolutes, no bedrock of unquestioned truth; socially, politically, economically, judicially, or morally. Dogmatic statements are disdained in favor of dialogue. If any sure Truth is to be found, you have no right to force it on anyone else. "Don't violate my space man!" It is a tragic observation that the downward spiral of our society parallels the rise of this rejection of God and His Word. Despite the current unpopularity of the historic position, my basic commitment is that the Bible is indeed the inspired, authoritative Word of God. It is from this position that I approach the Bible for study. My belief in inspiration implies



a unity and wholeness to the message of the Bible.<sup>7</sup> Though God used many human authors who wrote in several different languages, the Bible is ultimately the Word of the one living and true God. Thus, there is no inherent self-contradiction to the message but a basic agreement. We must be careful not to put ourselves in the position of sitting in judgment over God and His Word. All other texts must be judged by the interpreters. However, this is the one text which must rightfully judge its reader.

#### F. Incarnation and Inspiration

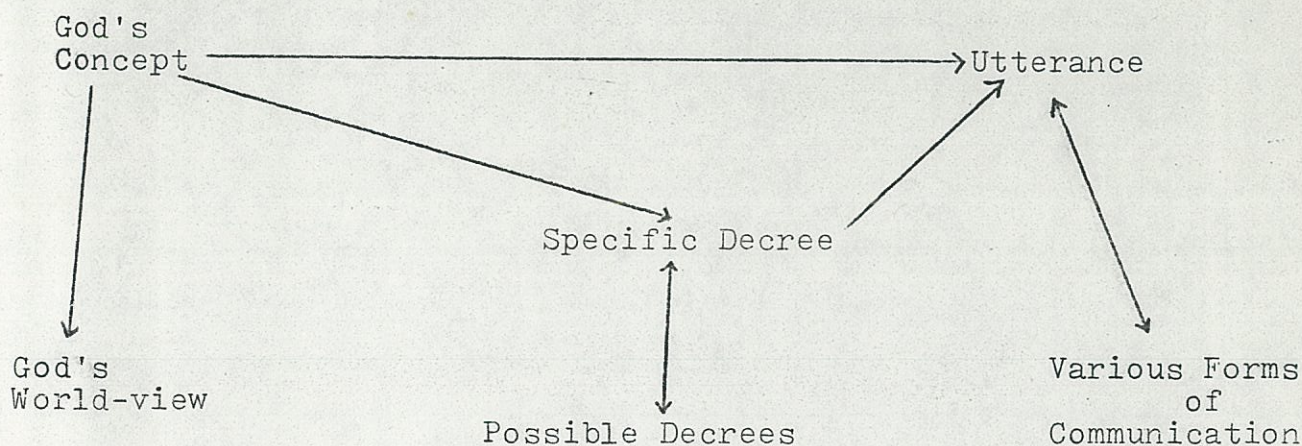
We have seen some of the difficulties and confusion which complicates communication. Some people have great difficulty believing that God could or would get involved in this mayhem of words. He is the Creator who reigns over this world, how could He be concerned to speak to the man on the street in plain language?!? On the contrary, ours is the God who became a first century Palestinian Jew to speak to us. Jesus was fully human, even "tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4.15). In the incarnation we learn that humanity does not mean the same as sinfulness or error. Humanity is limiting, but it is not necessarily defiling.<sup>8</sup> This mystery, that He who is fully God, is now also fully man, is central to a proper understanding of Scripture. In the ministry of Jesus the Servant, we see that God speaks simply to the man on the street. As the Sovereign Lord, Jesus also keeps His Word for man, "and the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10.35). Just as God the Word became flesh, yet without sin, so the Word of God can be recorded accurately into the words of men. Neither incarnation nor inscripturation defile the Word.

#### G. Our Speaking God

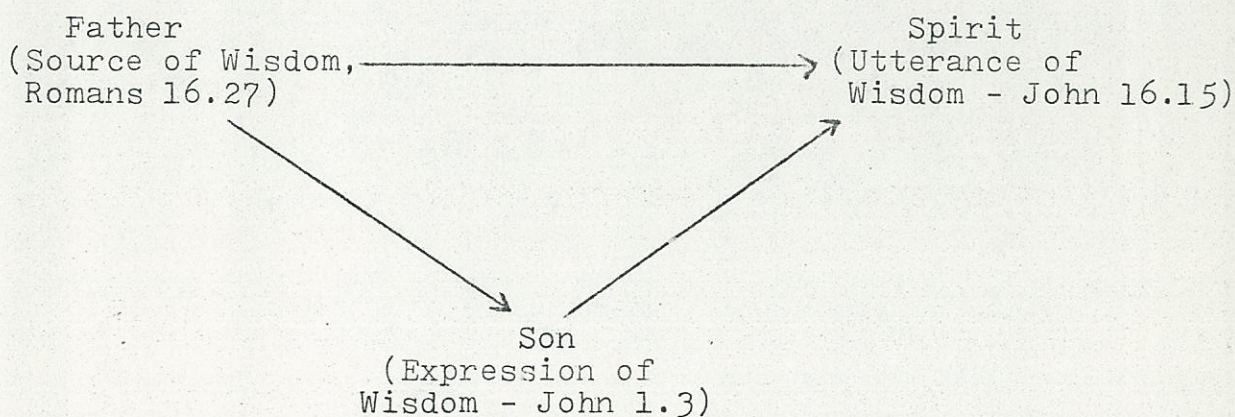
Recognizing the complications of speech, some have sought to make speech a unique ability of man. Thus, according to this notion, when God speaks to man He is somehow out of His element, doing something that is not natural to Him. As if a speaking God was God wearing some odd, borrowed costume. However, this concept is just the reversal of the truth. For the God of the Bible is not made in man's image. Rather, we read that it is man who is made in the image of God. When man speaks, he, as God's image bearer, is doing what God has done first. Speech is itself an attribute, an



integral part of the character of God.<sup>9</sup> Contrary to the false gods of the nations who are only "dumb idols", it is said of Israel's God, "by the Word of the Lord the heavens were made" (Psalm 33.6). God's creative Word is all powerful. "God not only controls all things, but He also speaks to his creatures. Only in biblical religion does the highest being, the ultimate being, confront us in personal address."<sup>10</sup> The diagram we have seen for human language finds its parallel in divine language.



The image bearer speaks like the Image Himself speaks. The diagram of human language is analagous to Divine language. Ultimately, the diagram finds its parallel in the Trinity, the person of the Godhead Himself:



Though we want to avoid rigid compartmentalizations, these are the characteristic roles of the members of the Trinity. The Scriptures declare the Father as "the only wise God": Jesus mediates God's Wisdom as the only begotten Son, "All things came into being



that has come into being" (John 1.3). The Spirit serves uniquely in the communication of this Wisdom to us. Jesus said, "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said, that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you" (John 16.15). So for God to speak is very natural. Indeed, it is part of his very being. And as we speak, we demonstrate that we bear the image of our God who speaks. If we ascribe error or confusion to the Bible, then we must make a similar charge against God Himself. This also has ethical implications: if the Bible contains errors, the Godhead contains error, then perhaps our speech should be sprinkled with errors since we are to reflect the character of God.<sup>11</sup> All of God's speech, whether in his intra-Trinitarian counsel, or recorded in the Bible, conveys the same authority.

From a right understanding of the Incarnation and the Trinity we can properly understand the Bible itself. We must zealously defend both a pure Incarnation and a pure Inscripturation of the Word of God. That is, the Word of God has remained fully divine while becoming fully the word/flesh of man, undistorted by sin.

#### H. The Spirit uses Human Authors

The Bible is a record of the revelation experiences of men. There were many men in several different cultures throughout several hundred years who had an encounter with the living God; from Adam in Eden to John on the isle of Patmos. However, there would be no accurate record of their experiences apart from an infallible witness. The Holy Spirit Himself serves to accurately inscribe these events in Scripture. To record these events He employs the services of various human authors. "For prophecy never had its' origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were moved along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1.21). The Spirit did not use these men as puppets or secretaries. Rather, in His Sovereignty He insured that the very words they desired to write were the God-breathed words of Scripture (cf. 2 Timothy 3.16). For example, Luke's Gospel is considered God's message just at the point of Luke's personal research and desires (Luke 1.1-4). Paul's writings also serve to illustrate this fact. For though he clearly saw himself as God's messenger (1 Corinthians 14.37; 1 Thessalonians 2.13), to reject God's message was to reject Paul as a person. This is seen in the Galatian epistle in which Paul defends himself (1.6-2.20)



in order to defend the Gospel of Christ. Thus, the Spirit who provided the revelation experience of the Biblical authors so fills them that they faithfully testify the very Word of God in their own words.

These messengers of God acted on behalf of the whole people of God throughout the ages. The author of Hebrews explains that the people of faith act as "a great cloud of witnesses" (12.1) to God's faithfulness which is at work in us who have tasted the "powers of the coming age" (6.5). Peter said "we have the word of the Prophets made more certain" (2 Peter 1.19). Speaking of the Old Testament authors Peter also said, "who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing..." (1 Peter 1.11). This side of Christ's coming, we understand the message of the prophets more clearly than they did themselves. The corporate nature of Scripture is further evidenced by Peter who wrote, "no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophets own interpretation" (2 Peter 2.20). The example of Paul's sufferings in the proclamation of his message, shows that he was serving for the good of others and not for himself (cf. 2 Corinthians 11.23ff.).

Some have criticized the teaching that the Scriptures are inspired saying that it makes religion merely an assent to cold, life-less propositions. Yet, Jesus Himself rejects this charge entirely when He says, "The words I have spoken to you are Spirit and they are life" (John 6.63). The person who reads the Scripture meets face to face with God Himself. The Gospel writers wrote to move their readers to a response of faith. "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20.31). Paul prayed for his readers "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation, so that you may know him better" (Ephesians 1.17).

### I. Translations and the Spirit

How can we be sure that the translations of Scripture we have now are still conveying God's message? Much can be learned here through the study of history and archeology. Scholars have shown that the



text of our Bibles agree almost completely with ancient texts like the Dead Sea scrolls. No major point of doctrine is under dispute through textual variants.<sup>12</sup> The abundance of parchments and ancient script as evidence of the continuity of God's message through the ages is staggering; to date there are thousands.<sup>13</sup> There has been more scholarship invested in the translation and transmission of the Bible than any other book. Yet, the most conclusive proof of the accuracy of our translations comes in the relationship between the Word of God inscripturated and incarnated. The Word become flesh made it quite clear after His ascension that He would be with His Church (cf. John 14.18; Matthew 28.20). Apart from God's reliable testimony to Himself, we would have no sure knowledge of the Word incarnate. Again we rely on the pre-suppositional argument, which we admit is circular. Because the bottom line of all arguments has this circular character; all make final appeal to someone or something. In this case we appeal to the truthfulness and trustworthiness of God and His Word. We can build upon the solid foundation of "the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 3). Paul asks, "How can they believe in the one of whom they have never heard?" speaking of the incarnate Word. God meets this great need through equipping His messengers with an inscripturated Word, "faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ" (Romans 10.14,17). None of us today has an inerrant translation of the Bible. We must honestly face the fact that despite the best of human scholarship, two thousand years of transmission have made some passages obscure. However, the fact that the original autographs of Scripture were inerrant means that there is a solid foundation which bridges our translation to the autographs.<sup>14</sup> Even if we did have an inerrant translation, the limitations of our creaturliness and sinfulness would hinder completely accurate understanding. The sixty-six different books which our translations contain proclaim a unified testimony to the same central Gospel truth. Upon this message, so clearly declared throughout the pages of God's inscripturated Word, we can build our lives. For our God has promised, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13.5). Some, rejecting all this confusion about words, simply want to "have Jesus". They seek a Jesus who would not be so concerned about words; a Jesus who is comfortable being anything they want



Him to be. However, there is no other source of information to learn anything significant about the historical Jesus except the Bible. And the Jesus of the Bible refuses to be squeezed into this mold of a cosmic bell-boy. He lets His strong words fall as they will; often they are a sword of division and a source of contempt. His crucifixion evidences how little sinful men are concerned about the truth of God. It is the message of the incarnate Word which will judge those who reject the true message of the inscripturated Word. Jesus said, "as for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."(John 12.47-50)



### III. Historical Interpretation - the Spirit in History

Does it really matter that Isaiah's vision of God occurred "in the year of King Uzziah's death" (Isaiah 6.1); or that the Assyrian king who invaded Judah was named Sennacherib? (2 Chronicles 32.1). Is it all that significant that "Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene" (Luke 3.1) when John the Baptist began his ministry or that "Quirinius was governor of Syria" (Luke 2.2) in the year that Jesus was born? These, and hundred of other historical references in Scripture, point to the fact that the Bible is a historical document. From the Garden of Eden to the isle of Patmos, the saga of God and His people is unfolded.

As we have just done with the subject of Grammar, we now examine the discipline of History to learn how to more faithfully handle the Word of God. First, we will re-enter the "kitchen" and learn six basic principles which will aid our general understanding. Then we will "dine" together, making particular application of these principles to our understanding of the Holy Spirit.

#### A. Principles of Biblical History

##### 1) Fact of God's Action in Space and Time

Much scholarly discussion has gone on during the last century or so about the "historical Jesus." Serious challenges have been raised about whether or not there even was a real Jesus. "Perhaps the man Scripture calls Jesus is only the figment of someone's imagination." The implications of this speculation are tremendous. For if we can not believe the records about Him who is the leading actor in the drama of Scripture, a cloud of doubt hangs over the entire Bible. As men and women have done for centuries, we can trust in the Bible's record of Jesus. And as we trust the cornerstone and foundation, we can place our faith in the whole of the Bible. The record of God's dealings with man through several thousand years testify to God's great justice and faithfulness. Indeed, it is true of all God's actions, "this has not been done in a corner" (Acts 26.26). The religion of the Bible is not just "personal" or "private". Rather, the inscripturated Word is an open, historical declaration. The Psalmist boldly declared, "I will also speak of



thy testimonies before kings, and shall not be ashamed" (Psalm 119.46). Our secular culture, unable to destroy God's Truth, has sought to "put it in its place." But God has given the Scripture to be a bright torchlight to all men of His judgments. "Thou hast given a banner to those who fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the Truth" (Psalm 60.4). Our calling is to be just as open in our witness of Jesus through our words and actions. This confidence will embolden us to make our stand for His Kingdom and righteousness, even in the face of adversity.

History is important to the Bible because ultimately history is "His Story." The story commences as He announces the universe into existence in six creative days; climaxes as He "suffered under Pontius Pilate"; and consumates as He returns to bring history to a close.

## 2) A Biased History

As I tried to explain earlier, all people have certain basic commitments or pre-suppositions. The bottom line of all our thinking stems from the faith commitment we have made to someone or something. Because of this basic commitment, all of life has a distinct religious character. This is evidenced by the tenacity with which our pre-suppositions are held.

Historians also have these kind of basic religious commitments. Every writer's treatment of history is subject to his particular bias. This is an inescapable aspect of the communication process. There is no way to avoid such pre-suppositions. But it is essential that we be keenly aware of them. Following the anti-God drift of our culture, many historians have taken a very critical approach to the Bible. Much critical scholarship is done from the religious commitment of agnosticism or atheism. Some have been so hardened in sin that they have intentionally sought to destroy the Christian faith, "professing to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1.22). The human authors of Scripture also had definite pre-suppositions. Their faith commitment is evidenced in the definite bias of their testimony. Among the hearers of Jesus, Mark records that Jesus' own family said of Him, "He has lost His senses" (Mark 3.21). While the Pharisees declared that "He is possessed by Beelzebul" (Mark 3.22).



It is quite evident that neither of these opinions is the perspective from which Mark wrote. He has his own bias. He is part of the community of faith who confess of Jesus, "Thou art the Christ" (Mark 8.29). Mark writes a "gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mark 1.1). Therefore, the bias from which Mark writes is that these are the authoritative words of Jesus the Lord. Similarly, this is the perspective from which all of Scripture is written.

### 3) God-centered History

This aspect of history and interpretation rebukes the me-centered spirit of our age. The Bible is not primarily a book of "holy heroes." The stage of the drama of redemption is crowded with a spectacular supporting cast. But their greatness is over-shadowed by the one from whom and through whom and to whom are all things.

Because of this perspective, an apt sub-title for the Bible could be "The Visitation of God". This divine visit comes "at many times and in various ways" (Hebrews 1.1). To Abraham, God showed Himself as a burning torch-pot, passing through a street of blood to ratify His Covenant. To Jacob, God was an attacker in the night who broke him into a "Prince with God". To Moses, the I AM Himself engulfed a bush in flames. To Israel, the Lord of the Covenant filled the tabernacle in a cloud of glory. To us, the Word made flesh tabernacled among us as the bearer of the Spirit. It is this coming of God in flesh, Jesus Christ, which is the visitation of God par excellence. By contrast, all else is type and shadow. He alone is full of grace and truth. Now, through our faith in Jesus, we are visited by the indwelling Godhead (John 14.23). We eagerly await the Lord's visit which will never end, "Behold the tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them" (Revelation 21.3). So when we read Scripture, our prayer ought to be to see it in perspective, to see the Lord of the Book in the Book. This is not to slight the dignity of man, but to see pre-eminently the God who made man great.

### 4) Main Purpose

The main purpose of the historical record of God's visitation is to declare God's Salvation. There is hardly an area of life which is untouched by Holy Scripture. However, the central theme is to



detail the plan of God's comprehensive redemption. Paul exhorts Timothy to continue in "the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3.15). This salvation touches every area of life. God has won a redemptive victory which makes the whole world new. The Scriptures focus on the saving work of Jesus. This accounts for the imbalance in the proportion of the historical accounts. Sometimes the Scriptures jump over periods of hundreds of years, making very little mention of them. But we are given very detailed accounts of God's redemptive work in the Red Sea/Sinai event and in the Exiles. The greatest emphasis is on the Lord Jesus and His work. Four full testimonies of His life and ministry are given. All four give maximum attention to the week of His passion. This emphasis is not to imply any insignificance to the other themes of Scripture. Rather, it is important that we keep the centrality of redemption in focus so that we might properly investigate other teachings of Scripture.

#### 5) Unfolding Clarity of the Message

Our Bible is the end result of the compilation of writings from a span of hundreds of years. Proper understanding of one part can only be gained through seeing the whole. Augustine once said of the two testaments, "the New is in the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed." I remember how overwhelming this sounded to me as a new Christian. I was so eager to learn but was skeptical at the thought of ever reading all sixty-six books of the Bible. Especially with all the other important things High School students have to do! After having read the Bible through a dozen or so times, I confess it has not been easy. Yet I can thankfully say that the discipline of reading God's Word has been a blessed nourishment. It is this aspect of unfolding clarity which keeps the reading of Scripture fresh and alive. I am constantly amazed at the beautiful intricacy of the tapestry of Scripture.

As the Apostle Paul wrote the Galatian congregation, his disappointment is quite obvious. Some of them had sought to put the brakes on God's unfolding plan of salvation. Paul's anger reflects the severity of the danger they were inviting. For they were in danger of missing Jesus, the very substance of the Old Testament shadows. Paul writes, "Before this faith (in Christ - v.22) came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith



should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law" (Galatians 3.23-5). The forward progress of redemption means that we have been called from the bondage of the law and unto faith/Christ. This forward progress will affect the way we interpret Scripture. We must be careful not to slight the glory of Christ by neglecting the fullness of His finished work. John's prologue makes a contrast between Jesus and Moses. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1.17). This does not mean that Moses was the bearer of error. Rather, the word "truth" should be understood as "fulfillment". The rituals of the Old Covenant "are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ" (Colossians 2.17). This concept of fulfillment is born out by the structure of John's Gospel. For in it we learn many ways in which Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament shadow; the true - Lamb, Heavenly Manna, Shepherd, Sabbath rest, Vine, Light unto the Nations, etc. Remembering this principle of unfolding clarity will enable us to faithfully interpret both shadow and substance. That which is less clear is properly interpreted by what is more clear.

#### 6) Form of the Message

Throughout history, various groups have sought to put unique emphasis on certain points of Scripture. Perhaps the most common example is the "Red Letter Edition" in which all the words of Jesus are printed in red ink. Some critical scholars have put undue emphasis on the "deeds" of God in Scripture at the expense of the words. (I've yet to learn how we know anything about the deeds apart from the words!) Nevertheless, these emphasis' betray a lack of appreciation for the structural form of Scripture. God has not just thrown some stories together willy-nilly. Instead the drama of redemption unfolds as a three-act play; Announcement, Event, and Explanation. That is, God announces what He will do; He does it; then He gives a word of explanation. An example of this form is seen in the Exodus event. Announcement - "I am the Lord and I will bring you from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them and will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment." (6.6). Event - "Moses stretched out his hand over



the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back into its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the Lord swept them into the sea...But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground" (14.27,29). Explanation - "They will know that I am the Lord their God, who brought them out of Egypt so that I might dwell among them. I am the Lord their God" (29.46). We see this pattern carried out in all the significant events of Scripture; including the birth of Isaac, conquest of Canaan, and the Exile. In fact, the whole of Scripture can be held together this way. The whole Old Testament can be summarized as announcement of Jesus' coming; the Gospels describe the events of Jesus' life and ministry; and the Acts and Epistles explain the significance of Jesus' coming.

Understanding this structure helps to see why we speak of a "closed canon." God does not intend to add to our Bibles by giving any more revelation for the good of the whole people of God. Jesus' death/resurrection/ascension is the central event of Scripture, and this deed is called a "finished work." Therefore, the twenty-seven explanatory documents of the New Testament contain the full explanation of its significance. Jude speaks of the "faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (v. 3). He could just as easily be speaking of redemption or revelation. Both have their consummation in Christ's finished work. When God acts for our redemption, he gives an explanatory word of revelation. With the "once for all" work of redemption in Christ, we have received God's final word of revelation to the Church, "in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son" (Hebrews 1.2).

## B. The Spirit in History

It is difficult to understand the relationship that Old Testament believers had with God. Was Abraham saved? If so, was he saved by faith and/or works? Was he filled with the Spirit? If the Holy Spirit did not come until Pentecost how could he be? These are some questions we need answers for. To help us think about the answers I want to try to apply these six principles of history to the ministry of the Spirit.

### 1) Old Testament Believers and the Spirit

In order to understand the relation between the Spirit and the Old Testament believer, we should examine several relevant passages.



In Genesis we find a rather obscure reference to the Spirit in the life of Joseph. Remember how he successfully interpreted Pharaoh's dream regarding the famine? After doing so, Pharaoh wanted Joseph to administer a food distribution plan saying, "Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?" Since this passage does not detail the precise relation of Joseph and the Spirit, we need to look at other Scriptures for further insight. When Moses was overwhelmed by the awesome responsibility of leading the Israelites through the wilderness, God devised a plan to ease his burden, "Bring to me seventy of Israel's elders...and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them...when the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again" (Numbers 11.16,17,24,25). Another of this group who was filled with the Spirit was Bezalel son of Uri. God told Moses, "I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability, and knowledge in all kinds of crafts" (Exodus 31.3). This endowment of the Spirit was to enable Bezalel to construct the beautiful Tabernacle. But he was not alone in his ability. God continued saying, "Also I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I have commanded you" (Exodus 31.6). During the transition of leadership, Joshua was given a special measure of the Spirit as Moses had received. "Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses laid his hands on him" (Deuteronomy 34.9). Scripture gives similar descriptions of the giving of the Spirit to the Judges: "the Lord raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to deliver them, Othniel the son of Kenaz...and the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel" (Judges 3.9,10); "so the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon" (6.34); and "The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him, and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him" (13.24,25). Further along in Israel's history, we read of Elijah and Elisha (cf. 1 Kings 18.12). We have the unusual account of Elisha receiving the double portion of Elijah's Spirit as Elijah was suddenly taken up in the chariot of fire (cf. 2 Kings 2.7-18). It is funny to read about the frantic searching of the prophets from Jericho who sought Elijah. Elisha reacts to their futile effort with the time-less statement of



humiliation, "I told you so!" (v. 18). One of the most widely studied individuals who received the Spirit in the Old Testament is Saul. Prior to his installation as king, we read the promise of Samuel to Saul, "the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man" (1 Samuel 10.6;11.6). Then we read about the tragic conclusion of Saul's reign, "the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord terrorized him" (16.14). Nevertheless, the purposes of God continued, "and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward" (16.13). It would be helpful here to cite some summary thoughts about these Old Testament passages.

- a) Each of the recipients of the Spirit was a leader in the Covenant community.
- b) At least part of the reason they were given the Spirit was for the good of the whole community. Elders, craftsmen, statesmen, and judges were uniquely gifted by God to benefit His Covenant people.
- c) The focus of the narratives is not on the spiritual condition of the Spirit-endowed individuals. Rather, the focus is on their role in the history of the whole people of God. Too many Bible students seem to follow the lead of the prophets of Jericho who engaged in a frantic and vain search for Elijah. The God-centered perspective should help us realize that the purposes of God move forward despite the death of an Elijah or the disobedience of a Saul. This is not to minimize the intimate concern of our Heavenly Father, but to put it in perspective in the purposes of God. So to ask a full explanation of what is going on in the life of Saul is to misunderstand the text. That would really be a question which the Scripture does not ask. Though we are given a much more developed theology of the Spirit in the fuller New Testament revelation.

## 2) New Testament References to the Spirit in the Old Testament

The two dominant themes of the passages we have that speak to this issue concern the issues of guidance and salvation.

- a) Guidance - Generally, God provided guidance for His people through the Prophets. We learn from Stephen that the ministry of the Prophets was performed in the power of the Spirit. He strongly rebukes the unbelieving Jews who failed to realize that