

INTRODUCTION

As an introduction to this book, I would like to acquaint you with my method of Bible study. The reason for that is because this book was not written in the same style as most Bible related materials. I have had the Biblesoft™ program in my computer for years. It contains a whole library of books: Such as a concordance, Vine's, Strong's, Nelson's, Nave's, and many more helpful accessories. I have nine translations of the Bible and some commentaries. All these things have been a great help in my studies, but I have learned one thing on my own that I would like to pass on. When I read an epistle, I try to remember I am reading mail that was written to other people and in a different age. I think of the environment in the days the mail was delivered to them. I remember that those who wrote the letters and those who received them were familiar with the miraculous events that were occurring at that time. Those who wrote the letters were inspired by the Holy Spirit and **many** of those who received the letters were endowed with spiritual gifts. Those who may not have had a spiritual gift themselves were closely associated with those who did. They all knew of the miraculous events that occurred as the results of the spiritual gifts in the church (1 Cor. 12-14).

In order for me to have a clearer understanding of a letter, I try to mentally place myself on a pew in the building of the first century church that had received the letter. Then when I read passages that pertain to the Holy Ghost or spiritual gifts I try to understand them as I would have if I were in the congregation that received

the letter. When I read a passage such as 1 John 2:20, “But ye have an unction from the Holy One; and ye know all things”, I don’t try to make a present day application. I try to understand it as I would have if I had lived in the first century when people did have the unction from the Holy One. Just as there were things written aforetime for the learning of people in this Christian age, (Rom. 15:4) there are things that were written in the New Testament in the first century that are there **for our learning**. We have been taught to try to make some kind of present day application to each verse. However, that may not be the best way for us to understand the verse. When I am reading in the book of Luke or the book of Acts I try to remember that those books are two letters that were written to a man named Theophilus, and if I understand them as he was to understand them I will make a correct exegesis of the passages. Luke said he wrote to Theophilus in order for him to **understand** the certainty of the things wherein he had been instructed (Luke 1:4).

I didn’t try to make very many present day applications of the Scriptures that I used in this book. That is because I tried to direct the thoughts of the readers toward understanding the passages in the same way that those who received the letters in the first century would have understood them. John told the Christians to whom he wrote that they had an anointing from God and didn’t need any man to teach them anything (1 John 2:27). Could I make a present day application of that statement that was written to a first century church? If I mentally place myself among those

people, observe the miracles done by those **who had the anointing of the Holy Spirit** and try to understand that statement as they understood it; I believe I can rightly divide the Word. Also, Paul wrote that the sealing of the Holy Ghost was the **earnest of their inheritance** (Eph. 1:13, 14). The gift of the Spirit was God's pledge or guaranty **to them** in the absence of the written Word. A present day application is that we have the written Word as our guaranty. I can then mentally return myself to the present, **and recognize those verses as being some things that were written aforetime for my learning, and that I have not been sealed, as they were, with the Holy Spirit but that I have the same pledge or guaranty through the Word.** That is basically how I focus my mind when I study the Bible and that is the way I have tried to express my thoughts in this book.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	a
“UNDERSTANDEST THOU WHAT THOU READEST?”	5
PLEASEING GOD BY REASONING	7
UNDERSTANDING PROPHECY	16
JESUS FORETOLD OF MEN WORKING MIRACLES	21
THE BACKGROUND OF ACTS 2:38, 39	22
THE SERMON PETER PREACHED	24
THE MANIFESTED GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT.	25
THE PROMISE JESUS MADE	28
A SUMMARY	33
THE HOLY GHOST CAME WITH POWER	34
LINKING ACTS 2:38 UP WITH ACTS 5:32	36
THE BACKGROUND BEHIND ACTS 5:32	37
SAUL OF TARSUS HAD ALSO BEEN CUT DEEPLY	46
JESUS ACCUSED THE JEWS OF DISOBEDIENCE	47
WHAT IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST?	48
THE PURPOSE OF THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST	50
THE DISCONTINUATION OF THE GIFTS	57
THE HOLY GHOST AND THE SAMARITANS	62
FALSE TEACHERS IN THE ASSEMBLIES	70
THE NATURAL MAN OF 1 COR. 2:14	75
SOME PROBLEMS I CREATE FOR MYSELF	83
SOME CONTROVERSIAL VERSES	86
PAUL WANTED TO VISIT THE CHURCH AT ROME	89
THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH AT ROME	92
THE SPIRIT THAT DWELT IN THE ROMAN CHURCH	95
THOSE WHO WERE LED BY THE SPIRIT	96
THE SPIRIT BORE WITNESS	97
THE SPIRIT HELPED THEIR INFIRMITIES	99
THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT WAS THEIR SEAL	105
THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH	110
THE CHURCH WAS TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT	111
IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST SALVATION?	115
CONCLUSION	123
INDEX OF SCRIPTURES DISCUSSED	126

“UNDERSTANDETH THOU WHAT THOU READEST?”

If someone approached one of us while we were reading our Bible and asked if we understood what we were reading, it would probably hurt our feelings; we could even be insulted. We might think; we are Bible students, we have average intelligence and yes we believe we understand the Scriptures when we read them. However, when we stop to think about all the beliefs that exist today, we realize that some of us really don't understand the Bible when we read. For instance, in a study of the book of Revelation there are two (and maybe more) dates which are believed to be when the book was written. Some believe it was written prior to A.D. 70 while others think it was written about A.D. 95 or 96. What we believe about the date it was written will determine what many of the signs and symbols represent in the book. For example, the fall of Babylon would represent the fall of one city to those who hold the early date and would represent the fall of another city to those who hold the late date. As we know two opposing views cannot both be correct. One (and possibly both) of these views is incorrect. **My point is this; if one of these views is correct then those who hold the other view don't understand all that they are reading when they are reading in the book of Revelation.** Let me also stress this point; I believe that we can hold to either date without being condemned because we don't understand this particular point. I won't make the belief of when the book of Revelation was written a test of fellowship.

The question is also appropriate in a study of the Holy Spirit. **Understandest thou what thou readeest when you read verses pertaining to the Holy Spirit?** There are

two opposing views (along with others) on the Holy Spirit just as there are two major views on the date that the book of Revelation was written. One view is that people today receive the Holy Spirit in a non-miraculous way when they obey the gospel. I have an article written by Bro. Hugo McCord (deceased) entitled “THE HOLY SPIRIT”, to which references will be made in this study. Brother McCord subscribed to the view of the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He wrote, **“When the HS has entered the man, that is, after a sinner becomes a Christian, what does the Spirit do? Inside the man’s body (1 Corinthians 6:18-20), He does nothing. He just stays there as a Divine testimony that the man is now a Christian, a son of the heavenly King, and as a guaranty that heaven will be his if he behaves himself (Romans 8:4, 16; Ephesians 1:13, 14; 4:30). The indwelling of the HS is by God’s design dormant, inert, and non-sensory, yet it is real and important and precious”.** That is what is generally believed among those who believe in the non-miraculous indwelling. Now: At this moment would be a good time to take a good dictionary and look up the words **dormant, inert and non-sensory.** The opposing view is that the reception of the Holy Spirit was a miraculous gift and the gifts of the Holy Spirit enabled the recipient to receive direct revelation, preach the gospel and confirm the Word with signs, wonders and miracles. Those who hold this view also believe that this was a **temporary arrangement of God while the church was in its infancy and that the gift of the Holy Ghost along with the spiritual gifts ended when the period of the miraculous ended.** Just as the understanding of the signs and symbols in the book of Revelation is dependent upon which date is believed to be the date the

book was written: There are Scriptures concerning the Holy Spirit which are understood in different ways depending on whether we believe that people today receive the Holy Spirit in a non-miraculous way or we believe the reception of the Holy Spirit ended when the period of the miraculous ended. Again, we know that two opposing views cannot both be correct. **If one of these views is correct then it is evident that those who hold the other view don't understand all they read when they read about the Holy Spirit.** But let me stress again, I believe that we can hold either view and not be condemned for our misunderstanding on this particular point. I won't make one of these two views on the Holy Spirit a test of fellowship. However, there are some views of the Holy Spirit that I can't fellowship.

PLEASING GOD BY REASONING-ISA. 1:18

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord”. The Lord said that it would be a good thing to reason. God's Word is written in such a way that it requires study and meditation in order to be understood. Since we know meditation is a good thing, **let's set our minds on trying to reason about what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit. There will be many questions asked in this study; designed to provoke study and reasoning. To some the answers will be apparent; to others much study will be required but don't become discouraged.**

Acts 2:38, 39 KJV “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children,

and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

Acts chapter 2, verses 38 and 39 are the two pivotal verses on the subject of the Holy Spirit. Our understanding of those two verses will determine which of these two views we might accept on the Holy Spirit. If we believe “The gift of the Holy Ghost” in verse 38 is a reference to the reception of a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit; that will determine how we interpret many other passages which make reference to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. If we believe verse 39 makes the promise effective to every person who would obey the Lord from that time until the end of time; that will affect the way we understand many other verses in the New Testament related to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, if we believe the promise of “The gift of the Holy Ghost” in verse 38 has reference to the gift of the miraculous; that will determine how we understand many other verses in the New Testament. If we understand verse 39 to say that the promise was to the Jews of that generation and of the next generation (their children) and would also include the Gentiles (those who were afar off) and **was not a promise** to every person who would obey the Lord from that time to the end of time but was peculiar to the time of the miraculous; that will affect the way we understand many other verses in the New Testament that make reference to the Holy Spirit. If we interpret the portion of verse 39 that reads, “Even as many as the Lord our God shall call”, to mean everybody who obeys the Lord from that time to the end of time; that will swing the pendulum of our understanding to the side of the non-miraculous indwelling but if we interpret it to mean those to

whom the Lord chose to give miraculous gifts and powers; then the pendulum will swing back to the view that the reception of the Holy Spirit ended when the period of the miraculous ended.

When we read the phrase “As many as the Lord our God shall **call**” in Acts 2:39; what comes across our minds? It is normally associated with the “call” in 2 Thess. 2:14 where Paul told the Thessalonians that they were “**Called by the gospel**”. If I make this association it will lead me to the conclusion that everyone who is called by the gospel will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost in every age. If I come to that conclusion it will be necessary for me to conclude that the gift of the Holy Ghost today is not a miraculous gift since no miracles are performed today. If I come to that conclusion that makes it necessary for me to conclude that the gift of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2:38 was not a miraculous gift. I believe that is the line of reasoning we need to concentrate on.

Paul gives a specific purpose for the call in 2 Thess. 2:14 and that is, “**To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ**”. However there were other callings which were not for that particular purpose. There are thirty two (32) Greek words that are translated to some form of the word call in the King James Version of the New Testament. There are many different shades of meaning where the words are used. **The context will usually indicate what shade of meaning should be applied to the word.** The Greek word translated “call” in Acts 2:39 is “proskaleomai” (pros-ka-leh;-om-ah-ee) and the Greek word translated “called” in 2 Thess. 2:14 is “kaleo” (ka-leh’-o). **Strong’s Greek Hebrew Dictionary gives the definition of the word proskaleomai**”

as “Middle voice from 4314 and 2564; to call toward oneself, i.e. summon, invite: KJV—call (for, to, unto)”.

That is the definition without any comments.

Vine’s Expository Dictionary has the same **definition** along with his **comments** on the two words. His comment on Kaleo is, “Kaleo is used particularly of the Divine call to partake of the blessings of redemption”. I understand that to be exactly the way the word is used in 2 Thess. 2:14 and I believe that Vine’s comment is in agreement with the context so I absolutely respect his opinion on that usage of Kaleo.

Strong’s definition of the word “kaleo” is—“akin to the base of 2753; to “call” (properly, aloud, but used in a variety of applications, dir. Or otherwise: KJV—bid, call (forth), (whose, whose surname) (was called)”. That also agrees with Vine’s comment on the word in 2 Thess. 2:14.

However when we look at Vine’s **comment** of how the word “proskaleomai” is used; he says that word is **“The Divine call in entrusting men with the preaching of the gospel”**. **However, he indicates that it is used that way only in Acts 13:2 and 16:10.** He doesn’t have the **opinion** that the word has the same meaning in Acts 2:39, even though the same Greek word is used in all three verses. Thayer’s Greek Lexicon has the same comment on the word proskaleomai that vine has. **Vine, Thayer and Strong all have the same definition but Vine and Thayer offer their opinions on what the word means in its context.**

Before we could assign the meaning “The Divine call in entrusting men with the preaching of the gospel” to the word proskaleomai in Acts 2:39 as Vine does with the same word

in Acts 13:2 and 16:10; we would need to look at some Scriptures that use the word and examine their context.

Acts 13:1-4 KJV “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.”

The Holy Ghost said He had “**called**” (proskaleomai) Paul and Barnabas for a specific work. We know that Paul was called with a Divine call and was entrusted with the preaching of the gospel (Acts chapters 9, 22 and 26). We also know that Paul was equipped with the power of the Holy Ghost, Acts 9:17 and 19:1-6 for just two examples. Therefore I have no doubt that Vine’s **comments** on the use of the word in Acts 13:2 are true and correct.

Acts 16:8-10 KJV “And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto the m.”

There's no doubt in my mind that the word *proskaleomai* as used in Acts 16:10 would mean that **the Lord had given Paul and Silas a Divine call to go into Macedonia and had entrusted them with the preaching of the gospel when they got there.** Neither do I doubt that they were equipped with the miraculous powers of revelation and confirmation to accomplish the job that God had set before them. Again I must agree that Vine's **comment** is right on target on the meaning of the word in the context of Acts 16:10.

Matt. 10:1 KJV "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease."

Jesus "**called**" (*proskaleomai*) His twelve disciples and gave them power to cast out unclean spirits and heal the sick. **He also gave them a message to preach: "The Kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7). Was this not a "Divine call to entrust them with the preaching of the gospel"?** Neither Vine nor Thayer commented that the word in Matt. 10:1 meant the same as in Acts 13:2 and 16:10 even though the same Greek word is used and the contexts are parallel.

If the Holy Ghost "called" Barnabas and Paul and equipped them with miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, and Jesus "called" His disciples and equipped them with miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, **and these were recorded by using the Greek word *proskaleomai*; and the Lord was to "call" as many as He would (Acts 2:39) also using the Greek word *proskaleomai*: Why would it stretch our imagination to think that the "promise" of Acts 2:39 could be to as many as the Lord would call for the**

purpose of equipping them with miraculous powers and entrusting them with the preaching of the gospel by giving them the gift of the Holy Ghost just as He did with Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:2 and Paul and Silas in 16:10 and as Jesus did with the twelve in Matt. 10:1? The same Greek word is used in all four instances. Let's examine another verse.

1 Cor. 12:28 KJV “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”

The question is; did God **call them with a Divine call to fill those positions and spread the gospel?** Did the apostles receive “The Divine call to entrust them with the preaching of the gospel”? You would have to answer yes to that question. **If the apostles received the Divine call to enable them to fill their position; did the prophets, teachers, and the others who were “set” in the church receive the Divine call in order to enable them to fill the positions that would help spread the gospel?**

God “**set**” people in the church in those positions. **Were they called with “The Divine call in entrusting them with the spreading of the gospel”? If they weren't empowered by the Holy Spirit to enable them to execute the duties to which they were appointed, and they had no New Testament to guide them; how would they function?** Let's look further.

Eph. 4:11-12 KJV “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and

teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

The purpose behind the gifts was **to teach the saints, preach the gospel to others and build up the church.** The question is; would God place such responsibilities on those people without equipping them with the ability to perform their duties? The ones whom God “called” are the same ones He gave to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. He gave some the gift to be pastors (elders). How did He equip them to be elders? Acts 20:28 tells us that they had that ability because the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. God didn’t **set** those people **in the church** without equipping them with the ability to perform the duties that was set before them. **He gave them gifts (Eph. 4:8); and then He set them in the congregations (1 Cor. 12:28) to guide the church.** Of course there were not enough apostles to set one in every congregation **permanently,** but they could lay hands on other Christians to enable them to fill the other positions and then move on to another place.

The call in Acts 2:39 would not be the call by the gospel to “Partake of the blessings of redemption” (kaleo) as the association is often made because their obedience to Peter’s command to repent and be baptized in verse 38 would make them partakers of the blessings of redemption. **If they would obey Peter’s command; they would have been obeying the call “To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” given in (2 Thess. 2:14).**

The call of Acts 2:39 was the call to receive the “promise”. If we can read Matt. 10:1, Acts 13:2 and

16:10 and associate those verses with the Divine call in entrusting men with the spreading of the gospel; what would forbid us to read Acts 2:39 and associate it with the Divine call to receive the promise of the Holy Ghost; and to be entrusted with the gospel since the same Greek word is used in all these verses? There is nothing in the context of Acts 2:39 that would forbid us to associate it with those other verses even though **Thayer and Vine both comment that the word proskaleomai in verse 39 is “God’s call to the Gentiles through the gospel”**. But can that be proven?

Acts 2:39 KJV “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

Analyze the verse for yourself. The promise is unto you **(the Jews) and** to your children **(the generation to follow) and** to all that are afar off **(also to the Gentiles)**. What was the promise? The promise was that they would receive the gift of Holy Ghost (verse 38). **There is nothing in verse 39 that restricts that “promise” in verse 38 to the Gentiles.** The conjunction **“and”** connects the words **you, your children** and **all that afar off**; making each of equal value in the sentence. How many times have you heard that same argument used on Mark 16:16 making belief and baptism of equal value? **Therefore the promise was inclusive of both Jews and Gentiles of that generation and the next generation: How then was it restricted to the Gentiles?** However, those who were “called” were given gifts **as it was pleasing to God or according to His will.** We’ll discuss that in another section of this study.

I am thankful for Greek scholars such as Mr. Vine and Mr. Thayer, but I will analyze their commentaries just as closely as I will a commentary by Matthew Henry, Adam Clark, Robert Jamison, Andrew Fausset or any other commentator.

UNDERSTANDING PROPHECY

In order for us to understand prophecy it is necessary that we understand something about how prophecy came. Prophecy came by men who were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:20, 21). There were some prophecies written in plain language and could be understood by people at the time it was given – Jeremiah 20:4 for example.

Jer. 20:4 KJV “For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends: and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon, and shall slay them with the sword.”

Any Israelite in Judah who heard that prophecy could understand it at the time Jeremiah spoke it: But there were other prophecies that people were not able to understand. There were prophecies that would later be explained in the New Testament that could not be understood by any man because God never intended them to be understood at the time of the prophecy (Rom. 16:25--1 Cor. 2:7, 8).

Matt 2:13-15 KJV “And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod

will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.”

When the prophecy that said, “Out of Egypt have I called My Son” was read; men couldn’t have understood it, or else Herod could have had it made known to him.

There were prophecies that were given in plain language and prophecies that were given by using symbols. The ones given in symbols were often interpreted in the Old Testament and would reveal what the symbols represented. For instance Joseph had two dreams before his brothers sold him into slavery. One of his dreams involved the sun, the moon and eleven stars that bowed down before him. His father Jacob interpreted the dream to mean that he and Joseph’s mother along with his brothers would bow down to him. This shows that the sun and moon were symbolic of his father and mother or the **ones in authority**. Let’s follow that thought and see where it will lead us.

Joel 2:31 KJV “The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.”

If the sun and the moon are symbolic of those in authority in Joel’s prophecy, as they were in Joseph’s dream, then Joel prophesied that the authorities that would exist at the time of the fulfillment of his prophecy would lose their power. Keep that thought in mind and let’s look where Jesus quoted from

Joel's prophecy in His discussion of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Luke 21:25-26 KJV "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; 26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Matt 24:29 KJV "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:"

It is clear that Jesus related Joel's prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem in those verses in Matthew 24 and in Luke 21, but He also said, "The powers of heaven shall be shaken". That is taken from the writing of the prophet Haggai (2:6-22). That symbolism is interpreted, in Haggai's prophecy, to mean that the Lord would overthrow kingdoms and replace them with the powers of His choice.

Hag 2:6 KJV "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; 'Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;'"

The Hebrew writer explains this prophecy of Haggai and gives an interpretation of what Jesus meant by the powers of heaven being shaken.

Heb. 12:25-28 KJV "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away

from him that speaketh from heaven: 26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. 27 And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:”

The Hebrew writer makes it clear that the powers of the Jewish system had been shaken, removed and replaced by the kingdom of Christ. With these things in mind; let’s examine Joel’s prophecy. There are four divisions in the prophecy. (1) That which was occurring while Peter spoke – or the beginning of Joel’s prophecy. (2) The miraculous events that would transpire during the course of his prophecy. (3) The destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish age. (4) The results of all the happenings in the prophecy or salvation by obedience to Christ’s commands and calling on Him to fulfill His promises (Acts 22:16).

First of all Peter said, “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” Peter could have used the language that Matthew used and said, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Joel.” Peter quoted from the prophecy, “In the last days”. That is Joel’s explanation of the time the prophecy would begin to be fulfilled. It is easily understood that Peter didn’t mean that what they were seeing and hearing (verse 33) was the complete prophecy because other things were to occur before it ended. Then Peter quoted Joel, “I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.” What they saw and heard was God’s Spirit being poured out

on the **Jews**, but the prophecy included the **Gentiles**. This had not happened at that time, so we know Peter wasn't saying that what they saw and heard was the complete prophecy, but was the beginning of the prophecy.

Then Joel's prophecy explains that the reception of the Spirit would enable the sons and daughters to miraculously receive revelation and prophesy. The old men would receive revelation through dreams and there would be a **host of people** who would prophesy and speak by revelation. That was the miraculous events during the course of the prophecy.

Next we have a portion of the prophecy that indicates the end of the Jewish age. Even though Peter didn't explain the meaning of the signs of the sun and the moon in Joel's prophecy; Jesus didn't leave us to wonder about what they meant. In His dissertation on the destruction of Jerusalem Jesus quoted from that portion of Joel's prophecy. It is clear that it pertained to Jerusalem's downfall and the **end of the Jewish age** (Matt 24:29, 30).

The last thing in the prophecy is the fact that all who would call upon the name of the Lord would be saved. It shouldn't be hard for us to see a dual meaning in this verse. Since the signs represented the destruction of Jerusalem, they could be **saved from that devastation** (Matt. 24:21) and could also **save their souls** by obeying Christ (Acts 22:16). Salvation is the results of everything that is in Joel's prophecy and would continue after the other parts of the prophecy were fulfilled.

Now let me introduce another thought. We looked at the beginning of the prophecy and the ending of the prophecy. Now let's think about what was between the beginning and

the ending. The miraculous events occurred between the beginning and the ending. The events of Joel's prophecy began with the miraculous outpouring of God's Spirit and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus had told the apostles that He would be with them even to the end of the world, or as it is commonly translated "The end of the **age**" (Matt. 28:20). If Jesus continued with people until the end of the Jewish age with miraculous revelation and confirmation; and since the miraculous events had to end at some point in time (1 Cor. 13:8-10), what would be wrong with reading Joel's prophecy to mean that the miraculous part of his prophecy would come to a close with the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish age? That is just something to think about. The pouring out of God's Spirit, the giving of revelation and the miracles to confirm the Word would cease. Only the salvation of the soul by calling on the name of the Lord would continue. That portion of the prophecy was given following the events of the sun and moon.

JESUS FORETOLD OF MEN WORKING MIRACLES

Mark 16:15-20 KJV "And he said unto them, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the

Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

Jesus told the eleven there would be signs that would follow them that believe. It is a mistake to limit these signs to the apostles and not to include other first century believers. For example Stephen, who was not of the eleven, was full of power and worked miracles. He spoke by the revelation of the Holy Spirit and his accusers couldn't resist the wisdom and the **Spirit** by which he spoke (Acts 6:10-12). Philip, who was not an apostle, preached the gospel by revelation and worked miracles among the Samaritans (Acts 8:6, 7). Stephen and Philip were just two of a **multitude** who received the gift of the Holy Ghost in the first century. Don't overlook Mark and Luke whom we believe to be inspired New Testament writers.

In every instance where the Holy Ghost was given in the book of Acts there is an indication of a manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit in those who had received Him. In every instance where the Holy Ghost was given in the book of Acts there is an inference that supernatural events took place which originated with the ones who had received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

THE BACKGROUND OF ACTS 2:38, 39

Since these two verses are the pivotal verses in determining our belief, let's reason about them. **What is the background behind verses 38 and 39? Isn't the background behind these verses the prophecy of Joel that Peter had just quoted (Acts 2:16-21)?**

Acts 2:16 -21 KJV “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;”

Wasn't Peter speaking the words the Spirit gave him to speak (Acts 2:4)? Didn't he tell the people that what they saw and heard was the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel; verses 16 and 33?

17 “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:”

Joel's prophecy said that God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. **Did that not mean that He would pour out His Spirit on both the Jews and the Gentiles?** Didn't the reception of the Spirit enable them to receive revelation through the dreams and visions, and give them the ability to preach and confirm that revelation of the gospel to others?

18 “And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:”

If God was to pour out His Spirit on His handmaidens, would that not mean that God would pour out of His Spirit on women also? Philip, the evangelist, had four daughters who received the Holy Spirit and prophesied (Acts 21:9).

19 “And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

The wonders and signs, (blood, fire and smoke) were they not signs to confirm what Jesus had told His disciples about the destruction of Jerusalem in Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21? The darkening of the sun and changing the moon into blood, is that not figurative language showing the downfall of the Jewish system (Matt. 24:29, 30 and Heb. 12:18-29)?

As we study the background for the two verses, **let's try to find something that would indicate whether the gift of the Holy Spirit in verse 38 is of a miraculous nature or of a non-miraculous nature.** The pouring out of God's Spirit: was that miraculous or non-miraculous? The ability of the sons and daughters to receive revelation and prophesy: Miraculous or non-miraculous? The reception of revelation through dreams and visions: Miraculous or non-miraculous? How would the signs and wonders be classified; as miraculous or non-miraculous? **Doesn't everything in Joel's prophecy point to the miraculous, except the calling on the Lord for salvation?**

THE SERMON PETER PREACHED

After Peter quoted the prophecy of Joel (Acts 2:16-21) he preached a sermon. Did he say anything in that sermon that indicated that the promise in verse 38 would be a non-miraculous indwelling? I searched from verse 22 to verse 38 and I couldn't find where Peter mentioned anything that would indicate that the promise in verse 38 was anything other than what the prophecy of Joel had said would come. **Did you find anything that Peter said that indicated that verse 38 was a promise of the non-miraculous?**

Acts 26:22 KJV “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:”

The apostle Paul affirmed that he didn't preach anything other than what the prophets and Moses had said would come. **When Peter preached (as the Spirit gave him utterance) was he not preaching exactly what the prophet Joel had said would come?** Were the things that Joel said would come miraculous or non-miraculous? Did Joel prophesy anything about the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit? As for that matter **did any prophet ever prophesy of the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit?** If so where?

THE MANIFESTED GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1 Cor. 12:7-11 KJV “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: 11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

Let's count; there are nine spiritual gifts in those verses which were given to men by the Holy Spirit. They are wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in tongues and interpreting

tongues. Let's reason about these gifts **and the giver** for a short time. Now by whom were these spiritual gifts given? In the text **each gift was said to have been given by the Spirit**. Then doesn't verse eleven say "**Dividing to every man severally as He will**"? Would that not mean that the Spirit gave the gifts to each person as it pleased Him? **However since the Spirit did not speak of Himself but only spoke that which He heard (John 16:13), did He not give the gifts to people as it pleased God the Father? Notice also there was a "Visible manifestation" of these gifts of the Spirit. They were obvious to everybody.**

Heb. 2:1-4 KJV "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will."

Doesn't verse four say, God bore witness to the preaching of these inspired men with signs, wonders and different gifts of the Holy Ghost; **according to His own will**? Does 1 Cor. 12:11 not say that He was "**Dividing to every man severally as He will**"? If the Spirit divided severally to every man **as He willed** and God gave the gifts **according to His own will**; would that not mean that God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to those of His choice? **Could the phrase, "As many as the Lord our God shall call" in Acts 2:39 not be interpreted**

to mean as many as the Lord our God shall call for the purpose of equipping them with the gift of the Holy Ghost which will enable them to spread the gospel? In Acts 9:17 Ananias said the Lord had sent him in order that Saul might receive his sight, **and be filled with the Holy Ghost:** **Does that not show that the Lord gave the Holy Spirit to those of His choice?** If we will read Gal. 1:11, 12, we should be able to understand that the gift of the Holy Ghost equipped Saul with the ability to spread the gospel. God had a purpose in the giving of the Holy Ghost and the spiritual gifts which we will discuss later in this study.

Almost everything that men have written about the phrase “As many as the Lord our God shall call” interprets it as an **“All inclusive”** expression. To those writers it means that “All the Lord calls by the gospel” will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Has it ever occurred to anyone that the phrase could be **“An exclusive expression”**? Why could it not be interpreted to mean that God would call those of His choice to spread the gospel and He would equip them with the Holy Ghost? That would **exclude** everyone except the ones God chose to give the gifts and the responsibilities. If we interpret the phrase in that way it would place a **limit** on those whom the Lord called and would eliminate the necessity for God to give the Holy Ghost to every obedient believer. Think of the draft process for the U.S. army; only those who were called were drafted. Those who didn’t receive a call were excluded. The call of Acts 2:39 could be interpreted in that way. God called Saul for that particular purpose. Study about the implications of Acts 9:17.

THE PROMISE JESUS MADE

Jesus also made a promise to His apostles that He would send the Holy Spirit to them after His ascension. It might be profitable for us to reason about His promise and see if He indicated in His promise whether the gift of the Holy Spirit would be of the miraculous nature or the non-miraculous.

John 7:37-39 KJV “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

Jesus said in essence that those who received the Holy Ghost would be pouring out rivers of living water. How should we understand that? Wasn't the sermon that Peter preached on Pentecost a river of living waters flowing to the hearers? There were about three thousand who drank of the living waters that day. Are we not to understand that Jesus meant that those who received the Holy Ghost would be able to speak for God, giving out instructions which came by revelation for the saving of the soul? **Wouldn't the Word of God be the living waters that would flow from those who would receive the Holy Ghost?**

John 4:10 KJV “Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.”

As Jesus talked to the woman at the well He said that He could give her living water. **He could give her the Words of eternal life (John 6:63-68).**

John 4:14 KJV “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Jesus told His disciples that those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness would be filled (Matt. 5:6). **They would be filled with the bread of life and the water of life.**

Rev. 22:17 KJV “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

The Holy Spirit, the church, and those who heard encouraged whosoever would to take of the water of life (the Word of God) freely.

There is another thought that needs to be reasoned about because many believe that John 7:37-39 is the promise of a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit. John wrote, “But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive”. The question is; did Jesus mean all who would ever believe on Him or would the reception of the Holy Ghost end when the miraculous period ended? Take a look at another Scriptural reference and make a comparison.

Mark 16:16-18 KJV “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And

these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

The text in John 7:39 said that believers would receive the Holy Ghost. **Would they also receive miraculous powers?** The text doesn't say they would. The text in Mark said that believers would receive miraculous powers. **Would the believers in Mark 16:17, 18 also receive the Holy Ghost?** The text doesn't say they would. **How could we know the believers in John 7:39 didn't receive miraculous powers and only received the non-miraculous?** How could we know that the believers in John 7:39 are not the same believers as those in Mark 16:17, 18? **If they were, it stands to reason that those in Mark 16:17-18 received the Holy Ghost and those in John 7:39 received miraculous powers. My reasoning on this is; I can't make a difference in the believers of John 7:39 and the believers of Mark 16:17, 18, therefore I can't believe that John 7:39 is a promise of the non-miraculous while Mark 16:17, 18 is a promise of the miraculous. If the Holy Ghost of John 7:39 can be applied to Christians today, why can't the miracles of Mark 16:17, 18 be applied to Christians today since both are said to be believers?**

John 14:15-18 KJV “If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he

dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”

Jesus promised the apostles that He would not leave them alone but that He would pray to the Father and He would send another to comfort them. Wasn't the comforter that Jesus said He would send to them the “Spirit of truth”? The Spirit of truth that would be in them was the Holy Spirit.

John 14:25, 26 KJV “These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

The comforter that was promised in John 14:16, is identified in 14:26 as the Holy Ghost. Wouldn't the disciples of Jesus feel as though the world had crumbled around them when Jesus was crucified? Jesus said that He wouldn't leave them alone. Jesus was the comforter of His disciples while He was with them. Jesus said that they would again be comforted when the Holy Spirit came. But Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would do other things. Didn't He say the Holy Spirit would teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever He had said to them? **Would that have been a promise of the miraculous or a promise of the no n-miraculous indwelling?**

John 15:26, 27 KJV “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: 27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.”

Let's be sure to keep these two verses in mind in this study. I believe they will become a very important factor in our understanding of some verses that we will be studying later. First, did you notice that the Holy Spirit would testify? Then think about this; what is the significance of the testimony of the apostles along with the testimony of the Holy Ghost? Was it not to fulfill the requirement of the law that everything would be established at the mouth of two or three witnesses? There will be much more on the testimony of the Holy Spirit agreeing with the apostles' testimony later in this study.

John 16:6-8 KJV "But because I have said these things unto you sorrow hath filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Again Jesus knew that the disciples' hearts were filled with sorrow because of the things He had told them. But how can we miss the fact that the Holy Spirit would be active? **The Holy Spirit that Jesus promised would enable people to do things out of the ordinary. The Holy Spirit would reprove the world of sin through the mouths of those with the gifts of the Holy Ghost.**

John 16:12-14 KJV "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall

glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”

Could we reason about what the Scriptures say would be the activity of the Holy Spirit? **The Holy Spirit that Jesus promised would speak, He would teach, He would enable them to remember, He would testify, He would reveal and He would glorify Jesus. Would you say those things were miraculous or non-miraculous? Was the Holy Ghost whom Jesus promised active or was He “Dormant, inert, and non-sensory”?**

A SUMMARY

Did we find anything in the prophecy of Joel that indicated that the promise in Acts 2:38 and 39 is anything other than the promise of the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit? No! Did we find anything in the promise of Jesus to indicate that He would send anything other than the same Holy Spirit whom Joel prophesied would come? No! Did Peter indicate in his sermon that the promise in verses 38 and 39 was anything other than the promise of the miraculous contained in Joel’s prophecy? No! Since Peter had quoted Joel’s prophecy; and that prophecy was for the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit; if Peter was promising a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which had never been mentioned before, would he not make it clear to the hearers that they would not be receiving the miraculous outpouring in Joel’s prophecy? Would it not be a misapplication of the Scripture to quote a prophecy of the miraculous; then make a promise of the non-miraculous without a word of explanation? What impression would it make on an audience if a preacher

today read from 1 Cor. 15:1-4 and then never mentioned the death, burial or the resurrection of Christ in his sermon but rather preached on marriage, divorce and remarriage? Would it not be confusing to the ones who heard him? Remember, Peter spoke as the Spirit gave him words to say (Acts 2:4). If we think what he said would be confusing, then aren't we accusing the Holy Spirit of being the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33)? Peter by inspiration, quoted the prophecy of the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost and then promised the hearers that they could receive the Holy Ghost. **Would it be unreasonable to assume that the hearers would associate the promise of the reception of the Holy Ghost to the prophecy they had just heard quoted?**

THE HOLY GHOST CAME WITH POWER

Acts 1:8 KJV "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Jesus told His disciples that when the Holy Ghost came, there would be power that would accompany Him. Examine the following Scriptures.

Luke 24:49 KJV "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Mark 9:1 KJV "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

They were to wait in Jerusalem until the power came. What was the power that came when the Holy Ghost came? Didn't the power come to preach the gospel in other languages (Acts 2)? Didn't the power come to heal the lame man (Acts 3)? Didn't the power come to the apostles to enable them to lay hands on others who would also receive the Holy Spirit and be able to receive revelation, preach the gospel, and perform miracles themselves (Acts 8)? Didn't the power come to raise the dead (Acts 9)? **Were all these things not signs and wonders that confirmed the preaching of the apostles and other inspired people? A miracle was the testimony of the Holy Ghost which bore witness to the testimony of an inspired speaker (John 15:26, 27).** The following verses show this to be true.

Mark16:16-20 KJV “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

The book of Acts is the account of inspired men preaching everywhere and the Lord working with them and confirming the Word **with the power** that came with the Holy Ghost.

LINKING ACTS 2:38 UP WITH ACTS 5:32

Acts 5:32 KJV “And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

When those who believe in the non-miraculous indwelling set out to prove their theory they almost always couple Acts 2:38 with Acts 5:32. Time after time and point after point their Scriptural references will read “Acts 2:38, 5:32”. Brother Hugo McCord, who translated the Bible (I believe four editions) and gave it to Freed Hardeman university wrote, “Acts 5:32 cannot be restricted to the first century unless people today are exempt from obedience, for Peter said, God gives the Holy spirit to all who obey” (pg. 8).

When those who believe that Acts 2:38 makes reference to the non-miraculous indwelling read Acts 5:32 they are sure they have found a clincher for their point of view. On the surface that would seem to be the case, but sometimes we overlook some deeper meaning in a verse. For instance Romans 11:29, “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance”. That appears on the surface to say that God doesn’t require repentance but we have too many verses which contradict that interpretation so we have to study further. When we rightly divide the Word we see that it means that when God gives gifts or makes a calling **He will not repent of that.** If we aren’t careful Acts 5:32 will seem to say something that was never intended when it was written. To some the verse is saying, “God gives the Holy Spirit to everybody who will ever obey Him”. On the surface, that might appear to be the meaning of the verse but remember when we examined Romans 11:29 we found that

the first appearance didn't prove to be a correct interpretation.

THE BACKGROUND BEHIND ACTS 5:32

In a Bible study it is necessary to study and know the background behind the verses we are studying. For example, the book of Hebrews can never be properly understood without an understanding of the background behind the thoughts expressed in the book. Likewise, Acts 5:32 can never be properly understood without an understanding of the verses in its background. Acts 5:32 is set against the background of Deut. 19:15; John 5:36; 8:13-18; 15:26, 27 as well as other passages. Let's reason about some of the passages in the background of Acts 5:32.

Deut. 19:15 KJV "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."

We can understand the reason behind this command. One liar could destroy an innocent person if one person's testimony was sufficient to convict. **However the principle behind the command carries over into one person's testimony about other things.**

Luke 10:1 KJV "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come."

When Jesus sent out the seventy, He sent them out two and two in order that every word they spoke would be witnessed by another. The message they were to speak was,

“The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you”. Since that was a message coming directly from the Lord He gave them power to perform miracles and sent two people for the purpose of having two testimonies that agreed.

John 8:13-18 KJV “The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. 14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. 15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. 16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. 17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.”

The Pharisees accused Jesus of trying to bear witness about Himself without having a second witness to back up His testimony. Jesus acknowledged that He bore witness of Himself and that He knew that it was written in the law that it took the testimony of more than one to prove a thing, but He also told them that the Father was His second witness. Now the question is: **How did God bear witness to the things that Jesus said and did?** We know that God spoke from heaven when Jesus was baptized and when He was transfigured but was that the only times and the only way God bore witness that Jesus is His Son? **Peter answered that question in his first gospel sermon.**

Acts 2:22 KJV “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles

and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”

Jesus had a second witness but the Father didn’t speak out and bear witness with vocal sounds every time Jesus spoke. **However, when Jesus performed miracles that was a statement from God that He approved of what Jesus had said and done.** We need to remember the words of Nicodemus, “We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2). Not only could Jesus not do a miracle except God was with Him but **Jesus only spoke the words that God gave Him to speak** (John 12:49).

John 5:36, 37 KJV “But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. 37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.”

John bore witness of Jesus and the people were willing to rejoice in the light that shown from John for a season, but Jesus had a greater witness than that of John or any man. The works that He did bore witness of Him. God bore witness of Jesus without the people hearing His voice or seeing His shape. Peter said that God testified of His approval of Jesus by the miracles, wonders and signs which God did by Him (Acts 2:22).

John 15:26, 27 KJV “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit

of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: 27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.”

Jesus told the apostles that they would receive another comforter and He would testify of Jesus. Again it is appropriate to ask, how did the Spirit testify of Jesus? There are two ways the Spirit testified about Jesus. Number One, He testified by revelation and number two He testified by confirmation. When the apostles began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4) that was the Spirit testifying of Jesus by revelation. The Spirit revealed the words that the apostles spoke. Then when the lame man was healed (Acts 3:7) that was the Spirit testifying of Jesus by confirmation. The Spirit confirmed the testimony of Peter and John by giving them the ability to perform such a miracle. In the verses above Jesus said in essence, the Spirit would be one witness to testify about Him, and the apostles would also be a witness because they had been with Him from the beginning. **With that arrangement, one apostle could preach the gospel and the Spirit would confirm his speech with signs, wonders and miracles. With the Holy Spirit’s confirmation of the words of the apostle everything would be in accordance to the law that required a testimony to be established at the mouth of two or three witnesses.** Examine the following verses:

Heb.2:4 KJV “God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”

Mark 16:20 KJV “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen.”

The Spirit would bear witness to the testimony of the apostles in the same way that God bore witness to the things that Jesus said and did. The Spirit backed up their testimony with miracles, signs and wonders that were done by the hands of the apostles. People knew they couldn't perform miracles unless God was with them. **When God did a miracle by their hands it showed that God approved of what they were saying and doing in the same way He showed His approval of what Jesus said and did (Acts 2:22).** The background behind Peter's statement in Acts 5:32 is this:

1. Two witnesses were necessary to prove anything.
2. The apostles would be dual witnesses within themselves, being eyewitnesses and having the Holy Ghost as their second witness.
3. With that arrangement, one apostle's testimony can be accepted as it is in truth, the Word of God.

1 Thess. 2:13 KJV “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

First, before any conclusion can be drawn as to whether the Holy Ghost in Acts 5:32 is a reference to the miraculous or the non-miraculous indwelling there is one fact that can't be ignored. **That fact is that the Holy Ghost in Acts 5:32**

is a witness. Now, in order for a witness to be of value to anyone **“He must give testimony”**. For example, a two year old child could witness a murder but if he couldn’t give testimony as to what he saw and heard his presence at the murder scene wouldn’t be of any value toward solving the murder. **If the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost is as Brother McCord said, “He does nothing, He just stays there: He is by God’s design dormant, inert, and non-sensory”, then we can know for a fact that the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost doesn’t testify. If the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost doesn’t speak nor inspire anyone to speak (John 16:13) doesn’t write nor inspire anyone to write (1 Cor. 14:37) doesn’t perform miracles nor enable anyone to perform miracles (Acts 1:8) then He wouldn’t bear witness.** What if Peter had said, “We are His witnesses and we have another witness, the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost: But He doesn’t testify at all; not by inspiration, nor by speaking, and He doesn’t impart the power to work miracles, as a matter of fact He does nothing, He is by God’s design dormant, inert, and non-sensory, He just stays there”? **Give some thought to that because in order for one to believe that Acts 5:32 has reference to a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost he must believe that is exactly what Peter meant.** How intelligent would it have been for Peter to say, “We have another witness but He is really not a witness because He can’t testify”? But remember, Peter was speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. **Any unintelligent statement that is attributed to Peter must be attributed to the Holy Spirit.**

Secondly, one must believe that the entire council understood Peter to mean that God gives the **non-miraculous indwelling** to those who obey Him. The high priest and the council knew the background behind Peter's words in Acts 5:32. They knew exactly what Peter meant when he said that the apostles had another witness. The following verses will show where the chief priest and the council had used that very same background when they plotted the death of Jesus.

Mark 14:55, 56 KJV "And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. 56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together."

There were many who bore false witness against Jesus but the high priest and the council couldn't use them because they couldn't find a second witness who agreed with any of them. **They understood the principle behind Peter's statement in Acts 5:32 but did they understand him to mean the witness was the Holy Ghost in a miraculous way or in a non-miraculous way?**

Acts 4:14-16 KJV "And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? For that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it."

There is no question that the high priest and the council knew first hand that the apostles possessed the power to

perform miracles. The man who had been healed was standing in their presence. They understood that a notable miracle had been done by the apostles. I don't know of any among us who would attribute such a notable miracle to the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost. **If we wouldn't attribute that miracle to the non-miraculous indwelling why would we think that the chief priest and the council would think of the non-miraculous indwelling when Peter made the statement in Acts 5:32? My question is: Where and when had the chief priest and the council ever heard about a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost?** If they had ever heard of such, there is no record of it in the Bible. **But if they had, they probably would have ridiculed Peter for saying such a thing because they would have known that the non-miraculous indwelling wouldn't testify in order to be a second witness; He does nothing, He just stays there.**

In order to understand Acts 5:32, we must leave it in the time period that Peter spoke, and it must not be removed from the context. At the time Peter spoke those words, God did give the Holy Ghost to them that obeyed Him. Some received the baptism of the Holy Ghost and some received Him by the laying on of the apostles' hands. The high priest and the council knew about the miracles that were being done by the ones who had the Holy Ghost. They knew the apostles had miraculous gifts (the Holy Ghost in a miraculous way) but **there is no indication that they knew anything about a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost.**

Now think of the position that the high priest held in the religion of the Jews. He was the final authority in the

activities of their religion. Would the high priest and the council think of themselves as being obedient to God? After all, they were the ones who were enforcing God's law. **Would they think that the apostles were in a closer relationship to God than they were?** They knew what their position was in the religion of the Jews and they thought they knew all they needed to know about the apostles.

Acts 4:13 KJV "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

When Peter (who the high priest and the council thought was ignorant and unlearned) told the high priest and the council that they weren't being obedient to God that angered them. Someone will say, but Peter didn't say they weren't obedient to God. But think; that is exactly the inference Peter made. **He said that God gave the Holy Ghost to those who were obedient. Question: Did the high priest and the council have the Holy Ghost? No! Did they know the apostles could work miracles? Yes! Did they know that they couldn't? Yes! They knew that they didn't have the Holy Ghost. If those who were obedient received the Holy Ghost, would the chief priest and council not perceive Peter's statement to mean they were not obedient?** Lest someone thinks this is a farfetched idea, let's examine Acts 5:32 and the verse that follows.

Acts 5:32, 33 KJV "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given

to them that obey him. 33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.”

Something that Peter said in verse 32 cut the high priest and the council so deeply that they wanted to kill the apostles on the spot. His inference was that they were disobedient to God and that cut them to the heart.

SAUL OF TARSUS HAD ALSO BEEN CUT DEEPLY

Acts 9:1, 2 KJV “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.”

Saul of Tarsus was in the same frame of mind as the chief priest and the council when he started to Damascus. The background behind Saul’s anger is found in Acts 7:51-54.

Acts 7:51-54 KJV “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. 54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.”

Stephen was put to death by the very same council that Peter stood before when he made the statement in Acts 5:32. Stephen spoke in words that couldn’t be misunderstood. He

called them stiff-necked, said they were uncircumcised in heart and ears, betrayers, murderers, and law-breakers. **That is exactly what Peter insinuated in Acts 5:32 and it got the same results; they were cut to the heart.** They took counsel to kill the apostles but were stopped short of it by the counsel of Gamaliel; however Stephen did suffer death at their hands when he accused them of being disobedient. Saul of Tarsus was present, heard the accusations and took them personally.

JESUS ACCUSED THE JEWS OF DISOBEDIENCE

John 8:44 KJV “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

Jesus had a long conversation with the Jews in the eighth chapter of John. He called them sinners in more ways than one and told them that they were in the family of the devil.

John 8:58, 59 “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. 59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”

As a result of His accusation that their father was the devil and the fact that Jesus claimed to be deity they took up stones to kill Him but He escaped from them. **The Jews didn't take it kindly when they were told that they were disobedient to God. These three examples show where their anger was aroused to the point that they wanted to**

kill God's messengers who told them they were disobedient.

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST?

Acts 10:44-47 KJV 44 "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"

One question that almost always comes up in a discussion of the Holy Spirit is; "What is the gift of the Holy Ghost?" If we will notice in the verses above, I believe we can see that the "Holy Ghost" and the "Gift of the Holy Ghost" seem to be used interchangeably. Verse 44 says the Holy Ghost fell on them. Verse 45 says they received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then again in verse 47 Peter said that they had received the Holy Ghost. **In my view the reception of the Holy Ghost and the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost are not the same thing. There is another way that I can see that it could be viewed.** Bro. McCord wrote, "Some interpret the phrase the gift of the Holy Spirit as meaning a gift from the Spirit, not the gift of the Spirit Himself. If one only examines Acts 2:38, both interpretations are possible: One cannot know from the Greek grammar whether Peter meant a subjective (of the HS) or an objective (from the HS) genitive" (page 5). Let's reason about this idea for a little time. Did people receive a

spiritual gift **first**, or did they receive the Holy Ghost first? We could look at it this way: The Holy Ghost was given to them first and then the Holy Ghost gave them the ability to speak in tongues which was a gift from the Holy Ghost. In order for us not to be confused we may need to go back and review what we read in 1 Cor. 12:11. “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will”. **The gifts of the Spirit were not given to any person who had not received the Holy Spirit first.** God poured out His Spirit on the apostles at Pentecost and on Cornelius and his household before they were able to speak in tongues. We might say that was God’s gift of the Holy Ghost to them. Then how did they receive the ability to speak in tongues? **According to 1 Cor. 12:10 the ability to speak in tongues was given by the Holy Spirit.** The gift of the Holy Ghost can be looked at in two ways. **One: the gift of the Holy Ghost was the Holy Ghost Himself** and was given either directly by God or by the laying on of an apostle’s hands. **And two: the gift of the Holy Ghost was the spiritual gifts that were given by the Holy Ghost to the person who had received the Holy Ghost in either of those two ways.** Looking at it as the Holy Ghost Himself is the gift of the Holy Ghost: The Holy Ghost is the object that was given by God. Then if we look at it as the gift of the Holy Ghost being the gifts that were given by the Holy Spirit: The spiritual gifts were the objects being given and constituted the gifts “**from**” the Holy Ghost.

On every occasion in the book of Acts where people received the Holy Ghost it is said that they received the “Holy Ghost” before any miraculous events took place. Acts 2:4 and 10:44 show that the Holy Ghost came upon them

first and then they began to speak in tongues. Acts 8:17 shows that when the apostles' hands were laid upon them the Holy Ghost came upon them and then Simon was able to see the manifestation. In Acts 19:6, the Holy Ghost came upon them first then they began to speak in tongues. My point is this: The record shows that every person who received one or more of the gifts of the Holy Ghost (plural) had already received the gift of the Holy Ghost (singular). A careful reading of 1 Cor. 12:1-11 will show that any one of the gifts (plural) was administered by the Spirit. It is my contention that the first century people received the Holy Ghost (either by the laying on of the apostles' hands or by God's pouring out His Spirit on them) and then the Holy Ghost administered the gifts according to God's will (1 Cor. 12:11 and Heb. 2:4).

THE PURPOSE OF THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST

Let's reason some more about the purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon those people. We learned from the book of John: Chapter 14 verse 26 that He would teach the apostles all things and would enable them to remember all that Jesus had said. Chapter 15 verse 26 says that He would testify. In chapter 16 verse 8 we learned that He would reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. John 16:13 and 14 tell us that He would guide them into all truth. He would speak, (not of Himself but what He would hear) He would show them things to come, and He would glorify Jesus Christ. We also learned from Acts 1:8 that they would receive power when the Holy Ghost came upon them. **In this section of our study let's try to see what God**

intended to accomplish by sending the Holy Spirit and the work of the Holy Spirit in the first century.

Rom. 16:25-26 KJV “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:”

God had kept a secret since the world began but when it was time to reveal what He had in mind: **God chose to send the Holy Spirit and reveal His plan so that all nations could hear the gospel and render obedience to the faith.**

1 Cor. 2:6-13 KJV “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things

also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

God revealed things through the Spirit to people that eye had never seen, ear had never heard and no man had ever had these things cross his mind (verse 9). Peter wrote that the prophets inquired and searched diligently and even the angels desired to look into God's secret but didn't know what God had in mind (1 Pet. 1:9-13). Paul said that if the princes of this world had known God's secret they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (verse 8). **God's purpose in sending the Holy Ghost was to reveal His plan for the redemption of the souls of mankind. Along with the revelation of God's secret the Spirit also empowered those people with miraculous gifts that they might confirm what they taught. This was God's arrangement in the absence of written revelation**

God's secret consisted of a great number of things which had never been revealed to men in detail. There were hidden messages in the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44), but they were not understood until the Holy Spirit inspired men with the correct interpretation of those messages (Matt. 1:21-23 for example). The idea of receiving remission of sins by obeying the Lord in baptism had never occurred to any man. The establishment of the church had never entered into the heart of man, but the Holy Spirit inspired men with the message of the church (Acts 2:47, Eph. 1:22-23). The acceptable way to worship God in the church had never been thought of by man. God's plan to finance the affairs of the church was a mystery, the organization of the church under the oversight of elders had

never occurred to man, but the Holy Spirit inspired men who conveyed those messages to the church (Acts 14:23, 20:28). **Inspired men were the only guides in the infant church (Eph. 4:1-16).**

1 Cor. 12:28 KJV “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”

God’s eternal purpose, (Eph. 3:11) included His making preparations for those gifts to be given by the Holy Spirit. God had a purpose for the apostles, for the prophets, for the teachers, for the workers of miracles, for the gifts of healing and for those who spoke in tongues. There was a work for each one who was given one of those gifts to help guide the church through its infancy. **Since Joel prophesied of the coming of the Holy Ghost about 800 years before He came: We know it was a part of God’s plan from before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:20).**

Eph. 4:8 KJV “Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.”

When Christ ascended He sent the Spirit (He prayed to the Father and the Father sent the Spirit John 14:16) to give supernatural powers to those people because God had a purpose for each of the gifts. **They were to direct the church in its period of infancy.**

Eph. 4:11-16 KJV “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:”

The apostles received the Holy Spirit, and laid their hands on others who became prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. The gifts which were given by the Spirit were to guide the early church. **It is imperative that we remember that those people with the gifts of the Holy Spirit were the only guides and protectors from false teachers the church had in those days.** They edified Christians, preached the gospel to sinners and directed the church in doctrine and worship as the Spirit revealed instructions to them. **The Spirit guided the infant church into all truth by using those who possessed the spiritual gifts (John 16:13).**

13 “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:”

Wasn't it God's plan for His church to be unified in what was believed (John 17:20, 21)? He wanted it to be a complete church with all the members believing the same thing and speaking the same thing (1 Cor. 1:10). God gave those gifts to men to guide the church and all those who possessed the Spiritual gifts spoke the same thing because they were all guided by the same Spirit. They all worshipped the same way because the same Spirit gave them all the same instructions. **God used inspired men to guide the infant church in doctrine and worship in the same way the Bible is used for that purpose today.**

14 “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”

Even though God had placed inspired people with spiritual gifts in leadership roles in the church, Satan used his forces to disrupt the unity of the church (2 Cor.11:13-15). Jude 1:4 tells us that certain ungodly men had crept in without the church being aware. Some were teaching that circumcision and keeping Moses' law were required in order to be saved (Acts 15:1). Some taught the doctrine of Balaam, and some taught the doctrine of the Nicolaitans which God hated (Rev. 2:14, 15). **Those who had the gifts of the Holy Spirit were the safeguards of the early church because they were miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit.** As Paul listed the gifts in 1 Cor. 12, he said there were gifts of supernatural knowledge, supernatural wisdom and discerning of spirits. By using those three gifts alone, the infant church could come through many tests. If a false teacher came into their midst the one with the gift of discerning the spirit by which he spoke (whether he spoke by the Holy Spirit or was a false teacher) could identify the false teacher and the ones with the gifts of knowledge and wisdom could correct whatever error had been taught. John wrote, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). **The unity of those infant congregations depended upon those with spiritual gifts to guide them in the same way we depend upon the Bible to guide us today. False teachers could carry them away with every wind of doctrine if they weren't refuted by those who had the Holy Spirit.** False teachers can carry us away with every wind of doctrine if we don't check them out by the Bible. There were false teachers lying in wait to deceive them just as there are false teachers lying in wait to deceive today.

15 “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:”

The inspired people in the first century were to speak the truth in love, but they were guided by the Spirit to **refute** the false doctrine of the devil’s messengers. Paul told Titus that there were unruly, vain talkers, and deceivers whose mouths **must be stopped** because they were teaching things they ought not to teach and undermining the faith of whole houses (Titus 1:10, 11). The inspired people of God could work miracles to confirm that what they taught was inspired of God but the deceivers had no such power. Remember that Nicodemus said no man could do a miracle unless God was with him? The church, under the guidance of inspired people with miraculous powers, was able to grow up into Christ who is head of the church which is His body (Eph. 1:22-23).

16 “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

The church could grow up into its head (Christ) if each joint (each miraculously endowed person) would supply his part with the gift the Holy Spirit had given him and the church would make increase (would add numbers to the congregation). Those who were already members would be edified and strengthened with each member’s participation in the things the Spirit enabled him to do.

Having inspired people in the church with the ability to receive revelation, preach the gospel and confirm their

words with miracles was God's temporary arrangement for the church while it was in its infancy. That was the reason for the gifts of the Holy Ghost. There are no people today that receive revelation nor do any possess any of the gifts that the Holy Ghost gave in the first century. The question is; does anyone receive the gift of the Holy Ghost today?

THE DISCONTINUATION OF THE GIFTS

1 Cor. 13:8-13 KJV "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

Do you remember that Paul listed the nine spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 12? **Prophecies, tongues and knowledge** were among the nine. In verse 8 above, Paul is using those three gifts as a representation of all nine gifts. He could just as easily have listed them all and said that they would all vanish away. All of them did cease, none of them are present today. In other words Paul was saying that all miraculous gifts would fail, cease and vanish away at the proper time.

9 "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part."

Each member that had a gift supplied his part, **and only his part.** to the unity of the early church. The member that had the gift of prophecy wasn't able to prophesy about everything; he was limited to the ability given him by the Holy Ghost, he didn't have it all. The member who had the gift of knowledge didn't know everything, he only knew a part. However if each member performed his duty according to the spiritual gift he had been given, the church would have

the perfect guidance of the Spirit. The gospel was preached for one part. The Word was confirmed with miracles which was another part. All aspects of the worship services were guided which was another part. Their prayers were guided by the Holy Spirit. Their song services were guided by the Spirit and He inspired the sermons that were preached. The purity of the gospel was protected and all they did in worship was guided by those with spiritual gifts. When each one with a gift supplied his part; the church had complete guidance and that was the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the gifts to those people (Eph. 4:16).

10 “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

The complete guidance by those who had spiritual gifts would no longer be possible when prophecies failed, when tongues ceased and when the supernatural knowledge vanished away along with all the other spiritual gifts. However Paul said that there would be something to take the place of that which was temporary; “That which is perfect” or that which is complete. The temporary arrangement that God made to place inspired people in the church to guide it would be replaced by something permanent; written revelation. When revelation was completed and confirmed with miracles, signs and wonders and the written Word was completed, “That which was in part was done away”. We now have the completed Bible to guide what we preach in our sermons, our walk of life and our worship services. The Bible proclaims itself as being sufficient for our every need (2 Pet. 1:3, 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The parts were within a temporary arrangement of God until written revelation was completed

We have identified “When that which is perfect is come” as being “When written revelation is completed” and we have identified that which is in part as being the temporary arrangement of God that guided the infant church in the absence of written revelation. Now I deem it necessary to expound upon the phrase “That which is in part” along with an explanation of the words “Done away”.

First, let’s deal with the words “Done away”. The question that must be answered is: What did Paul mean by saying that the parts would be done away? Strong’s expository dictionary defines the words done away as, “To be (render) entirely idle (useless)”. Then we are to understand that **all of the parts** of God’s temporary arrangement were rendered useless or were discontinued. This only means that the parts are now useless as far as that arrangement is concerned. People still speak in different languages today but there is no miracle involved. Sickesses are healed today but a doctor and modern medicine are the instruments used; not miraculous healing.

What constituted the parts? Again we are reminded that Paul listed nine spiritual gifts in chapter 12 of first Corinthians. Without going back and naming each one of them we can safely say that each one of those miraculous gifts constituted a part of that which was to be discontinued. We know there are no prophets today (1 Cor. 12:10) because prophecies failed (1 Cor. 13:8): **That part or that gift** was done away or discontinued. It was rendered useless and so were all nine of the gifts that Paul listed in 1 Cor. chapter 12.

Now that we have said that all miraculous gifts were to be done away, (rendered useless or discontinued) **have we**

considered all the things that constituted “That which was in part”? Is there a possibility that we may have forgotten to include the most important **“Part of the parts”** which was discontinued? What was the **power behind** the nine miraculous gifts? The answer would be **“The Holy Spirit”**. Can anyone deny that the gift of the Holy Ghost was a part of God’s temporary arrangement? **Would that not make the gift of the Holy Ghost a part of the parts that would be discontinued?** If the gift of the Holy Ghost was discontinued there would be no power to exercise the nine miraculous gifts listed in 1 Cor. chapter 12.

It stretches my imagination beyond its limits to know that God devised a plan whereby He sent the Holy Ghost down from heaven, and the Holy Ghost empowered men to receive revelation, to impart the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, to guide the infant church with inspiration, confirmation and miraculous gifts until revelation was completed: And then to think God would discontinue all the gifts with the exception of the gift that contained the power behind all the other gifts. And why believe God would reduce the power of the Holy Ghost to the point where He does nothing, He just stays there, is dormant, inert, and non-sensory? That is beyond my imagination. Why not believe the gift of the Holy Ghost with its power was discontinued and that was the reason all the miraculous gifts ceased? That way “All the parts” would have been discontinued. Does that make sense?

11 “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

When the church was in its infancy, the members spoke as a child because they possessed only a part. They didn't have a complete revelation of God's will, they knew only in part. When revelation was completed, the church would no longer need the parts. The completed revelation would supply everything the church needed. The gifts would be done away.

12 "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

As long as they knew in part; (verse 9) one person didn't have the complete picture. It was like looking into a glass which didn't reflect the image very clearly. But when revelation was completed things would become clearer. Men would have the message that God gave in one complete package; the Bible.

13 "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

Paul says in essence that all the supernatural gifts will be gone but there are some important things which will remain. As long as this world stands there will be faith, hope and charity (love). If there is a church today that belongs to the Lord there is faith in that church. If there is a church that Christ has a part in there is hope in that church. If there is a church that remains true to Christ; there is love in that church. **Those in the early church put their faith in the words spoken by inspired men; today we put our faith in the words written by inspired men; the Bible.**

THE HOLY GHOST AND THE SAMARITANS

Let's reason about the word "none" which Luke used occasionally when he wrote to Theophilus. One of those occasions makes reference to the Holy Ghost.

Luke 4:27 KJV "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

This verse appears in one of the two letters that were written to Theophilus. Luke, an inspired writer, penned those two letters. **Being inspired, Luke would have written at the direction of the Holy Spirit.**

Question: How did the Holy Spirit intend for Theophilus, (and others who would read it) to understand what is written in that verse? Luke used the words "None of them was cleansed". The word in the Greek which is translated "none" is defined to mean "**Not even one**" (Strong's Greek\Hebrew Dict.). According to Luke 1:4, Luke wanted Theophilus **to know the certainty of some things.** Did Theophilus know for a certainty that **not even one** leper other than Naaman was cleansed **in any shape, form or fashion** in the time of Elisha? Did Luke write in such a way that Theophilus could understand it that way? By using the words the Holy Spirit inspired; how could the verse be understood otherwise?

Let's look at some other verses that Luke wrote to Theophilus and consider whether he wrote them in words that Theophilus could understand.

Acts 8:14-17 KJV "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God,

they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

What was Theophilus (and all who read) to understand about whether the Samaritans had received the Holy Ghost before the arrival of the apostles from Jerusalem? Again the Holy Spirit used the same Greek word translated “none” Which means ‘Not even one’. **Was Theophilus supposed to understand for a certainty that not one single solitary Samaritan had received the Holy Ghost in any shape form or fashion before the apostles arrived and laid their hands on them? If that was the message the Holy Spirit intended to convey, what other words could He have used to make it any clearer?** If that wasn’t what was supposed to have been understood why did the Holy Spirit put a word in there which means ‘Not even one’? **If the Holy Spirit knew that the Samaritans had already received Him in a non-miraculous way; why did He use a word that meant that not even one of them had received Him?** Then again, why did the apostles pray that they might receive the Holy Ghost if they had already received Him in a non-miraculous way? If the Holy Ghost intended it to be understood that not one single solitary Samaritan received the Holy Ghost before the arrival of the apostles then the belief that they received the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost when they were baptized **cannot be correct.** **Were those of Samaria saved when they believed and were baptized (Mark 16:16)? Were they added to the**

church (Acts 2:47)? Were their sins washed away when they were baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 22:16)? Did they belong to Christ before the arrival of the apostles (Rom. 8:9)? If they belonged to Christ before the apostles arrived, they belonged to Christ before they received the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:16). If they belonged to Christ without having the Holy Spirit in the first century **why can't one belong to Christ today without having the Spirit? Some say that according to Romans 8:9 one can't belong to Christ without having the Holy Ghost. That verse is set against the background of Romans chapter seven where Paul's discussion is about the law and the condemnation under the law and the deliverance from condemnation in Christ. If we could imagine ourselves to be in the congregation at Rome with the inspired teachers on the one hand and the false teachers on the other hand and a letter coming from Paul which said in essence; those who do not have the Spirit of Christ, (the Holy Spirit) who can't confirm what they teach, are not speaking for Christ; they don't even belong to Him. **That was a warning to the church at Rome that if a teacher couldn't confirm his speech he didn't belong to Christ and wasn't speaking for Him.****

If the promise in Acts 2:38 is a promise of a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost; Why is it that every instance of the reception of the Holy Ghost in the book of Acts is the reception of the miraculous? The apostles (Acts 2) and the house of Cornelius (Acts 10) were baptized with the Holy Ghost. Then by the laying on of the apostles hands in Samaria (Acts 8), and the laying on of Paul's hands in Ephesus (Acts 19) the Holy Ghost was imparted. There is no other record of a reception of the Holy

Ghost in the book of Acts and every one of these receptions was of the miraculous nature. Is the Holy Ghost poured out on people today? No! Are the apostles laying their hands on people today? No! How then do people today receive the non-miraculous indwelling? **The Holy Spirit gave no record of anyone receiving a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the book of Acts.**

After reasoning on these things, what do you believe to be the message the Holy Spirit intended to convey in Acts 8:16? As for myself, my reasoning tells me that no leper besides Naaman was cleansed **in any shape, form or fashion in the days of Elisha.** That is what I believe because that is what Jesus said. **I also believe that none of the Samaritans received the Holy Ghost in any shape form or fashion before the apostles arrived.** I believe that because that is what Luke wrote by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. **Those who believe the Samaritans received the non-miraculous indwelling when they were baptized believe that in spite of the fact that the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to write, “For as yet He was fallen upon none of them” (Acts 8:16).**

There is a fundamental **rule** of Bible study that needs to be addressed here and that is: **“Where an obscure Scripture and a plain Scripture appear to be in conflict: The plain Scripture always takes precedence over the vague one”.**

Let’s look at an example; “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord” (Rev. 14:13). That is a **plain** portion of Scripture. You can read any of the verses in symbolic language or in plain language from Genesis to Revelation

and they **cannot** contradict that plain Scripture. Now let's look at the two Scriptures under consideration; Acts 2:38, 39 and 8:14-17. Does Acts 2:38, 39 make it **plain** that every one of all generations will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost if they repent and are baptized? Some say that is exactly what it does. Now look at Acts 8:16; is that verse in conflict with that interpretation? It says that some who believed and had been baptized had not received the Holy Ghost: **That is a contradiction of that interpretation of Acts 2:38, 39.** Now we must determine which Scripture is plain and which is obscure. If Acts 8:16 is the plain Scripture, then there will **not be** a verse in the entire Bible that will be a contradiction. However if we interpret Acts 2:38, 39 to mean every baptized believer receives the gift of the Holy Ghost; **that stands as a contradiction of Acts 8:16.** If Acts 2:38, 39 is a plain passage; Acts 8:16 would be the vague passage. If we consider both passages to be plain; then we have a contradiction which would render the entire Bible worthless.

Now we find ourselves in a dilemma. What can we do to eliminate the problem? We must change that interpretation of Acts 2:38, 39 or we must alter the meaning of Acts 8:16: **One or the other.** We could change the interpretation of Acts 2:38, 39 to mean a promise of the miraculous and **there would be no contradiction.** However, many of our brethren have chosen to change the meaning of Acts 8:16 and have **conjured up a non-miraculous Holy Ghost** that the Samaritans **supposedly** received at their baptism. A non-miraculous Holy Ghost is of necessity an **invention of men** because it is nowhere mentioned in the Bible. **The Word of God knows nothing about a non-miraculous Holy Ghost.**

If the Samaritans didn't receive the Holy Ghost at their baptism how could Acts 2:38 be a promise that everybody who is baptized would receive the Holy Ghost? If the Samaritans belonged to Christ, were added to the church, had their sins remitted, and were saved before receiving the Holy Ghost; how could Rom. 8:9 mean that anybody who doesn't have the Spirit today, doesn't belong to Christ? There will be more on Rom. 8:9 later in the lesson.

There is also something else in this that needs to be reasoned upon.

Acts 10:44-48 KJV “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.”

The thing that seems strange to me is that Cornelius and his house received the Holy Ghost with a miraculous ability before they were baptized. **That would mean that they received the miraculous and then had to wait until they were baptized to receive the non-miraculous indwelling.** Would it not seem strange to you that anyone who had the miraculous would have to wait for the non-miraculous? Look again at what Hugo McCord wrote about the non-miraculous indwelling: “He does nothing He just stays there, and is by God’s design dormant, inert, and non-

sensory”. I could see the rationale in thinking of the Samaritans waiting to up-grade their condition **if they had received the non-miraculous indwelling at their baptism** and were waiting for the miraculous: But to think of Cornelius and his house having the miraculous and then having to wait for the non-miraculous just doesn’t seem to make any sense. They would have had the ultimate in spiritual gifts and be waiting for something that would do nothing, just stay there, would lie dormant, inert, and be non-sensory in them.

Another thing we need to remember is; Acts 2:38 and Acts 10:45 were both written to a man named Theophilus. Being inspired by the Holy Spirit; Luke wrote because he wanted Theophilus to know that the things he had been taught were **thoroughly authenticated (Luke 1:4).** According to Acts 2:38; Theophilus was told that Peter promised those who would repent and be baptized, that they would receive “The gift of the Holy Ghost”. According to Acts 10:45; Theophilus was told that the household of Cornelius received “The gift of the Holy Ghost”. Now let me quote from the book, “The Timeless Trinity” by Roy H. Lanier Sr. to show how he dealt with these two verses. **“There is only one thing that might confuse the careless reader, and that is the fact that in Acts 2:38 the gift is the ordinary, or indwelling manifestation, of the Holy Spirit; but in Acts 10:45 the gift is the baptism in the Holy Spirit”** (page 355). I believe that Theophilus would have understood that God poured out His Spirit on the household of Cornelius. With the information contained in Acts 1:5 and Acts 11:15, I am convinced that he would have understood that they had been baptized in the Holy Ghost: **But, what was written between Luke 1:1 and Acts 10:48**

that would make him know that the gift in Acts 2:38 is the ordinary, or indwelling manifestation? When Theophilus sat down and read this second letter from Luke; did he read something in it, or was there something in the first letter that gave him to understand that the phrase “The gift of the Holy Ghost” in the two verses would have a different meaning? **This is not to say that everyone that received the Holy Ghost received the baptism in the Holy Ghost but it is to say that “The gift of the Holy Ghost” is a reference to the miraculous in both verses.** Unless there is something in the book of Luke or in the book of Acts that would cause Theophilus to interpret the phrase “The gift of the Holy Ghost” differently on these two occasions; why would we think he would do so? **The letters were written to him; if we don’t understand them as he was to understand them, we’ll have a misunderstanding of them.**

Since Luke was so intent, in his first letter, on making Theophilus know the certainty of the things he had been taught: Why would we think he would be any less intent in his second letter? **If** the phrase “The gift of the Holy Ghost” has a different meaning in Acts 2:38 and in 10:45; **why did Luke fail to make Theophilus know the certainty of that in one of his letters?** My point is this; there is not a shred of evidence in the book of Luke or the book of Acts that the phrase had different meanings in the two verses. Read any book you can find that upholds the existence of the **ordinary manifestation or the non-miraculous**; and the verses given for their proof-text will usually come from John, Romans, Galatians, or Ephesians and not from Luke or Acts. That is with the exception of where Acts 5:32 is misapplied (see the section on linking up Acts 2:38 with Acts 5:32). **Would**

Theophilus have been required to read Paul's epistles or John's gospel before he could understand what Luke wrote? That's absurd!

Acts 10:45 and 46 are in plain speech, "The gift of the Holy Ghost" can't mean anything other than the miraculous in those verses. What kind of logic is there in taking an identical phrase in an obscure passage (Acts 2:38) and making it to mean exactly the opposite of the plain passage? That violates the cardinal rule of Bible study that **a plain passage takes precedence over an obscure passage.**

FALSE TEACHERS IN THE ASSEMBLIES

Jude 1:4 KJV "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

As has been stated before, there were false teachers who invaded the early church. One of the forces that crept into the churches unawares was the teachers who taught that people must be circumcised after the manner of Moses or they couldn't have been saved when they obeyed the gospel.

Acts 15:1, 2 KJV "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question."

When these men from Judaea came to Antioch; Paul and Barnabas disputed with them about their doctrine and it was determined by the church at Antioch that they, along with others, should go to Jerusalem to confer with the other apostles and elders about the matter.

Gal. 2:2 KJV “And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.”

Paul and Barnabas went up by revelation. That would mean that the Holy Spirit revealed to them that they should go up. They wanted to be sure that they had not omitted something in their preaching that should have been preached and to confirm that they were preaching the same things the other apostles were preaching. But when the matter was decided, a letter was drafted and sent to those who were being troubled by those who were teaching the necessity of circumcision and the keeping of the law.

Acts 15:24 KJV “Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:”

The question was settled by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. **None of them had given any such commandment.** There is no question as to whether their solution was correct. However the false teachers continued to espouse their false doctrine. If we look we can see the difference in the two groups of teachers. The apostles were being guided by the Holy Spirit and Jude said the false

teachers didn't have the Spirit. Consider the following verses from Jude.

Jude 1:16-19 KJV "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. 17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

It is evident that those who had the Spirit were teaching by inspiration but there were some teachers who didn't have the Spirit. They were not children of God. **They were enemies of the cross of Christ.**

Phil. 3:17, 18 KJV "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:"

The enemies of the cross of Christ reached out to every congregation of the Lord's people of that time. The inspired men of those congregations were given the responsibility to guide the church in the direction that God wanted it to go and refute the doctrines of the false teachers.

Rom. 16:17, 18 KJV "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own

belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

The church at Rome didn't escape the influence of the false teachers. Paul wrote several things to the church at Rome concerning those who were guided by the Holy Spirit and those who were false teachers. The false teachers at Rome were said to have **“Good words and fair speeches” while Jude wrote that they were “Speaking great swelling words”** (Jude 16). These were false teachers who didn't have the Spirit (didn't have the Holy Ghost) but with good words and fair speeches deceived the hearts of the simple. **Those who were guided by the Holy Spirit were to mark and avoid those false teachers who didn't have the Spirit.**

The church at Corinth was guided by men who had the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 12). There were also false teachers in the church at Corinth. **Someone may think that the congregation at Corinth had both the miraculous and the non-miraculous Spirit dwelling in the church there.** If that be the case with you consider the following verses that were written to that congregation.

1 Cor. 4:18-20 KJV “Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. 19 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. 20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.”

The false teachers at Corinth were conducting themselves proudly and haughtily as though Paul wouldn't come back to Corinth. But Paul said that he would come back with the intentions of giving those who were puffed up a test. He

intended to give them the very same test that John said to give; “**Try the spirits**”, (1 John 4:1). He knew they had “Good words and fair speeches” but he also knew they didn’t have miraculous power to confirm their words. Paul’s test would be a simple one: **He would require the teachers to confirm what they taught.** The false teachers were teaching that it was necessary to be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved. Paul intended to show the church at Corinth that these were false teachers and they couldn’t confirm what they taught. If that isn’t how Paul intended to know the power of those who were puffed up, then how would he know what power they had? **But think about this, had there been a faithful teacher in the church at Corinth who had the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit, he wouldn’t be able to confirm what he taught any more than the false teachers would.** Paul knew that those at Corinth in whom the Spirit dwelled were endowed with the miraculous. **He knew that a speaker that couldn’t confirm his speech didn’t have the Spirit and didn’t belong to Christ (Rom. 8:9).** If there had been faithful Christian teachers at Corinth who had nothing more than the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit they would have failed Paul’s test in the same way the false teachers would. If faithful teachers who only had the non-miraculous indwelling couldn’t prove that they belonged to Christ and the false teachers couldn’t prove that they belonged to Christ: What would be the purpose of Paul’s test? The faithful teacher could say, “Oh yes I belong to Christ I have the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit”. The false teacher could make the same claim but without a manifestation of the Spirit neither one of them could

offer any proof that they were speaking for Christ or that they belonged to Christ.

“But ye have an **unction** from the Holy One, and **ye know all things**” (1 John 2:20). They were endowed with spiritual gifts and according to 1 John 2:27 had received the **anointing** (the same Greek word that is translated unction in verse 20) and **didn’t need any man to teach them**. In other words they were inspired and they didn’t need any **uninspired** man to teach them. **John made no distinction between those who had received a miraculous anointing and those who had received a non-miraculous anointing. Do you suppose that was because he didn’t know anybody who had received a non-miraculous anointing?**

THE NATURAL MAN OF 1 COR. 2:14

1 Cor. 2:14 (KJV) “But the **natural man** receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (Emp. mine O.H.)

Many of the commentaries identify the natural man as the sinner, the brute man, or the animal man. Some translations portray the natural man as anyone who is not a Christian. That would mean **“He is just any sinner”**. There are questions as to whether the context will bear out that interpretation **or whether other passages will even allow that interpretation?**

1 Cor. 2:14 (New American Standard) “But a natural man **does not accept** the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he **cannot understand** them, for they are spiritually appraised.” (Emp. mine O.H.).

1 Cor. 2:14 (Living Bible) “But the man who isn’t a Christian can’t understand and can’t accept these thoughts from God which the Holy Spirit teaches us. They sound foolish to him, **because only those who have the Holy Spirit within them can understand what the Holy Spirit means.** Others just can’t take it in.” (Emp. mine O.H.).

The natural man of the KJV is made to be “A sinner” in the New American Standard and The Living Bibles. **According to these translations, a sinner can neither understand nor accept the thoughts that were taught by the Holy Spirit.** If we believe these translations (interpretations) there are some serious questions for which we must find answers. How many people standing before the apostles on Pentecost were sinners? According to Rom. 3:10, 23 they were all sinners. **If sinners couldn’t understand nor accept the thoughts that came from the Spirit of God; then nobody who heard the apostles understood nor accepted the things the apostles said on Pentecost because we know they were all sinners.**

But wait: Doesn’t Acts 2:41 read, “Then they that gladly **received** his word were baptized”? The ones who gladly received God’s word **understood and accepted** what the Holy Spirit taught by the mouth of the apostles because they spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4).

If those translations were correct, and the natural man is just any sinner, we would be compelled to conclude that no sinner could ever be converted because none could ever accept or understand the teaching of the Holy Spirit. **However, the Living Bible provides an escape clause for this problem** “Only those who have the Holy Spirit within

them can understand what the Holy Spirit means”. **This would require that God put the Holy Spirit in a person before he could understand or accept the things taught by the Holy Spirit and that would include the Bible.** That would mean that any that understand and accept the teachings of the Spirit were chosen by God, and that He had given them the Spirit in order for them to receive and understand His teaching. It would also mean that any that are lost are lost because God refused to put the Holy Spirit in them and they are left in the condition of not being able to understand nor accept the teaching of the Spirit. In other words, God would be a respecter of persons. He would predestine souls to heaven or hell and only the elect would be saved. Souls would suffer the torments of hell for the sole reason that God had refused to give them the ability to understand and accept the things taught by the Holy Spirit.

Then again; **think about this**, those who received his words asked Peter what to do and he told them that if they would repent and be baptized they would receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. But wait; they would have already had the Holy Ghost if they couldn’t have received the things of the Spirit without His being in them. A promise of the Holy Ghost to those to whom God had already given Him doesn’t make any sense.

If the natural man in 1 Cor. 2:14 is not “Just any sinner”, just who did Paul have in mind? Let’s examine the context and try to determine just who Paul called **the natural man.**

1 Cor. 2:4 KJV “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:”

In verse four Paul contrasted the wisdom of men with his demonstration of the Spirit and power. The Spirit by which Paul spoke the inspired messages was the Holy Spirit. The power he demonstrated was God's power that confirmed His Word with miracles. Paul reminded these same brethren that they had seen the signs of an apostle worked among them in signs, wonders and mighty deeds as proof of his apostleship (2 Cor. 12:12).

1 Cor. 2:9-14 KJV “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

Anything that human eyes had ever seen, anything that men had ever heard, or any thought that had ever crossed any man's mind had not revealed what God had in mind for those

that love Him. God had kept those things secret in His mind and they remained a mystery until He revealed them to His holy apostles and prophets (Rom.16:25, 26). God revealed His secret unto the apostles and prophets by His Spirit. **Paul said that the Holy Spirit searched the deep things in the mind of God and then the Holy Spirit taught those things to inspired people (1 Cor. 2:13).**

Then Paul affirms that inspired people had received the **Spirit which is of God in contrast to the spirit of the world**. In verse 4 and in verse 12 Paul makes this contrast. Paul and others (he used the pronoun “we” in verse 12), had received the Spirit which is of God that they might know the things that God wanted them to know. And they “spoke” the things which they received from the Spirit of God. When Paul said they spoke those words that the Holy Ghost taught them, that meant that they were “teaching” those things. When he said there were things that man’s wisdom taught, and contrasted it with the words the Holy Ghost taught, that meant that some were teaching in words that man’s wisdom taught. Now we can see there were two sets of teachers in the church at Corinth. One set of teachers was teaching by the inspiration of the **Spirit of God** and the other set of teachers was teaching by the **spirit of the world** and only had the wisdom of the world.

Verse 15 begins, “But he that is spiritual”. That is in contrast to the “natural man” in verse 14. **The natural man and the spiritual man are the ones being contrasted in these verses. The spiritual man is the inspired man who had received the Spirit which was from God. The natural man is the man who taught from the wisdom of the world. Now it becomes clear that the natural man in the**

verse is the uninspired man. The uninspired man did not **receive** the messages of inspiration and neither did he **know them** because God didn't give His messages to uninspired men. The natural man is of the world and Jesus said that the world could not receive the Spirit (John 14:17). This is not to say that the natural man couldn't understand the things the Spirit taught if someone explained them to him. As we have seen, there were sinners who did receive the things that were taught by the Spirit of God by the apostles on Pentecost. It did mean that when the natural man (the uninspired man) was teaching, he was not teaching inspired messages from God because God had never given him any inspired messages. Therefore he didn't **know** an inspired message to teach. The subject that the inspired people taught was, "**The things which God hath prepared for them that love Him**". The inspired man **received** these things from the Spirit of God and he could **know** them. **The uninspired man did not receive the things of God from the Spirit of God; therefore he could not know them (1 Cor. 2:14).**

The thing that Paul was trying to convey to the church at Corinth was that when he came to teach them, he didn't come as an eloquent orator but he came as an inspired man with a message from God and the power of God to confirm the Word. He also wanted them to know that he did not speak words of worldly wisdom, but he spoke the wisdom of God. **He wanted them to understand that there were some who were teaching that did not have a message from God and they spoke only as the wisdom of this world had taught them** They are the ones he refers to as the natural man as it is translated in the KJV. However, Phillips Modern English translation, The Jerusalem Bible,

and The Revised Standard Version all render it “**An unspiritual man**”. That would be a man without the **Spirit**. Today’s English Version renders it as “**The man who does not have the Spirit**”, and The New International Version has it “**The man without the Spirit**”. **I do not recommend these translations as study Bibles, only to make comparisons**. Since Paul contrasted the man without the Spirit to the spiritual man, these translations make it clear that the natural man, the unspiritual man, the man without the Spirit and the uninspired man are all the same man” **and Paul contrasted him with the spiritual man or the inspired man**. The inspired man **received the things of the Spirit of God and he could know them** (1 Cor. 2:12). As one reads on into the third and fourth chapters of 1 Corinthians it is clear that there were false teachers at Corinth.

There are other Scriptures that teach the same points that Paul wrote to the church at Corinth. False teachers who did not have the Holy Spirit were plentiful in those days.

1 John 2:19-20 KJV “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. 20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”

The **natural men** went out from them but the **spiritual men** had an anointing from the Holy One.

1 John 2:26-27 KJV “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need

not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”

Jude 17-19 KJV “But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; 18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. 19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.”

John’s letter was written concerning the natural men who seduced the Christians, but John said that the Christians had an unction from the Holy One and that they knew all things (1 John 2:20). John was writing to people who were endowed with the Spirit and the Spirit gave them knowledge of all things pertaining to the salvation of the soul. John also wrote that they had an anointing from God and they didn’t need any man to teach them (1 John 2:27). The word translated “anointing” in verse 27 is the same Greek word translated “unction” in verse 20. What John wrote should be interpreted to mean; “You have inspiration from God and He inspires you with what He wants you to know. You have no need for any uninspired man to teach you anything. Jude identifies the uninspired teachers as “Mockers who walked after their own ungodly lust who didn’t have the Spirit”. They were not able to receive revelation because they were of the world and didn’t have God’s Spirit abiding in them. Those who “Went out from them” (1 John 2:19); the “Any man whom they didn’t need to teach them anything” (1 John 2:27) and “Those who separated themselves, having not the Spirit” (Jude 19) are all equal to “The Natural man of 1 Cor. 2:14 who received not the things of the Spirit of God and

couldn't know them". A man who taught without having the Spirit in the first century would be equal to someone teaching today without any instructions from the New Testament.

SOME PROBLEMS I CREATE FOR MYSELF

If I were to believe that Acts 2:38 makes the promise that every obedient believer would receive the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost; there are certain problems that I create for myself that I am unable to overcome.

One of the problems that I face comes from the plea that was made during the restoration movement. "Let us speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent". The problem that this plea presents to me (if I believe in the non-miraculous indwelling) is this: **If I challenge some false teacher on a point and say to him let's just speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent and at the same time tell him that I have the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost: I would have defeated my position before the debate got started. The only thing he would have to do to defeat my argument would be to say: Where does the Bible speak of the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost? I couldn't tell him if my soul's salvation depended on my doing so. If I speak where the Bible speaks, and am silent where the Bible is silent; I could never mention the non-miraculous indwelling to anybody at any time because the Bible is as silent as a tomb about a non-miraculous Holy Ghost.**

In Luke chapter 20 Jesus was asked by what authority He did the things that He did. Before He would answer He asked a question: “The baptism of John; was it from heaven, or of men?” There are only two sources for the ideas that pertain to religion and worship. The ideas either originate with God or they originate with men. Suppose the same question was asked concerning the origin of the idea of the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost “Was it from heaven or was it of men”? How would we answer it? **If the idea originated with God you can read about it in your Bible. If it originated with men you can hear about it in men’s sermons and you can read about it in their writings but you can’t find it in your Bible to save your life.**

Heb. 7:14 KJV “For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”

Jesus couldn’t be a priest on earth because He came from a tribe of which Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood (Heb. 8:4). **If that is true concerning the Lord and His priesthood; how can we justify ourselves in claiming a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost when the Lord spake nothing concerning the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the entirety of the Bible?**

Another problem that I face if I preach the non-miraculous indwelling is: I can’t ask people to follow me in their Bibles.

Acts 17:2, 3 KJV “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of

the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.”

Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures. That is he reasoned with them out of the Old Testament Scriptures. He quoted the prophets and reasoned with them about Jesus fulfilling the prophecies pertaining to the Messiah. He proved by the Scriptures that Jesus is Christ (Greek for Messiah).

Acts 17:11 KJV “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

The people of Berea took their Old Testament and read behind Paul to see if the things he preached corresponded to the things that were written. **Now let’s just suppose that Paul had told them that if they would repent and be baptized they would receive the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost; and they had gone to the Scriptures and searched to see whether that was so. We know they wouldn’t have found it mentioned anywhere in the Bible. If Paul had preached it and they couldn’t find it; how much faith would they have put in what Paul had to say?** Did the people who heard Peter (and the other apostles) on Pentecost believe that Acts 2:38 had reference to a non-miraculous indwelling? If they did; they believed it without finding it in the Scriptures. **I have used Acts 17:11 many times to encourage the audience to check out the things that I had spoken but if I had preached that we have a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit I**

would know beforehand that they would never be able to find a passage that would substantiate what I had said. It never ceases to be amazing to hear about the things that people believe in religion. There are so many things believed that are foreign to the Bible. People believe in a Pope, purgatory, limbo, prayers addressed to Mary, sprinkling for baptism, praying the sinner's prayer, pre-millennialism and many other such things that are not even mentioned in the Bible. **I will issue a challenge: If you can produce a verse in the Bible that mentions a non-miraculous Holy Ghost (Spirit), then I will produce a verse that mentions every one of those things listed above.**

SOME CONTROVERSIAL VERSES

Since I have so many problems with the interpretation that Acts 2:38 speaks of a non-miraculous indwelling; let's investigate some passages in the epistles that deal with the Holy Spirit and see how they could be understood.

Heb. 6:4-6 KJV "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

If I believe these verses refer to the miraculous I will interpret them one way and if I believe they refer to the non-miraculous I will have to interpret them another way. Both views can see that the "enlightenment" of a person would

come by the knowledge of the Word of God so both views would agree that people today can be enlightened. Then we come to the “Heavenly gift”. The non-miraculous view would say something like this, “The heavenly gift is salvation in Christ”. There might possibly be an agreement on that point also. Then the phrase, “Were made partakers of the Holy Ghost”. Those with the miraculous view would say that was a miraculous endowment and those with the non-miraculous view would say it was a non-miraculous indwelling. Then the phrase “And have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come”. The miraculous view would say that was the power that came when the Holy Ghost came. Adam Clark (his commentary) said that all the words and phrases in Heb. 6:4, 5 referred to apostates who never were Christians and were not applicable to backsliders of any kind. It is amazing how far some will go in order not to conflict with some doctrine they teach. However, one of the most difficult things that I can see for the non-miraculous view is; it is impossible to renew one to repentance who received these things and had fallen away. I have heard the non-miraculous view that it is **almost impossible** to renew them. I have heard the view that “It doesn’t say he couldn’t repent and be renewed, it said that it was impossible to persuade him to repent but he could repent if he was willing”. **If that is true, then why would we try to encourage a brother to repent who has received the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost and then had fallen away? Did the verse not say that if one had been made partakers of the Holy Ghost and then had fallen away that it would be impossible to renew him again to repentance? Why try to persuade one when he can’t be persuaded?** Then again I don’t know of any case;

neither in the Bible nor in modern times of anyone who ever repented while being unwilling.

What would those with the miraculous view say about renewing one to repentance who had been made partakers of the Holy Ghost? **If one had received the Holy Ghost and the powers of the world to come and then had “Done despite to the Spirit of grace” (Heb. 10:29), would it not be impossible to renew him to repentance because God wouldn’t accept his repentance?**

Luke 12:10 KJV “And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.”

Judas Iscariot was made a partaker of the Holy Ghost. At one time he had the powers of the world to come, (Matt. 10:1-8) but he fell away (Matt. 26:45-50). He tried to repent (Matt. 27:3-5) but he went to his own place (Acts 1:25). God didn’t accept his repentance. If what Jesus said in Luke 12:10 doesn’t apply to a person such as Judas, to whom would the verse apply? Then again, why did Ananias and Sapphira not have an opportunity to repent? Would you **study** about that? **How did they lie to the Holy Ghost?**

Heb. 6:7, 8 KJV “For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.”

The writer of the Hebrew letter continued with the thought in verses 7 and 8. The person (the earth) that receives the good things (rain) and brings forth the fruit of

the Spirit (good crops) will receive blessings from God. But the person (earth) which bears the fruit of unrighteousness (briers) is rejected by God and whose end is to be burned. Did those who tasted the heavenly gift, were made partakers of the Holy Ghost and possessed the powers of the world to come receive the good things of God? Yes! But if they fell away, their end was to be burned. An apostate can't fall from a place he's never been.

PAUL WANTED TO VISIT THE CHURCH AT ROME

Rom. 1:8-15 "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; 10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. 11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; 12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. 13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. 14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."

Although Paul had never been to the church at Rome he wrote them a long letter. We know that Paul burdened himself with the care of all the churches (2 Cor. 11:28), but then we might wonder why Paul would write such a long

letter in such explicit terms as those in the letter to a congregation that he had never visited. If the church at Rome had been doing well and prospering, why would Paul have such a desire to visit them? First he said that he wanted to impart some spiritual gift to the end that they would be established. Then he said that by this he would be comforted along with their being comforted. For some time, Paul had desired to go to Rome but had been occupied with other things. He said that he desired to have some fruit among the people at Rome also. He was chosen by Christ to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 26:17) and he was ready to preach to the Gentiles at Rome also. Not only that but Paul knew there were false teachers at Rome who were disrupting the unity of the church (Rom. 16:17, 18). They were causing division in the church at Rome and were deceiving the hearts of the simple. With that situation at Rome Paul wanted to visit the church there; expose the false teachers and set things straight.

There were also many people at Rome who had worked with Paul in the gospel in time past. Priscilla and Aquila who had laid down their own necks for Paul (Rom. 16:3, 4), were there along with a host of others who are named in Romans the 16th chapter.

Those who believe that people receive the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit; believe that the Christians at Rome had received the non-miraculous indwelling, **“But still lacked the `spiritual gift` that Paul longed to impart to them so they could be established”** (RSVP NEWSLETTER No. 63 by Jack Wilhelm, page 5). Look at the following verses and make your determination

whether there were those who possessed spiritual gifts already in the church at Rome.

Rom. 5:5 KJV “And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

Paul used the pronouns “our and us” to include himself and the church at Rome. Both Paul and the church had been given the Holy Ghost. Question: could you conceive of the idea that Paul had labored with those whom he listed in Romans the 16th chapter as his helpers and had not imparted the Holy Ghost to any of them?

Rom. 12:6, 7 KJV “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;”

As we’ve seen in Eph. 4:11 and 1 Cor. 12:28 **prophecy** and **teaching** are both gifts that Christ gave when He ascended. Therefore the church at Rome already had miraculous gifts at the time Paul wrote his letter. **A preacher couldn’t preach, a teacher couldn’t teach and the congregation couldn’t worship according to God’s directions without the exercise of those gifts because they were the only guide they had for worship. They had no New Testament at that time. Now that we know there were those at Rome who had the Holy Ghost, who received revelation and were in possession of spiritual gifts at the time Paul wrote the letter, we need to keep that in mind as we read the letter. It is also of the utmost**

importance for us to keep in mind that there were also false teachers at Rome who opposed the inspired message that was taught by those with spiritual gifts at Rome. They didn't serve the Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly. They used good words and fair speeches and deceived the hearts of the simple (Rom. 16:17). Look now at the 8th chapter of the book of Romans.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH AT ROME

Rom. 8:8, 9 “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

The word “flesh” is used two ways in Paul’s writing. In some cases the word flesh is used for the body of flesh, but in other places he uses the word flesh metaphorically for Judaism or the period of time the Jews were under the law. In verse 8 above, if we define the word flesh as the body of flesh, no one who is alive and breathing can please God. But we know from Hebrews 11:5 that Enoch pleased God while he lived in the flesh. Before we go any further on these verses let’s look at two verses in chapter seven that will help us to understand Paul’s use of the word flesh.

Rom. 7:5, 6 KJV “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

People who are alive don't separate themselves from their flesh. James said, "The body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26). Paul wasn't saying that at one time they were alive but now they are not alive in the physical sense. Therefore we can't define the word flesh in verse 5 as the body. **What Paul was saying is; when they were in Judaism (or under the law) they sinned and found themselves condemned because there was no provision for forgiveness in the law. But in verse 6 he said that they had been delivered from that law that had held them condemned. They had been in the flesh (under the law, a fleshly system) but now (through Christ) they had been delivered from the law. The guilt of sin under the law left them condemned but "Now in Christ" they had been delivered from the system of the flesh (to keep the law to the letter) and were in the Spirit (the system of the gospel).**

Phil. 3:3-5 KJV "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. 4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: 5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;"

Paul substituted the word **flesh** for the word **law** in Phil. 3:3, 4. He could have had confidence in the flesh (**law**) if anyone could. He came from the right ancestry, had been circumcised on the proper day and worshiped as a Pharisee. If anyone could have had confidence **in the law**, Paul could.

Rom 8:1, 2 KJV “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

The word “therefore” connects what Paul had said in chapter 7 with what he was about to say in chapter eight. We will miss the points he intended to make in chapter eight unless we make the connection. Chapter seven is devoted entirely to the condemnation that was under the law and the deliverance that came through Christ Jesus our Lord (verses 24 and 25). **The word “now” brings what he was about to say in chapter 8 out of the time when they were under the law into the dispensation of the gospel.** “Now” there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh (not according to the law) but after the Spirit (according to the inspired gospel). Their obedience to the gospel of Christ had delivered them from the bondage and condemnation of the law of sin and death.

Now back to chapter 8-verses 8 and 9. “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God”. **Paul is saying those in Judaism can’t please God. The false teachers were telling the church at Rome that Judaism was the “only” way to please God.** “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His”. This is one of the key verses that those who believe in the non-miraculous indwelling use when making a point for their belief. **They say that this verse teaches that anyone today who doesn’t have the Holy Spirit doesn’t belong to Christ.** If this verse had been written to a congregation in any period of time other than when revelation was being

given, and being confirmed with signs, wonders and miracles it might teach that. **But the verse was written to a congregation that was guided by people who had the Spirit (with miraculous gifts) who were opposed by false teachers who had no means to confirm their good words and fair speeches. What Paul was saying to a church in that time period is: If somebody is teaching be sure he is speaking by revelation and has the ability to confirm what he teaches. If he can't confirm what he teaches, if he isn't speaking words which have been revealed by the Spirit, don't be disturbed or troubled by what he says because he is a false teacher and he doesn't belong to Christ; in Paul's words, "He is none of His".** We know there were inspired people at Rome who did belong to Christ but that doesn't mean that everyone who assembled or who spoke in their assemblies belonged to Christ. There were some at Rome who were to be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17, 18).

THE SPIRIT THAT DWELT IN THE ROMAN CHURCH

Rom. 8:11 "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelled in the church at Rome: What Spirit dwelled in them, the miraculous or the non-miraculous? I don't know of anyone who would argue that Christ was raised from the dead by a non-miraculous Spirit. The Spirit that raised Christ from the dead will also bring all the dead out of

the graves. Who is going to contend that a non-miraculous Spirit will accomplish the resurrection? Then their mortal bodies that were dead because of sin (by reason of sin verse 10) would be quickened by His Spirit that dwelt in them (see also Eph. 2:1). **Would you say the Spirit that dwelled in them was a Spirit that was dormant, inert, and non-sensory, or was He an active Spirit with miraculous powers?**

THOSE WHO WERE LED BY THE SPIRIT

Rom. 8:14, 15 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”

As many of those in the congregation at Rome as were being led by the Spirit of God: How would they be led by God’s Spirit and by whom would they be opposed? Those who were being led by the Spirit were the inspired leaders and those who were following the inspired leaders. **The inspired leaders were being opposed by the false teachers who didn’t belong to Christ and who were not the sons of God.** The Spirit that had been given to the church at Rome was not the spirit of Bondage to fear (a reference to the law) and in bondage is exactly where the law would leave them because there was no provision for forgiveness in the law. If they had followed the false teachers they would have led them to be under the law and they would be in bondage to fear. But the Spirit that had been given to the church at Rome was the Spirit of Christ who is the Son of God. That being true those in the church at Rome were the children of God by adoption, therefore

they could call God their Father. With God as their Father and Christ as their brother (Rom. 8:29) they were in the family of God. By adoption they became heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (verse 17).

THE SPIRIT BORE WITNESS

Rom. 8:16 “The Spirit itself (Himself) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”

How did the Spirit Himself bear witness with their spirit and show that they were the sons of God? In order to be able to answer that question we may need to ask another question and answer it first. That question is: How did the Spirit Himself bear witness with the Spirit of Jesus that He is the Son of God? Take a look at the following verses.

John 8:13-18 KJV “The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. 14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. 15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. 16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. 17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.”

John 5:36, 37 KJV “But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. 37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me,

hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.”

Acts 2:22 KJV “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”

The Pharisees made accusation of Jesus, that He bore witness of Himself. That is, that He couldn't prove the things He said by producing another witness. According to the law (Deut. 19:15), If Jesus had no one to affirm the things He said His testimony would be null and void. But Jesus said that He had another witness. He said He bore witness of Himself for one witness and the Father affirmed what He said for the second witness. **The question is; how did the Father bear witness?** Jesus said that the works that He did bore witness of Him. What kind of works did Jesus do that bore witness of Him? The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Peter, said that the miracles that God did by Him showed God's approval of Jesus (Acts 2:22). The answer to the question is; the Spirit Himself bore witness with Jesus' Spirit that He is the Son of God by giving Him the power to work miracles. **Every time Jesus worked a miracle that was God's testimony that Jesus is His Son.** Jesus proclaimed that He was God's Son and God confirmed His testimony with miracles (John 20:30, 31). We know that no man could work a miracle except God was with him (John 3:2).

Now back to the question on Rom. 8:16: How did the Spirit Himself bear witness with the spirits of the apostles and the inspired people in the church at Rome that they were the children of God? The answer is; He did it exactly the

same way that He bore witness that Jesus is His Son. Every time one of them worked a miracle or engaged in supernatural activity; that was God's testimony that they were His children.

Acts 20:22, 23 KJV “And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.”

As Paul talked to the elders of the church at Ephesus he told them that he didn't know what would happen to him when he got to Jerusalem but that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every city that he would be bound and suffer afflictions there. **It is evident that Paul meant that in the cities he had passed through inspired prophets had told him of the bonds and afflictions that awaited him in Jerusalem.** One such prophet was Agabus who told Paul the same things (Acts 21:10, 11). However we know that in order for one to be a true prophet his prophecy must come to pass and Agabus' prophecy did come to pass and proved that he was a true prophet and a child of God. **In that way, the Spirit Himself bore witness with Agabus' spirit that he was a child of God.**

THE SPIRIT HELPED THEIR INFIRMITIES

Rom. 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself (Himself) maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

Again we come to a verse that was written to a church in the period of inspiration and conformation. **Paul said that Christians didn't know what they should ask for in their prayers as they ought but the Spirit helped them to word their prayers. Then we come to the question, how did the Spirit help them?**

The most common interpretation of Rom. 8:26 is that when we are so downtrodden and miserable that we don't know how to word a prayer the Holy Ghost will take our groaning and interpret it to God. Would any of us want to infer that God doesn't have the ability to understand our groaning without help from the Holy Ghost? How can we read, "For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him" (Matt. 6:8) and then agree with such an interpretation as that? **That interpretation leads to an "unavoidable" conclusion that the Spirit works in miraculous ways today.**

The Holy Spirit was sent to reveal the things that God wanted man to know (1 Cor. 2:12). The interpretation that the Spirit would reveal what was in the mind of man to God is a complete "reversal". How then ought we to interpret Rom. 8:26? **The answer is; the Spirit helped their infirmities by inspiring the prayers they prayed in the same way He inspired the sermons they preached.** Along with the inspired sermons and prayers they also sang inspired songs. At times the church was led in prayer by an inspired man and at other times the inspired men all prayed the same prayer at the same time. Look at an example of where an inspired prayer was prayed by a group who all spoke the same thing at the same time.

Ps. 2:1-3 KJV “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.”

First, let’s look at this illustration: By inspiration, Peter quoted Psalms 16:10 and gave the correct interpretation of it in his first sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2), “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption”. **The Spirit helped Peter’s infirmities because he didn’t know how he should preach that as he ought.** The Spirit helped his infirmities and gave him the proper interpretation of the Psalm: That it meant that **Christ’s** soul was not left in hell nor did **His** flesh see corruption. Psalms 2:1-3 above is another prophecy that they didn’t know how to properly interpret. But who would know the proper interpretation of that psalm better than the One who inspired it in the first place; the Holy Spirit? **The Spirit helped their infirmities by giving a group of Christians the correct interpretation of that Psalm and helped them to express the meaning. Look!**

Acts 4:23-31 KJV “And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child

Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”

When the high priest and the rulers of the people released Peter and John they went to their own company. That would be equal to saying that they went where other Christians were gathered. The apostles reported what had happened to them and what was said to them. When the other Christians heard it they all raised their voices “**With one accord**”. Phillips translation renders the phrase translated “With one accord” in the KJV as “**In united prayer**”, while the Jerusalem Bible renders it “**They lifted up their voice to God all together**”. They lifted up their voices at the same time and all prayed the same prayer. They quoted from the psalm and gave the correct interpretation of the psalm. **The question is; how was it that they all had the same words come out of their mouths at the same time?** How did they all give the exact meaning of the words of the psalm and how were they able to express them together? **The answer is; “The Spirit helped their infirmities”. The Spirit helped the infirmities of “inspired men” who didn’t know how to preach as they ought. He helped the infirmities of**

the ones who didn't know what to ask for in their prayers as they ought. He helped the infirmities of the ones who didn't know what they should sing as they ought and He helped the infirmities of the ones who didn't know how to worship as they ought. Those who were inspired with sermons, songs and prayers, were to teach the others with the inspired words in the sermons, prayers and songs.

Col. 3:16 KJV “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

They could let the Word dwell richly in the church only through inspired people in the church. They had no New Testament, therefore those with spiritual gifts taught the others with whatever gift they had. **As we can see in this verse some were inspired with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (see 1 Cor. 14:26). The Spirit helped their infirmities by inspiring them with a psalm, hymn or spiritual song because they didn't know what they should sing as they ought and the inspired songs had messages in them that taught lessons to the hearers.**

1 Cor. 14:12-15 KJV “Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. 13 Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret. 14 For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

The members of the church at Corinth had a zeal for the spiritual gifts. The impression one gets from reading this chapter is that the majority of them desired to have the gift of speaking in other languages. Paul wanted them to desire the gift that would be of the most benefit to the church, and that was the gift of prophesying. He said the use of the gift of prophecy would edify, exhort and comfort the hearers (verse 3). Speaking in tongues would only confuse the hearers if no one understood and there was no one to interpret. Paul said that he spoke in tongues more than all the others (verse 18). But if he prayed in an unknown language it was emotionally uplifting to his spirit, however he didn't understand what he had said. Speaking or praying in another language was for the benefit of those in the assembly who understood the language spoken; not to boost the ego of the one who could speak in another language. "What is it then" or what is the answer to this situation? **Sometimes there were people of other tongues in the assembly and it was needful to speak, pray and sing in the language they understood.** Paul said, "I will pray with the Spirit": What did he mean by that? Those who spoke in another language did so as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4). There was no other way that they could speak or pray in a language they had not learned. What Paul meant was, when the situation required it he would pray in another language even if he didn't understand, but he would also word a prayer to God that he did understand. But that is not all that Paul said. He said that he would sing with the Spirit. **Those who sang in another language did so as the Spirit gave them utterance.** Paul was saying he would sing a song as the Spirit inspired it in another language when the situation required it but he would also sing a song that he could

understand. **These verses show that there were inspired prayers and inspired songs in the infant church.**

1 Cor. 14:26 KJV “How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”

When the church came together, it seems as if everyone who had a spiritual gift wanted to use it at the same time. Paul gave instructions as to how the gifts were to be used and said that they should be used decently and in order (verse 40). **Those who had a gift were not controlled by the gift, but were in control of the gift (verse 32). The Spirit would inspire him with a tongue, a revelation, a psalm or a doctrine; but the one with the gift would be in control of when and how he spoke and when and how he sang.**

THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT WAS THEIR SEAL

Eph. 1:13 “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,”

There were those in the church at Ephesus who had heard the gospel and **trusted in** what they had heard (Acts 19:1-6). **After they believed, they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; they spoke in tongues.** **The word “seal” means a stamp that is visible.** There have been many kinds of seals down through the ages. A familiar seal today is a metal seal used on such things as transport trucks and railroad cars. The seal is put on the door so that it can easily be detected if the door has been opened during the time of transportation.

The seal could be broken or it could be missing altogether. If the seal was broken there would still be visible evidence that the seal had been there. If the seal was missing, the report would be that there was no seal on the door. If there was no seal on the door there would be no visible evidence that it had ever been sealed. The same is true with the seal of the Holy Ghost. If there is no visible evidence of the seal how do we know that the seal was ever placed there? Those in the first century who had been sealed had visible evidence. They could confirm their words with signs, wonders and miracles. **If people today were sealed with the Holy Ghost there would be visible evidence for all to see.**

Matt. 27:65, 66 KJV “Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. 66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.”

The chief priests and the Pharisees had the stone sealed that was placed at Jesus’ tomb. They probably sealed it with some kind of wax seal but whatever was used it was put there **in plain sight** to detect whether the stone had been moved. It was a visible seal which would have been broken or removed in order for the stone to be removed. **As far as I know, those who believe they have the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit have never indicated that it is visible in any way. The people in the New Testament that were sealed with the Holy Spirit had a visible manifestation of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7).**

There is another phrase in Eph. 1:13 that we need to think about and that is; **“Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”**. **If they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of**

promise they were sealed with the Holy Spirit that had been promised by Jesus and had been prophesied by Joel.

If Joel had prophesied that a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit would come or if Jesus had promised that a non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit would come, we could believe that the people at Ephesus were sealed with the non-miraculous indwelling. However if we can't point to a verse where the non-miraculous indwelling was promised, we must be persuaded to believe that Eph.1:13 is a reference to the miraculous because Jesus promised the miraculous and Joel prophesied of the miraculous, but neither of them foretold nor promised that a non-miraculous indwelling would come. **The Ephesians were sealed with a visible seal (any gift of the Holy Ghost would have been visible) and they were sealed with the Spirit that was in Joel's prophecy and the Spirit that was in the promise of Jesus; the miraculous.** To any who would contend that the promise of Eph. 1:13 is found in Acts 2:38, 39; you need to be reminded that the promise that is mentioned in Acts 2:39 is a direct reference to the promise of God made in the prophecy of Joel, that Peter had just quoted, (Acts 2:16-21) which was miraculous.

Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus and told them that they had been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. The Holy Spirit was also said to be the "**earnest**" of their inheritance. Is it necessary for me to make a present day application of that statement written to a church in the first century? I can visualize myself as being in that congregation and observing the activities of those who were sealed with the Holy Spirit. Then I can understand the Holy Ghost was the earnest or pledge of **their inheritance**. The gift of the

Spirit was God's pledge or guaranty in the absence of the written Word but today we have the written Word as our guaranty. **Then I can return my thinking to the present and recognize that verse as being something that was written aforetime for my learning (Rom. 15:4) and that I have not been sealed with the same Holy Spirit as they were but that I have the same pledge or guaranty in the Word.**

Luke 24:49 KJV "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

As Luke closes his first letter to Theophilus, he mentions the **promise** that would provide them with **power**. It is evident that the promise is a reference to supernatural power.

Acts 1:4 KJV "And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me."

As Luke opened his second letter he tells Theophilus that the Lord had told the apostles to wait for the **promise** that He had told them about beforehand.

Acts 1:8 KJV "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Theophilus was told that the apostles were to receive power after the Holy Ghost came upon them. Again this is a

clear reference to the supernatural **power** that Luke had mentioned to Theophilus in Luke 24:49.

Acts 2:33 KJV “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”

After the people had witnessed the outpouring of the Holy Ghost; Peter told them that what they had seen and heard was the fulfillment of that which had been **promised**.

Acts 2:38-39 KJV “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”

Luke then told Theophilus that Peter told the people that if they would repent and be baptized; they would receive the Holy Ghost according to the **promise** that had been made. **Would Theophilus understand the promise to be anything other than the Holy Ghost in a miraculous way with the background he had been given by Luke on the promise?**

The background for the promise in Acts 2:39 is the same background for the promise in Eph. 1:13. The Ephesians were sealed with the Holy Spirit as it had been promised by Jesus and prophesied by Joel. Both the prophesy and the promise are for the supernatural powers that existed in the first century.

THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

1 Cor. 3:16, 17 KJV “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

1 Cor. 6:19 KJV “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

The letter was written to the church at Corinth. Some members of the church at Corinth were endowed with spiritual gifts. There was a clear “**manifestation**” of the Spirit in their assemblies (chapter 12 and verse 7). There was no mistake about the Spirit dwelling in the church at Corinth because Paul gave explicit instructions about the use of the spiritual gifts and then he told them that the one with the Spirit had control over how he conducted himself (chapter 14 and verse 32). Therefore they could conduct themselves in such a way that everything would be done decently and in order, verse 40.

Think of it another way. The congregation at Corinth with the miraculous manifestations of the Spirit received a letter from Paul with instructions concerning the use, **or misuse**, of miraculous gifts. In that letter it was evident that when the church came together the miraculous gifts were being used (14:26). In that same letter he asked them; do you not know that the Spirit of God dwells in you? Some questions are in order: How did they understand Paul’s question? **If we don’t understand Paul’s question as they understood it then we will misunderstand. Did they**

think he meant that a non-miraculous Spirit dwelled in them or would their minds be turned to the miraculous since they knew that the Spirit that dwelled in them was responsible for the miracles that were being done? Had they ever heard of a non-miraculous indwelling; if so, where is the verse? We must understand what Paul meant the same way they understood what he meant, or we will make a misapplication of the text.

I am convinced that the only way we can understand the letters that were written to the churches in the first century is to try to visualize ourselves to be in the midst of a first century assembly. We must recognize that there were no New Testaments and that the people who were members of these congregations were familiar with the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit done by those who were in their midst: Or they possibly were endowed with some gift of the Holy Ghost themselves. When we read the letters that were written to the churches in the first century we are reading mail that was written to other people at a different time and while God had a different arrangement for the guidance of the church while it was still in its infancy. Before the inspired book was completed, miraculously inspired people guided the church.

THE CHURCH WAS TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Eph. 5:18, 19 “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;”

Ephesians 5:18 is used quite often to prove the theory of the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit. Paul instructed the church at Ephesus to be filled with the Spirit, but in the same sentence he tells them to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. **We have already shown that the psalms, hymns and songs that they sang were inspired (1 Cor. 14:26).** As we have already discussed: Along with the inspired songs there were inspired sermons, inspired prayers and inspired worship. By participating in singing inspired songs along with the other activities the Spirit inspired, the church could be filled with the Spirit. There are other occasions in the book of Acts where people were filled with the Holy Ghost and on every occasion the miraculous is involved. The following Scriptures will show this to be the case.

Acts 2:4 KJV “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Acts 4:31 KJV “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.”

On this occasion the assembled Christians had just finished reciting an **inspired prayer in unison.**

Acts 6:8-10 KJV “And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. 9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing

with Stephen. 10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.”

Luke also recorded that Stephen was **full of the Holy Ghost** (Acts 7:55).

Ephesians 5:18 is given by Paul as an exhortation in the positive sense: “Be filled with the Spirit”. But look at another exhortation that he gave to the church at Thessalonica that was in the negative sense.

1 Thess. 5:19-21 KJV “Quench not the Spirit. 20 Despise not prophesyings. 21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

They were told not to quench the Spirit. What did Paul mean; quench not the Spirit? **The exhortation in Eph. 5:18 is an exhortation to use the miraculous gifts that were in the congregation. The negative exhortation in 1 Thess. 5:19 is an exhortation not to hold back on the use of the gifts that were in that congregation.** The word translated “quench” carries with it the idea that they could hold back on the use of the gifts to the extent that the Spirit would be extinguished. **By using the gifts they could “Prove all things” and hold on to that which is good.** Those who were in the assembly who had the spiritual gifts would be able to prove all things. Since there were those in the assemblies who didn’t have the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9, Jude 19) and were teaching false doctrine, those with the gift of discerning of spirits didn’t need to quench the Spirit. They were to allow the speaker to speak, (despise not prophesyings) but then they were to ‘Prove all things’ and then **hold on to that which the Holy Spirit showed**

through those who had the gifts to be the inspired message.

2 Tim. 1:6,7 KJV “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. 7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

Timothy was told to stir up the gift that he received as a result of Paul laying his hands on him. That would be equal to saying **“Use the gift and don’t hold it back”**. God had not given them a spirit of fear. The Spirit that God had given them was a Spirit that had power, love and a sound mind. **Timothy was told to allow the Spirit to work through him.**

Let’s reason about what is said in these verses. First let’s remember that the person who had the gift was in control of the gift (1 Cor. 14:32). It was not as some think today that the Spirit controlled the person. **These verses show that the ones who had the gifts could hold back and not use the gifts, thereby “Quenching (to the extinguishing of) the Spirit” or they could “Stir up the gifts” and use them.** They were to use them to guide the activities of the church; singing inspired psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, preaching inspired sermons and praying inspired prayers. **They would also use them to conduct the worship service as the Spirit instructed and the church would be “Filled with the Spirit”.** How could these things be true if they only had a non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit? How could the church at Ephesus have any control over whether or not they were filled with the non-miraculous Spirit since He would be dormant, inert, and non-sensory? If He did

nothing, just stayed there; how would they know whether or not they were full? Brother McCord wrote, **“The indwelling is not miraculous, else all Christians would have such powers (Acts 2:39; 5:32; John 7:39). It is not sensory, for one cannot know there is a Holy Spirit except by reading of Him in the Bible”** (page 9). My question is: If that is true, how could one know if he is full of the Holy Ghost or whether he had quenched the Spirit to the point that He had been extinguished? **If all we can know about the Holy Ghost is in the Bible; where is the verse in the Bible that tells us how to measure how full a person is of the Holy Ghost or whether or not he has quenched the Spirit?**

IS THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST SALVATION?

There are a great number of our brethren who believe that the phrase “The gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38) should be interpreted **“The gift of salvation”**. I would like to examine that belief and expound upon some of the reasons that make me know **that cannot be correct.**

Mark 16:16 KJV “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Jesus said if one believes and is baptized, he would be saved. There is no question as to whether he would receive **“The gift of salvation”** when he obeyed the command that Jesus stated in Mark 16:16; we hear that preached from the pulpits every Lord’s day.

Acts 8:12-19 KJV “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was

baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. 14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. 18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, 19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.”

From this passage of Scripture; I would like to list a number of reasons why I believe the phrase “The gift of the Holy Ghost” **cannot be interpreted “The gift of salvation”**.

Reason no. 1. The Samaritans believed and were baptized exactly as Jesus required in Mark 16:16 and Jesus said those who complied with that commandment would be saved. **Would that not be equivalent to “Receiving the gift of salvation”?** However, Acts 8:16 tells us that the Samaritans **had not received the Holy Ghost. If the gift of the Holy Ghost is the gift of salvation; then the Samaritans didn't receive salvation when they believed and were baptized**

Reason no. 2. Let's turn that around and look at it from a different prospective. If the gift of the Holy Ghost is the gift of salvation, and if the Samaritans received the gift of salvation when they met the requirements of Mark 16:16: **That would mean that the apostles prayed (verse 15) that**

the Samaritans would receive “another salvation” when they prayed that they might “receive the Holy Ghost”.

Reason no. 3. In verses 17 and 18 the apostles laid their hands on the Samaritans and they received the Holy Ghost while Simon observed that “Through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, the Holy Ghost was given”. **If the gift of the Holy Ghost is the gift of salvation; then Simon observed that “The gift of salvation was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands”.** That is the only logical conclusion that can be drawn from that set of facts.

Reason no. 4. “Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Ghost was given”: What did Simon see? If he saw something; there was something visible for him to see. He couldn’t see salvation being imparted to the Samaritans by the laying on of the apostles’ hands. **He couldn’t see their sins being remitted by the laying on of the apostles’ hands.** He couldn’t see their conscience being cleared by the laying on of the apostles’ hands. He couldn’t see anything pertaining to the heart and mind of those upon whom the apostles had laid hands: But he could see the **“manifestation”** of their having received the Holy Ghost. There was a manifestation of the Spirit’s presence in the person who received the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. 12:7). What Simon saw was the manifestation of the Spirit in those upon whom the apostles’ hands were laid.

Acts 19:6 KJV “And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

When Paul laid his hands on the men at Ephesus there was a **manifestation** of the Spirit's presence in them when they began to speak in tongues and prophesy. I can't say that Simon saw the Samaritans speak in tongues and prophesy **but there was a manifestation of some kind or Simon couldn't have seen that the Spirit was given.**

Acts 10:44-48 KJV "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."

I would also like to discuss some reasons from the verses above that are sufficient to cause me to **reject the idea** that the gift of the Holy Ghost and the gift of salvation are one and the same thing.

Reason no. 1. Before Peter could finish his sermon, "The gift of the Holy Ghost" (the exact words Peter used in Acts 2:38) was poured out on the household of Cornelius (verses 44, 45). **If the gift of the Holy Ghost is the gift of salvation; then the Lord poured out the gift of salvation on the house of Cornelius before they were baptized.** To believe that one would have to believe that God granted salvation in a way that was contradictory to the way Jesus prescribed in Mark 16:16: But Jesus said that God had given all authority into His hands (Matt. 28:18).

Reason no. 2. Peter commanded the house of Cornelius to be baptized after they had received the gift of the Holy Ghost. If the gift of the Holy Ghost is salvation; and it was obvious to Peter that they had received the Holy Ghost: **Then it was obvious to Peter that they had received salvation. If they had received salvation at that point, there was no reason for them to be baptized for the remission of sins** as Peter had required those to do in his sermon in Acts chapter two.

Reason no. 3. Now let's turn that around and look at it from a different viewpoint. Peter spoke as the Spirit gave him utterance and said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). If baptism is "**For the remission of sins**"; and the house of Cornelius had not been baptized: **They had not had their sins remitted.** If the gift of the Holy Ghost is salvation, the household of Cornelius **received salvation before their sins were remitted. If we follow that line of thinking we would be compelled to believe that one could receive the gift of salvation while he was still in his sins.**

Reason no. 4. Just as Simon observed the manifestation of the Spirit in the Samaritans; those who came with Peter observed the manifestation of the Spirit in the household of Cornelius. In every instance where the Holy Ghost was given in the book of Acts; there is an indication of the manifestation of the presence of the Spirit in those who had received Him. In every instance where the Holy Ghost was given in the book of Acts there is an inference that supernatural events took place which originated with the ones who had received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Since supernatural events have ceased (1 Cor. 13) there is no

reason for me to believe that people today receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. However that does not prevent me from believing that people today receive the gift of salvation just as they did in the first century; if they will obey the commands that Jesus gave in Mark 16:16.

Since this section deals primarily with the ideas that are found in the books of Mark and Acts: **I would like to show how two passages are parallel from the two books.**

Mark 16:16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

Interpreted to Mean:
Belief plus baptism equals being saved – sins remitted-salvation.

Mark 16:17: These signs shall follow them that believe.

Interpreted to Mean:
Miraculous signs would follow those who believed and were empowered to perform those signs that followed. Mark 16:17-20

Acts 2:38: Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

Interpreted to Mean:
Repentance plus baptism equals being saved – sins remitted-salvation.

Acts 2:38: And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Interpreted to Mean:
Receive power from the Holy Ghost to enable the believers to perform the signs that followed them. Acts 1, 2, 8, 10 and 19.

Some contend that if the promise of the Holy Ghost doesn't directly apply to us, we need to rethink the application of the points that pertain to repentance and baptism for the remission of sins in the verse. Acts 2:38 says

“Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins”. In essence that says if one will repent and be baptized he will have his sins remitted and receive the salvation of his soul. Now look at Mark 16:16, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”. That says in essence that if one will believe and be baptized he will receive exactly the same thing that is promised in Acts 2:38; the salvation of his soul and the remission of sins. Then Acts 2:38 says “You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”. As has been stated many times power came when the Holy Ghost came (Acts 1:8). Miracles were performed, the lame were healed and they spoke with new tongues. Not the apostles only, but many others such as Philip, Stephen and the men at Ephesus. They could do those things only because the Holy Ghost gave them the power to do them. Mark 16:17 says, “These signs shall follow them that believe”. The signs that followed those that believed did so only by the power the Holy Ghost provided them when they received Him in accordance with the promise in Acts 2:38. What would have been necessary for the signs in Mark 16:17 to follow the believers? God would have to be with them (John 3:2). How was God with them? By giving them the gift of the Holy Ghost as was promised in Acts 2:38. By laying Mark 16:16, 17 down beside Acts 2:38 we can see that different words are used to say the same thing in the two passages. Now! If we need to rethink the application of the points that pertain to repentance and baptism for the remission of sins in Acts 2:38 just because we believe the promise of the Holy Ghost in that verse is for the miraculous; we would also need to rethink our application of believing and being baptized to obtain the salvation promised in Mark 16:16 because verse 17 makes a necessary inference that believers who complied with the

commands in verse 16 **would have the Holy Ghost**. We preach Mark 16:16 regularly and never mention verse 17 because it **so obviously** points to the miraculous. Most who preach Acts 2:38 will include the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost because to them that is not a promise of the miraculous: **But those signs in Mark 16:17 could not have followed the believers without their having received the gift of the Holy Ghost that was promised them in Acts 2:38**. If we can preach Mark 16:16 and omit the signs (vs. 17); it should be no problem to preach Acts 2:38 and omit the promise of the Holy Ghost because they are parallel in meaning.

Let me paraphrase the two passages (omitting “He that believes not” in Mark 16:16) and let’s see if I do the passages any injustice.

“He that believes and is baptized will be saved. **And believers will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, be able to cast out devils and speak with new tongues**” (Mark 16:16, 17). **Receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost is a necessary inference.**

“Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, **be able to cast out devils and speak with new tongues** (Acts 2:38). **Being able to cast out devils and speak with new tongues is a necessary inference.** Throughout the book of Acts the people with the gifts of the Holy Ghost did those things.

If we can preach Mark 16:16 without bringing the signs which followed the believers over to the present, there’s no reason why we can’t preach Acts 2:38 without

bringing the gift of the Holy Ghost over to the present. The gift of the Holy Ghost and miraculous gifts went hand in hand with revelation and confirmation. Since the gift of the Holy Ghost has ceased there is no power to receive revelation or to work miracles. No revelation and no miracles today would mean no gift of the Holy Ghost today.

Some continue to insist that we receive the Holy Ghost through the Word today. In my opinion that stems from the fact that they believe Acts 2:38 and 39 teach that we “must have” the Holy Ghost and that is the only way they can think of that we can receive Him. There were only two ways revealed in the Scripture that the Holy Ghost was given. He was poured out on some and was given to others by the laying on of the apostles’ hands. Neither of those things continues today. There is no Scripture that indicates that the Holy Ghost was given to anyone through the Word. It is true that the influence of the Holy Ghost is in the Word but the Holy Ghost only said what He was told to say (John 16:13). Jesus only said what He was told to say (John 12:49). The Bible is God’s Word that He gave through Jesus and the Holy Spirit (see also 2 Peter 1:21).

CONCLUSION

1. **There is no prophecy of the non-miraculous.** Search the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi and there is no prophecy of anything that resembles a non-miraculous Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost of which Joel prophesied would enable people to receive revelation through dreams and visions, preach the Word and

confirm the Word with signs, wonders and miracles. Those things were all miraculous and were peculiar to the first century.

2. There's no promise of a non-miraculous Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost that Jesus promised would teach all things to the apostles, bring all things that He had said to their remembrance, testify of Jesus, glorify Him, give power to cast out devils and speak with new tongues. There is nothing concerning a non-miraculous indwelling in the promises Jesus made concerning the Holy Ghost.

3. There is no power in the non-miraculous.

The Holy Ghost of which Joel prophesied, and Jesus promised would possess, distribute and exhibit miraculous power among the people (Mark 16:17, 18). The apostles received power after the Holy Ghost came upon them (Acts 1:8). There is no record of anyone in the book of Acts who received the Holy Ghost that Jesus promised who did not receive the miraculous power that came with Him.

4. There is no purpose for the non-miraculous.

God had a purpose for the Holy Ghost and the miraculous powers that were exhibited in the infant church. Inspired people guided the church through its infant stage before written revelation was completed (Eph. 4:8-16). There were inspired sermons, inspired songs, inspired prayers and their worship services were directed by inspiration (1 Cor. 14). Since, (according to those who believe in the non-miraculous indwelling) the

Holy Ghost does nothing, just stays there, is dormant, inert, and non-sensory; what purpose would the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost serve?

5. There is no proof of the non-miraculous.

The people who had the Holy Ghost in the first century had ample proof. There were false teachers who spoke in the assemblies who did not have the Holy Ghost (Rom. 8:9, Jude 19). John said for the church to try (test) those that taught to determine whether they spoke for God or were false prophets (1 John 4:1). That is exactly what Paul intended to do at Corinth (1 Cor. 4:18-20). If a teacher had the Holy Ghost he could confirm his speech. If he was a false teacher he had no proof. That would have put a false teacher and one with the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Ghost on the same level, because neither of them had any proof that they belonged to Christ. No one today can confirm his speech with signs and wonders; neither can anyone today prove by the Bible that he is endowed or that anyone has ever been endowed with a non-miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost.

INDEX OF SCRIPTURES DISCUSSED

Deut.	Pages	Mark	Pages
19:15	37, 98	16:15-20	21
Psalms	Pages	16:17, 18	29,30, 120,124
2:1-3	101	16:17	121
16:10	101	16:17-20	120
Jeremiah	Pages	16:20	41
20:4	16	Luke	Pages
Joel	Pages	1:4	62, 68,
2:31	17	4:27	62
Haggai	Pages	10:1	37
2:6-22	18	12:10	88
Matthew	Pages	21:25, 26	18
1:21-23	52	24:44	52
2:13-15	16	24:49	34, 108, 109
5:6	29	John	Pages
6:8	100	3:2	39, 98, 121
10:1	12-14, 88	4:10	28
10:7	12	4:14	29
24:21	20	5:36, 37	39, 97
24:29, 30	24	6:63-68	29
26:45-50	88	7:37-39	28, 29
27:3-5	88	8:13-18	38, 97
27:65, 66	106	8:44	47
28:18	118	8:58, 59	47
28:20	21	12:49	39, 123
Mark	Pages	14:15-26	30
9:1	34	14:16	31, 53
14:55, 56	43	14:17	80
16:15-20	21	14:26	31
16:16	15, 63, 115-122	15:26,27	31, 35, 39
16:16-17	121, 122	16:6-8	32
		16:12-14	32
		16:13	26, 42, 50, 54, 123

John	Pages	Acts	Pages
17:20, 21	54	13:2	10-14
20:30, 31	98	14:23	53
Acts	Pages	15:1, 2	70
1:4	108	15:24	71
1:5	68	17:2, 3	84
1:8	42,50, 108, 121, 124	17:11	85
1:25	88	19:1-6	105
2:4	23, 34, 40, 49, 104, 112	19:6	50, 117
2:16-21	22-24, 107	20:22, 23	99
2:22	38-41, 98	20:28	14
2:33	109	21:9	23
2:38	7-thruout book	21:10, 11	99
2:39	9-15, 26-27, 107, 109	22:16	19, 20, 64
2:47	52, 64	26:17	90
3:7	40	26:22	25
4:13	45	Romans	Pages
4:14-16	43	1:8-15	89
4:23-31	101	5:5	91
4:31	112	7:5, 6	92
5:32	36-47, 69	8:1, 2	94
6:8-10	112	8:8, 9	92
7:51-54	46	8:9	64-67, 74, 113, 125
7:55	113	8:11	95
8:6, 7	22	8:14, 15	96
8:12-19	115	8:26	99, 100
8:14-17	62	8:29	97
8:16	64-66, 116	11:29	36
9:1, 2	46	12:6, 7	91
9:17	11, 27	15:4	108
10:44-47	48	16:3, 4	90
10:44-48	67, 118	16:17	92
10:45,	68, 70	16:17, 18	72, 90, 92,95
11:15	68	16:25, 26	16, 51,79
13:1-4	11		

1 Cor.	Pages	Eph.	Pages
1:10	54	4:8-16	124
2:6-13	51	4:11	13, 53, 91
2:12	81, 100	4:11-16	53
3:16, 17	110	4:16	58
4:18-20	73, 125	5:18	111, 113
6:19	110		
12:1-11	50	Phil.	Pages
12:7	106, 117	3:3-5	93
12:7-11	25	3:17, 18	72
12:10	49, 59		
12:11	26,28,49	Col.	Pages
12:28	13,14,53, 91	3:16	103
13:8	59		
13:8-10	21	1 Thess.	Pages
13:8-13	57	2:13	41
14:12-15	103	5:19	113
14:26	103,105,110,112	5:19-21	113
14:32	114		
14:33	34	2 Thess.	Pages
14:37	42	2:14	9, 10, 14
15:1-4	34		
		2 Tim.	Pages
2 Cor.	Pages	1:6, 7	114
11:13-15	55	3:16, 17	58
11:28	89		
12:12	78	Titus	Pages
		1:10, 11	56
Gal.	Pages		
1:11,12	27	Heb.	Pages
2:2	71	2:1-4	26
		2:4	40, 50
Eph.	Pages	6:4, 5	87
1:13	105-109	6:4-6	86
1:22, 23	52, 56	6:7, 8	88
2:1	96	7:14	84
3:11	53	8:4	84
4:1-16	53	10:29	88
4:8	14, 53	11:5	92

Heb. 12:18-29 12:25-28	Pages 24 18	2 Pet. 1:20, 21 1:21	Pages 16 123
James 2:26	Pages 93	Jude 1:4 1:16 1:16-19 1:17-19 1:19	Pages 55, 70 73 72 82 82, 113, 125
1 John 2:19 2:19, 20 2:20 2:26, 27 2:27 4:1	Pages 82 81 75, 82 81 75, 82 55, 74, 125	Rev. 2:14, 15 14:13 22:17	Pages 55 65 29
1Pet. 1:9-13 1:20	Pages 52 53		

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