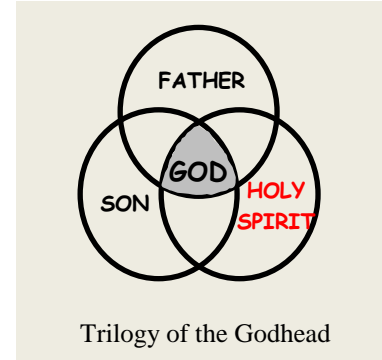


THE TRILOGY OF THE GODHEAD: THE HOLY SPIRIT

In Chapters 4 and 5, we looked in depth at God’s Master Plan for creation and what is designed for Himself—what is the grand or ultimate goal for the Father, and for the Son. Regardless of what we see in the earth today, there will be an out-gathering from this present creation, and the Father **will** have His family, born unto Him through the seed of His Son, to gather about Him both now and in the eternal age to come. And, the Son **will** have a kingdom in the new heaven and new earth to govern and of all He **will** share with His bride, which is now the Church.



Who may participate in this grand scheme? The door (the cross of Christ) stands open to *whosoever will*, and the beckoning of God is heard as that *still small voice* within. Now, as with Adam, all of man stands as before those two trees of the Garden. Does he choose to eat from the self-serving, self-determining Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, or of the life transforming Tree of Life found only in Christ Jesus?

We now turn our attention to that of the Holy Spirit. It is not the intent to focus here on His theological nature, role, and character as One of the Trinity of the Godhead. Rather, the sole intent is the unveiling of what, in God’s Master Plan for creation, is for Him. Just what is being gained and formed for Him, from this creation? What is the nature of this relationship now and for eternity to come? What is the Holy Spirit’s inheritance, or portion, in God’s master plan and what is His work in bringing it all about?

The Holy Spirit

One needs only to consider His name, or divine title—“Holy Spirit” or the “Spirit of Holiness”—to get an inkling of the essence of His character and work. Just think about it. “Holiness” shrouds the Father and the Son, fills all of Heaven, and transforms all it touches. In the heavenly scene around the throne of God, the four living creatures do not rest day or night, saying, “*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come.*” (Rev. 4:8) Some manuscripts have *holy* written nine times. You see, in scripture, when a word is repeated a second or a third time, it increases in relevance many, many-fold.

Holy is the essence of the Holy Spirit’s character and nature. Though the word *holy* is often thought of as something sacred, the fundamental meaning is “different.” Yes, something is distinctly “different.” Obviously, Heaven is *different* than the earth. The temple of God was *holy* because it was *different* from all other buildings—not in uniqueness of appearance only, but in Godly function and purpose for it. The activities that went on in the temple: the sacrifices, worship, prayer, and a measure of the presence of God (Holy Spirit) were altogether *different* than any other place in the entire world. Even the furnishings and utensils of the temple were considered *holy*. Though they may have looked similar to furnishings and utensils of the world, they were *different*. They were distinguished or distinct from all other similar looking objects. They were “set apart” from all that is common, worldly, of man and nature. They were *holy*, set apart unto God. They were special and not to be considered for common

use. One was never permitted to take what was declared *holy* and use it for personal or secular reasons. Nor was one ever permitted to take what was common and use it in a *holy* manner. One may have built an exact replica, to the minutest detail, of the Ark of the Covenant, but it would not be *holy*. It was not *sanctified* or “set apart” by God, or unto God, either by His declaration and/or with accompanying sacrifices and the shedding of purifying blood. To use something holy for common use, or use something common for a holy use, was always without exception considered “unholy,” an abomination, and sinful.

And now this holiness applies to the one true Church. Not as a building with all its furnishings, but comprised of a select people, the *saints*, the Body of Christ. This Church is *different*, it is distinguished and distinct from all religious activities in all the earth. And, the same rules regarding “holy” versus “common” apply to it. The Church should not be profane by bringing the secular, or what is common, into it. No matter what it is, or seemingly good it is, whether of the world’s business and management techniques, government or corporate structure, social or psychological approaches, or the music, and all else of the entertainment industry, none has a place in the true Church. Nor should holy activities of the Church be a part of common or secular activities. The world cannot understand the holiness of The Church. To them, it is foolishness. The two are as oil and water which cannot blend together. In a glass, one may continually stir oil and water together. The result is an unholy mixture. Neither is true to itself. They must eventually separate. That of the world serves its ultimate purpose, man. The Church serves its ultimate calling, God.

“Holy” is being separate, different, and distinct!

Spirit is the second part of His name. If Holy is descriptive of what He truly is, *spirit* is His nature. Man also has a spirit. The nature of man’s spirit is different from what is common to him and to his life experiences. Man’s relationship to others and the world about him is initially governed by his physical senses and the realm of his soul. His physical senses bring to the understanding of his soul what he sees, hears, feels, smells, and tastes. Thus, he is in communion with the world about him. But, unless one dabbles in the spiritual realm of soothsaying, astrology, séances, and the like, he really is not knowingly in use of his spirit. These other uses of the spirit, though at times appearing good and giving light, are actually dark practices, forbidden by God. They are all false and deceptive imitations of the realm of the Holy Spirit and mislead many. Unknowingly, one may be influenced directly or indirectly by the demonic spirit world.

As the physical senses are a part of creation, and are man’s connection to the created world about him, the realm of the *spirit* is man’s link to the invisible and intangible and a part of the uncreated realm. As such, the *spirit* is unrestrained by time, place, and matter. One can be *seated with Christ in the heavens* (in spirit) while sitting in a church pew or a tent. A word may come to him as a *still small voice* amid the noise and activity of life about him. For the Christian, faith is essential to this realm of the *spirit*—for it is NOT the outward, the emotional, or the understanding that governs, but it is of the inward, the intuition, the discernment. One must proceed from here with care and caution.

As *spirit*, the Holy Spirit is equally on earth as in the heavens. He is in oneness with God the Father and Son, as with the believer. As eternal, He lives in the past, present, and future, unlimited by time or space. The 2,000-year-old cross of Christ is a present reality in the Spirit. The Lord’s second coming is as imminent as the next breath. Communion is both physical as bread and wine and spiritual as the body and the blood of Christ. He is the Spirit of truth who searches the inward most parts of man re-

vealing the truth of who and what we really are. This is a truth we may not realize of ourselves, or a truth we wish to hide and pretend does not exist. Such is the realm of the *spirit*.

The local church can be as much in communion with the Holy Spirit, or more so, because of its corporate nature, as the individual believer can be. As such, the Holy Spirit is equally aware of the church's condition. Is it really *different*, distinct from the world, from all other religious activities, and from all sorts of immorality? Is it set apart? Is it *holy*?

IN

Let us now consider this small but very important preposition, “in.” Its significance is bold-faced in the following passage:

*“However, you are not **in** the flesh but **in** the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells **in** you.”* (Rm. 8:9)

This is very similar to our discussion in the previous Part 2 of being *in Christ* and of *Christ in you*. You may be simultaneously **in** a body of water, and having swallowed some of it, the water is now **in** you. Being in the water and having the water in you are distinctly different. The following analogy may add further clarification.

An Analogy. As an example, let us consider a hot athlete. He may reach out and take a bottle of water and pour the water **on** himself and refresh himself. Or he may drink the water and bring it **in** to himself—which is far more rewarding, for this water within does a far greater work. It actually helps to bring life in many ways to the body and satisfaction to the soul.

So it is with the Spirit. He may draw near and be approachable. One may sense His presence and desire to “draw near” to Him. The Spirit may be poured forth as Moses took the anointing oil (a type of the Spirit) and *anointed the tabernacle and all that was within it, and it was sanctified* (made holy, set apart). He then *poured some of the anointing oil **on** Aaron’s head and anointed him, to sanctify him* (i.e., set apart Aaron in ministry as High Priest). (Lev. 8:10-12)

But far greater is the presence of the Spirit **in** the tabernacle itself. So, *Moses finished the work. The cloud covered the tabernacle and **the glory of the Lord** filled the tabernacle.* (Ex. 40:33-34) Once all was sanctified, once all was properly set apart to God and for God, His Holy Spirit, *the Spirit of Glory* (1 Pet. 4:14), came **into** the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle, to abide and remain there.

How glorious it was to have the presence of God in the midst of His chosen people Israel—to be approachable, to come under His sanctifying anointing, to draw near, and to come into His presence (at least by the High Priest).

Now, beloved, this of the Old Covenant is glorious. Yet it is but a type, a sample, a foreshadowing of greater spiritual realities of the New Covenant and that of the Spirit of Christ. How much more shall we consider the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in our lives today? In comparing the Old Covenant with all the Law, the ordinances, the sacrifices, and, even the tabernacle itself, with the New Covenant in the spirit of Christ, Paul wrote:

*But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, **much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory**. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. **For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.** (2 Cor. 3:7-11)*

There is much to be said of this *Spirit of glory*, and we will do so in the pages ahead. We must also consider the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and that of the Church. But first we should take a look at the initial question, “What is **for** the Holy Spirit in God’s master plan for creation? What is His purpose? What is His portion?”

The Holy Spirit’s Portion

The following scriptures will lay a foundation for this discussion. You see, it is the goal for the Holy Spirit to have a proper place **in** which to dwell. The Spirit may *move across the face of the waters* as in Genesis in the act of creation. He may *fall upon* believers in anointing for ministry or for the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit such as prophecy, tongues, and the working of miracles. But it seems His highest relationship with the believer, and the Body of believers, the Church, is to have His sanctifying presence **in** them. It is His desire, His passion, to have His sanctifying presence **in** individual believers and **in** the corporate Church. He brings with Him the **glory** of God to share and impart into the children of God.

The Holy Spirit **In** the Believer:

*“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells **in** you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.”* (1 Cor. 3:16-17)

*“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is **in** you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”* (1 Cor. 6:19)

*“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells **in** you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is **in** you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead dwells **in** you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells **in** you.”*
(Rm. 8:9-11)

The body of the believer is not “like” a temple. It is not “as” or “similar” to a temple. The reality is, the believer’s body **is** an actual temple of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit dwells **in** this temple. As surely as the *glory of the Lord*, the Spirit of God, filled the sanctuary of Moses’ tabernacle to where even Moses could not enter because of the magnitude of this *glory*, this same Spirit of glory fills the sanctified believer. O to fully realize, have faith in, the absolute cleansing blood of the Lamb of God to *sanctify* and make *holy* this divine dwelling place, a sanctuary of God, His sacred abode. The simple consideration of such things is humbling and almost overwhelming to the rational thought. It also brings with it a stark awakening of its serious and sober reality and of personal responsibility. This truth brings new meaning to “being saved.” It gives vision and hope for divine interaction. Things will not, nor cannot, remain the same in the life of the believer. There will always be a striving between the desires of the natural man (the flesh) and that of the indwelling Spirit. (See Gal. 5:16-18) These

scriptures written above to believers in Rome and Corinth were written not just as an encouragement, but to open the understanding of their minds and to be a word of caution, admonition, and exhortation to walk a life seeking the fulfilling of this calling.

The Holy Spirit **In** the Church, the Body of Christ:

If the Holy Spirit is **in** the individual believer, how shall not the gathering of believers to form something corporate—a body—not bring about a greater magnitude of His presence. How shall not His divine presence, His *glory*, fill even more so this living, vital organism called the Church?

*“And what agreement has the temple of God with idols. For you (we) are the temple of the living God. As God said, ‘I will dwell **in** them and walk among them, I will be their God and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from among them and be **separate** (set apart), says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.”*
(2 Cor. 6:16-18)

*“For through Him we both have access, **by one Spirit** to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow members of the household of God, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom **you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.**”* (Eph. 2:18-22)

A habitation of God in the Spirit! How this reality tends to elude us. But God forbid, may it elude us no more. How the Church would be so different if the assembly of believers actually ***reckoned** that God Himself was present in all His glory. O how we must hold the reality of the Living God in our midst to a higher realm than mere contemplation of His presence. The LORD said to Moses, *“By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.”* (Lev. 10:3) And regarding the feast day gatherings, God told Moses they were to be *a holy convocation* (sacred assembly), *the people’s souls were to be afflicted* (humbled), *and offerings were to be made by fire.* (Lev. 23:27) This was to be the mind-frame, the reasonable expectation, and the attitude of those gatherings under the old Covenant. How much more, exceedingly more, must the mind-set, attitude, and spiritual expectation be of the assembly of the saints, each individual being a temple of the Holy Spirit, now corporately a *habitation of God in the Spirit*?

***Reckon.** I selectively used this word *reckon* here. It was a favorite word of Paul, used 27 times in his letters. Some other meanings are: *consider, take into account, come to the bottom line, reason to a logical conclusion.* I know many who *reckon* a church building as something sacred, and treat it as a holy item. Which is greater though, the church building in the absence of the Body of Christ, the Church, or the Body of Christ absent of the church building? If answered, “the building,” one answers according to the Old Covenant in which **things** such as the tabernacle, the altar, candlestick, etc. are considered holy and must be treated as such. If one answers, “The Body, the Church,” he answers correctly according to the New Covenant reality of the presence of God **in** His people. The building may be *reckoned* simply as a meeting place and the gathering of saints as the temple sanctuary and the very habitation of God in the Spirit. **Reckon: treat it as an absolute fact and react accordingly.**

Does one gather together and consider it a sacred gathering, clothe himself in humility, and offer sacrifices because a law says that he must—because the tenants of that faith require it? Or does one be-

come liberated from all those religious regulations and ritualistic mandates because of something greater, something inward, something spiritual? “*He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures has said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water. But this He (Christ) spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive.*” (Jn. 7:38, 39) Now magnify this ten times, 100 times, as the saints of the New Covenant gather together as a living sanctuary of God in the Spirit. G-L-O-R-Y! All works of man, in trying to produce a “spiritual” environment or the highest religious worship service, are consumed in the fire of the Holy Spirit as wood, hay, and stubble. What remains, beloved, is the satisfaction of the heart, a touching of heavenly things. When this soberness replaces casualness and the Spirit displaces religion, worship is no longer the same, neither are the teachings or the ministries.

THIS is the intent of our Lord’s words to the woman at the well: “*But an hour is coming, and now is, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; For such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him **must** worship in spirit and truth.*” (Jn. 4:23-24)

Today, this calls for soberness in the believer and the Church as never before. This is the goal of the Holy Spirit **IN** the believer and **IN** the Church, the Body of Christ, to produce and bring forth something of God Himself. This is the time for the Church to *be separate* from outward religion regardless of how “sacred” it may appear, and *be separate* from all the cleverness, talents, and ingenuity of man. O that His indwelling presence bring forth the reality of this *holy tabernacle*.

A Tale of Two Tales

I would like to share with you two incidences I encountered just this week. It seems both relate directly to the subject at hand. You see, there is the *vision* of the ultimate of God for His people. It is the ideal—the goal—which has been provided as part of man’s salvation and calling. And, there is the present *reality* of the believer’s walk and the state of the Church. How often there is a falling short.

First, just the other day, I met briefly with about 20 young men I had known when I served as a campus advisor to Christian Fellowship. I had not seen them for about 20 years. It was so good. There was a re-living of our times together, of the move of the Spirit of Christ in our midst, drawing us closer to one another and to the Lord Himself. With each year’s graduation, I would pray over them that what was started there would grow and they would not settle into a “religion,” thinking this was only a passing phase in their lives.

In that brief meeting I learned a few things. One thing I learned was that something greater than an organization could bind hearts together for a lifetime—and that something was the Spirit of Christ Himself. These young men, now gathering from the four corners of the USA, sensed yet a oneness with one another, and as an added blessing, with me. But another thing I learned is that each one that I talked with missed something from that fellowship of 20 years ago. To this day they cannot find unorchestrated worship that then seemed to flow so spiritually. And, there is missing this “centrality of Christ,” this striving focus on Him alone. Some even mentioned entering a degree of complacency, of not knowing “where do I go from here?” They have found themselves “settling” in a “good” church. To some, there is a witness of the gradual entrance of elements of the “emergent church” into their church—a subtle displacement of the centrality and simplicity of Christ for man-centered relevancy, oneness of all regardless of faith or lifestyle, societal issues, and to feel good about oneself. In that short time we had together I could only lament, “This ought not to be,” and to give them a brief encouragement. I believe that somehow my ministry with these young men is not over. This I pray with all my heart.

Secondly, this week I received an email from a young lady I have known for a long time. With her permission I am sharing a portion of that note. It is in responding to my recent newsletter article in “From Dan’s Desk,” she wrote:

“This is a good study, Brother Dan. Thank you. And I hear your heart regarding lack of conviction among God’s people nowadays ... it seems a lukewarm state is becoming more and more acceptable, sometimes in the name of 'honesty', or 'just being real.' But it is a lack on our part to seek holiness - 'as He is holy' - which makes us comfortable with our sin.

I have been very interested lately in reading about the effects of the 'emergent church' ... seeker friendly to the point of glorifying doubt, ecumenical mysticism, psychology and even new age thought entering into the general 'evangelical' population. Sometimes when we even sing the popular choruses of today all I can hear is romanticism and shallowness in the lyrics and melodies. I wonder sometimes if I am being too critical of things ...? Or is it the Lord telling me we are in serious times and I, also, need to be more serious with my walk.” (Anonymous)

My heart is poured out to these young men and this sister in the faith. How I wish we could all gather together, right now, with others of a like-mind and longing heart, to seek the fullness of His presence and the reality of His calling upon our lives. Come, Spirit of Christ, minister into these lives.

The Goal, Work, and Ministry of the Holy Spirit

I once heard DeVern Fromke say, to the extent, “the Son ever lives to bless the Father; and the Father ever lives to bless the Son.” It is a concept not to be forgotten. Each member of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit lives **for** the other. This is the very nature and expression of godly “*agape*” love. The **Son** lives to have a *family* of sons and daughters **for** the Father. The **Father** lives to have a *kingdom* and a *bride* **for** His Son. And now, the **Holy Spirit** lives to accomplish, to bring to fruition, this master plan **in** a people. He lives to bring to culmination the full realization of this plan—all that is in the Father’s and Son’s hearts, to bring God’s *glory*, the essence of His character, into the *family*, this *kingdom*, and this *bride*.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is first introduced during creation: “*And the Spirit of God was hovering* (moving) *over the face of the waters.*” (Gn. 1:2) It is important to note here that the Hebrew word rendered **hovering** (moving) is used again in Deuteronomy 32:11 in a way that is very revealing. It is used of an eagle fluttering over her nest, **brooding** over her young to warm, cherish, protect, and feed them—to bring them to...maturity.

“As the eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings.” (Duet. 32:11)

This shows the Holy Spirit hovering over creation, brooding over it, caring for it, nurturing it, protecting and feeding it, bringing it to maturity, unto fullness of stature. His work is to bring man to completion, wholeness, developing in him all the intended purposes of God. It is written, “*How I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.*” (Ex. 19:4) This passage of scripture first spoke of Israel, in the natural, being delivered from Egypt and being brought to His holy mountain. But it now speaks to the work of the Holy Spirit brooding over His Church, bringing it unto God the Father and His Son, the Lamb.

Jesus said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing.” (Lk. 13:34) Jesus said these words while He was still in flesh and blood, in the city of Jerusalem, amid the children of Israel. And now, He is resurrected and sits at the Father’s right hand in the heavens. It is now, in the greater dimension of the spiritual, that the Holy Spirit is sent forth to hover over the brood, the children, the Church. This *hovering* is the fullness of the action of the Spirit **in** the believer and of the believer **in** Him. We find, however, that Israel was not willing to come under the hovering wings of Jesus. They were defiant, stuck in their traditions, locked into religion and a way of life under the Law. They were content. They were unwilling to *change*.

Change

There are two very dynamic, active, vigorous attributes of the Holy Spirit. He is *power* (Acts 1:8) and He is *life* (Rm. 8:2). *Change* is impossible without either. In the natural, without **power*, in the form of energy (see following note), there would be no activity on the earth—it would be a stagnant world. There would be no movement, no temperature, no change. Without *life* all is reduced to things—objects without the ability to grow, reproduce, and experience interaction with other living things. Both *power* and *life* are completely intangible and must come from an extraneous source, the self-existent and all-powerful God. Though they are intangible, both may be experienced in life.

(*Power in the Biblical sense differs from a physics definition. Biblically, it means *ability, able to do something*. Thus, the word more closely aligns with *energy*.)

A newness of *power* and *life* beyond the natural may now be experienced in and through the “hovering” Spirit. Although these are indeed intangible and unable to be detected with the natural senses, they may be experienced—they are experiential. It is impossible to truly know the fellowship of the Holy Spirit without experiencing *change* or modification in one’s life. **If power is the ability to change, then newness in life is its expression.** If one feels that the status quo is fine, and that God made you just the way you are and you will live with it until Christ comes again, then you do not want to know, fully know, the Holy Spirit. For God, the ultimate is the humbling surrendering of one’s will and self-determination to the hovering presence of the Holy Spirit. *Thy will be done.*

Much needs to be addressed of the role of the Holy Spirit in fulfilling God’s master plan for creation. Much has already been written from many sources and more will eventually be written in these writings. For the sake of present brevity, a term that many think I have forgotten the meaning of, we will only consider here two more important aspects:

- The Holy Spirit’s power and life is wrought in **sanctification**.
- The Holy Spirit’s **ministry** to the Church, being expressed in different ways, is through His vessels of honor, individual members of the Body of Christ.

Sanctification New Life to an Old Term

Many years ago we were attending a service at a church of my old and dear friend, Sergio Valori. It was during a pause in the time of worship that Sergio’s father, Bruno Valori, began to pray aloud in his broken Italian accent, “Lord, sanctify me.” He pleaded over and over several times, “Sanctify me.” Now Bruno was an elderly man at the time. I wondered, “Why would this old man be praying like this?” He had been a man of faith most of his entire life, and there are many, many things to petition for—things like health, victory, revelation, and so on. But now this, “sanctify me,” as if it was the most important thing in the world to him? It was if he knew his days on earth were coming to a close, and that he wanted to be a more proper presentation to the Lord. That is all that mattered.

I believe the Holy Spirit was hovering in that meeting. He was hovering over the brood, the Church of Emmanuel Fellowship. He was hovering over the souls of Bruno and the others. An individual's awareness and response to the Spirit may vary. Some, like faithful Bruno, may be pricked to the heart, and fall under the nurturing of the Holy Spirit. While others may stand firm, unwilling to surrender to change.

Though the Spirit may be present in *power* and in *life*, these may find expression in different ways (to which those in Charismatic/Pentecostal circles may well attest). But, there is a uniquely qualifying focus of the Holy Spirit on *sanctification* as a grand objective. *Sanctification* requires the greatest outflow of power from God to penetrate to the inner-most core of one's being, bringing *change* to deeply rooted feelings, attitudes, and the silent intent of the heart. It brings softness and workability to a character seemingly rigid and set in concrete. And, it simultaneously releases a flow of God's own *life* to a life not just pleasing to Him, and towards His plan, but a walk of personal peace and joy in the Spirit. The regeneration into His life is something that finds inception at the new birth, but continues to enlarge throughout this lifetime.

I do not believe it has been God's goal to make man conform to a way of life by becoming obedient to a set of laws or commandments and rituals. This is religion, which is supposedly for God, to please Him and His judgments. It is, however, deceptive and misleading to many. **Christianity is not religion but life.** With the Spirit transformation of the heart, man experiences life at a higher level. It is for a Christ-centered life in peace rather than strife, joy rather than heaviness, love rather than envy and hatred, self-control rather than addiction, and so on. These "fruits" actually bring health to the whole man benefiting his spirit, soul, and body. Salvation has come, is coming, and will continue to come to the believer.

In the past, the term *sanctification* had often brought thoughts of the Law to mind. This was born out of man's attempt to fulfill the Word as in 1 Peter 1:15-16, "*but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy for I am holy.'*" This attempt uncovered a never ending list of "dos and don'ts" regarding religious activities, moral behavior, and works on behalf of God. Its results may actually interfere with the work of the Holy Spirit. But now, in the Holy Spirit, things of legalism and outward control are like *chains of bondage that shatter and fall to the ground. His hovering presence brings a distinguishing *power* and *life* to the transforming of man. After all, *life* is a spontaneous expression from within, not something imposed from without—"And *out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.*" Israel was brought out of bondage in Egypt, given a Law to live by, and brought to a promised land by the power of the hand of God. This was a foreshadowing of something greater to come, but in the Spirit. Now the believer may be redeemed from the bondage of sin and self, brought into life by the Holy Spirit, to an everlasting kingdom.

[*This was a real and personal liberating experience that came in and through the Spirit—life was never the same again.]

Ministry Of the Holy Spirit

The Personal Ministry of the Holy Spirit. There is always "potential" power and life when the Holy Spirit is present. Why is the word "potential" used to precede the words power and life? For it is the same as Jesus Christ saying, "*Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me.*" (Rev. 3:20) That little word *if* occurs quite often in the Bible and is used to show man as a moral being, capable to decide for himself between right and wrong, and may choose whether or not to "*open the door*" to the *voice* of the Spirit.

It seems many may “hear the voice” of the Spirit, but not respond and open the door to the inward workings of that power and life. Before a positive decision *to open* can be made, the individual must first be **convicted** of the need for such incursion into his life. In speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, “*He will convict (reprove) the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment...*” (Jn. 16:8) This means that the Holy Spirit must first overcome all reservation and doubts, fully convince with compelling evidence, and expose and prove wrong the individual’s heart. We have all experienced this at the time we first received Christ into our hearts...we just seemed to know that we needed something greater in our lives and we surrendered all to Christ, opened the door, and asked Him to come in.

Then, throughout our lives, we are encountered again and again with that petition of Christ in the Spirit, “*If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.*” Only during these times it is a bid to “draw closer...come higher.” The petition is towards refining aspects in our lives, a working of transformation, a sanctification to Him and for Him. Conviction may come as well, but all too often there is a reluctance to *open the door*. When it is of the flesh, it is so easy to succumb to “needs.” Often there is a great reluctance to the deeper workings of the Spirit. People fear change. Over time callousness in the spirit may set in, and we become, sad to say and God forbid, set in our ways. In these times we may grow in knowledge in our soul lives, but the inward working of the power and life of the Spirit is at best, ignored.

The Work of the Holy Spirit In and Through the Church, the Body of Christ. If there is a thought, disruptive to the life and ministry of the Church, wrought out of the realm of darkness and the flesh of man, it is that there are two categories of believers within the Church. This thought holds first and foremost that there are the priests and reverends or pastors that comprise the clergy of the church. These are supposedly the religious figures. Then there are the lay people that comprise the congregation. This is error. It has no truth or scriptural validity—though many may twist the scriptures to support this travesty that weakens the effectiveness of a functioning Body of Christ and puts the functioning in the hands of a few. It is true that there are certain ministries that are seemingly more apparent and seen in the forefront, such as pastors, evangelists, and teachers, and that they often stand out from among the Church as its members gather. However, it would be like saying a human body is a mind, heart, lungs, and liver, with other things attached for cohesion and support. Both are in error and ridiculous. The human body needs the functioning of all its parts, working in unison under the direction of the head. The Church, the Body of Christ, needs all its members functioning in unity under its head, Jesus Christ. Here is a statement worthy of note: Every individual in fellowship with the Holy Spirit is a potential vessel to be used by that Spirit, in **His** ministry, to the Church, the Body of Christ.

The overarching principle is that every ministry, regardless of prominence or seeming prestige, great or small, seen or unseen, is (1) **ordained** by the Holy Spirit, and (2) specifically **set** into the Church, the Body of Christ, by the Holy Spirit. It is His ministry to the Church in and through “*vessels of honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*” (2 Tim. 2:21) **Ordained Ministries** are not based upon talent, education, vocation or profession, eloquence of speech, charisma, desires, or enthusiasm. Although these qualities may be useful at times and, in maintaining a “religious church,” they fail in attempt to build the True Church, the Body of Christ. Rather, it is an anointed ministry that arises from within. Spirit-ordained ministries stand distinct from individual aspirations and from what I may coin... Orchestrated Ministries.

Orchestrated Ministries. Orchestrated ministries result in orchestrated religion and a regulated life. These ministries arrange the elements of a situation to produce a desired result—much like a music conductor arranges a symphony. This may work well in music but not in the Church. I once closely observed certain evangelists to learn and mimic their technique to orchestrate a large altar call, which is really quite easily done. Thank God He revealed to me the nature of orchestrated ministries before being caught up in it. Pastors, worship leaders, evangelists, teachers, prophets, administrators, prayer warriors, on and on may become orchestrated ministries, arranging things for a desired outcome. It is actually a type of manipulation and crowd control. The end is a symphony of religion, in harmony with man but less appealing to the ear of God.

During the Charismatic Movement we were often ‘fired-up’ with messages that stirred our emotions and apparent witness to the operating gifts of the Holy Spirit. Some messages were on target, as were some operations of the gifts of prophecy, knowledge, tongues, miracles, and so on. All too often they were then, and are now, orchestrated by clever men and women. They would bring a convincing but deceptive word misleading individual believers and even churches, much to their own gain and satisfaction.

These are *vessels of dishonor* worthy only of a thorough reduction, cleansing, and renewing; or of removal from ministry to the Church altogether. These are vessels of wood, hay, and straw.

Anointed Ministries. One day I encountered a true anointed ministry. There was *impartation*, not *orchestration*, through this ministry. There was a flow of the word of God through a vessel given into His hands. This vessel was made of character: Sincerity, brokenness and humility. When tested against the Word, his doctrine was sound, and his vision infectious. Once one has encountered something true, counterfeits are then more easily identified. Since then I have encountered many such anointed ministries. They do not necessarily come with hype and charisma, but with an inward witness of the Spirit. These are the ministries to which I gravitate and long to be in fellowship. To many, sadly to say, this company of ministries may appear boring, heavy, without flare, and too narrowly focused. To others, such as myself, power and life flow out from these ministries. Whether they be pastors, teachers, worship leaders, elders or pray-ers, these are *vessels of honor*, of gold, silver, and precious gems.

Set Ministries. As a final note, I wish to make a statement here regarding the way ministries are placed into the Church, the Body of Christ. The statement may deviate from the more common ways in which ministries are attained or raised up in the Church today. But, it is very, very scriptural, as I will note a number of scriptures in its support. You see, it is not a matter of personal druthers, of talents, or longtime faithfulness, or if someone needed to fill a position. In the midst of a portion of scripture that addresses the functioning Body of Christ, Paul writes,

“*But now God has *set each one of them, in the body, just as He pleased.*” (1Cor. 12:18)

So you understand, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to both **anoint** and **set** into place each and every ministry. “*There is a way that seems right to man,*” (Prov. 14:1) but it may not be according to the mind of God.

Many years ago I was drawn to the following scripture that I found most profound:

*“Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has *made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”* (Acts 20:28) [*“to set” and “has made” are the same word: appoint, place, assign a position to.]

Any and all ministries, prominent and inconspicuous, large and small, dynamic and subtle, vocal and unspoken, old and new, (1) must have been ordained and set into place by the Holy Spirit, (2) must have the realization of its immense responsibility, i.e., to a flock *purchased with His own blood*, and (3) must be recognized as such by the elders/overseers of the Church.

Please make special note of that three-point mandate for ministries: (1) Spirit ordained and set into place, (2) Soberness of calling to a flock purchased by His blood, and (3) Acknowledgement by Church elders!

Consider the following scripture as well:

*“And God has **appointed** (same word for set) these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then after that gifts of healing, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.”* (1 Cor. 12:28)

I am sure this does not exhaust the list of ministries anointed and set into the Church, by the Holy Spirit, for its edification. And, ALL of these ministries are built upon and laid in proximity to that first and foremost cornerstone, Jesus Christ Himself, whom God had set into place:

“Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.” (1 Pet. 2:6)

What an honor! What a high calling! To consider, each has been called, anointed, and set into place, built upon Christ Himself, to form this living organism called, the Church, the body of Christ. Christ, *“from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”* (Eph. 4:16) Now, we each need to reread this scripture once more reflecting upon every word and its personal application.

For God

This concludes this trilogy of the Godhead, and its place in God’s Master Plan for creation. It is not the end of the series, for there are other important trilogies to consider, but perhaps not as important as this trilogy of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In brief summary, we have concluded here that built into the design of creation, there is something **for** the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit that involves man.

The Father will have a spiritual family, born after the seed of His Son, with which to know and to fellowship. I am a father and grandfather. Words cannot begin to express the pleasure of the company of my family—blessings upon blessings. How much more so now, and for eternity, with our Father in heaven.

The Son will have a kingdom and a bride to be His complement, to sit and reign with Him in this kingdom. This Bride is being formed, from His side, in this age, as the Church, the Body of Christ. It is being prepared, as a chaste virgin, to be a glorious Church in this hour, and a wife of the Lamb for eternity.

The Holy Spirit will have a holy dwelling place. Presently, each individual believer is His temple, and the corporate assembly of believers is His living sanctuary, His habitation. It is in this dimension we know the *fellowship of the Spirit*. It is His work, in this hour, to raise up, to build up the Church, the Body of Christ, through His personal ministry and though His calling, anointing, and setting into place vessels useful to the Master. He is devoted to see that this dwelling place becomes a proper family for the Father and a Bride for the Son.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. This portion of this series on the Trilogity of the Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is almost overwhelming to *contemplate, but to contemplate on it we must! There is a spiritual dimension to man that must be considered and exercised. And, to exercise the spirit is a must. There are realities in the spiritual realm as real as those realities in the natural realm, only we cannot access them with our physical senses. It is only by faith that they are touched upon.

When the apostle, John, was on the isle of Patmos, he was given the Revelation of Jesus Christ. (Rev. 1:1) He began by saying, "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.*" (vs. 10) I don't believe he was already in some kind of trance or going through an out-of-body experience. I do believe he was in deep contemplation of all the unseen truths, the realities of this spiritual realm in which he now was abiding. Though he may have been sitting on a chair in a hut, or on a rock in the wilderness, his environment, in which he was in contemplation, was a heavenly one—for he was seated with Christ in the heavenlies. He considered his oneness with the Father and the Son, and the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. He considered this woman, the Church, the Body of Christ, of which he was a functioning member as an apostle. John was deeply contemplating all these spiritual things, and more than I can imagine, when he "*heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying...*" (Rev. 1:10) and we now have the rest of the Book of Revelation.

We cannot let this rest. We cannot consider these things as teaching to add to our volumes of knowledge only to quote from a reservoir of facts. It is part of our spiritual being, it is our calling, it is our purpose in life. Let us think on these things.

[*The term *contemplate*, as used here, is merely in its root sense: To think profoundly and at depth. Its use here is distinct from *contemplative meditation*, a practice exercised and encouraged by some churches.]