

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

ART. VI.—THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PENTECOSTAL GIFT.

II.

IN our brief review of this subject we have first dwelt on the Paraclete Himself, His pre-Messianic work in the souls of men, the special objects of His Pentecostal effusion, and the outward tokens of His coming. We have recognised the unity of the outpouring, notwithstanding the fact that it was given in instalments. We have acknowledged the continuing nature of His advent, and that He is to abide with the Church to the close of the dispensation, sanctifying it, cementing its unity, using it as His instrument for the revelation of Christ to the world. The doctrine of the Spirit, embodied in the New Testament, soon became the subject of investigation, and awoke an interest in the Early Church which expressed itself in many a treatise and many a confession of faith. Though there has probably never been a time when this high doctrine has not been under discussion, certain periods have been especially full of the interest, and fruitful in the literature, of the subject. Three of these will claim our attention.

The first of these literary periods is the latter half of the fourth century, comprising the later stages of the Arian controversy. Athanasius, the earliest champion of the truth, died in 373, not without the happiness of knowing that a worthy successor had been raised up in Basil the Great, whose treatise "De Spiritu Sancto" remains to us as one of the great books of the Church. Then followed Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Cyril of Jerusalem, Didymus, whose treatise on the Holy Spirit had a powerful influence upon three younger defenders of the truth—Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine. After these came Epiphanius, Chrysostom, and Leo Magnus, the last of a devout and brilliant series of writers who employed their pens to maintain the faith once delivered to the saints. These were chiefly concerned with the theology of the Spirit, His true Deity, His personality, His place in the Godhead, and cognate aspects of truth, the definition of which grew continuously clearer as the attacks of heresy, growing bolder, called for more determined effort to ward them off. Their labours laid a lasting basis for the development of the doctrine of the Third Person. It was a great era, and its results, if not so spiritually edifying as some later writings, were invaluable. Later than these, but upon similar lines, came Fulgentius of Ruspe, who died in 533, and John of Damascus, the theologian of the Greek Church, who died

about 756. The unhappy and disastrous dispute concerning the Dual Procession, issuing in the schism between East and West, has left the Eastern Church, in its separate position, unprogressive in character and backward in devotion to the Spirit. The *Veni Creator* and other great hymns to the Spirit belong to the West.

The mediæval writers on the Holy Ghost appear to have dealt chiefly with His gifts. Aquinas and Bonaventura, both dying in 1274, and Bernardin of Siena (died 1444), are amongst the best-known names of that age.

The second period of special activity in the literature of the Spirit is covered by the seventeenth century, and more especially the latter part of it. The series of fifteen sermons, "On the Sending of the Holy Ghost," preached by Bishop Andrewes before King James I., between 1606 and 1621, are a precious possession of the Church of England. After him came, amongst others in this country, Donne, Barrow, Jeremy Taylor, the Puritans—Thomas Goodwin, John Goodwin, and John Owen, author of the famous "Pneumatologia"—with South, Bull, and Stillingfleet. This period, although not free from controversy, which, however, was not, as in the first period, concerned chiefly with the person of the Spirit, dealt largely with His work upon the human heart, and in this element of personal experience was an advance upon the fourth century.

But the Reformation stopped short of missionary enterprise, the very purpose, as we have seen, of the Pentecostal baptism; and to this fact may be ascribed the check to the Holy Spirit's work, and consequent spiritual deadness, of the close of the seventeenth and the former part of the eighteenth century in this country. Then followed the Evangelical revival, dating from 1736, which, beginning with home missionary effort amongst the ignorant classes of our own land, led, at the close of the century, to the institution of foreign missions, destined to reach so rapid an expansion and to exercise so important an influence, direct and reflex, upon our own century.

These considerations lead us directly to the third of the literary periods referred to, beginning with an early date in the present century, and still being continued. The first to revive the subject was Bishop Heber, in his Bampton Lectures of 1815, on "The Personality and Office of the Christian Comforter," in which he maintains that the promise of the Spirit finds its true fulfilment in the Scriptures—an interesting but inadequate view. There followed several sectional movements, which claim a brief mention as bearing upon the doctrine of the Spirit from their own points of view. The leaders of the Tractarian Movement, though they have left us various writings on the Spirit, are responsible for the influence they

have exerted rather from the attitude of their system towards the Spirit and His operations than from direct treatment of the doctrine. Their school, especially in its later developments, constantly tends to a substitution of what has been termed the "mechanical" for the spiritual; and on this side the danger lies. The Plymouth Brethren, apparently starting from a spiritual principle, have led their followers into an arid waste, from which vital warmth has departed. The very singular movement in London associated with the name of Edward Irving, in which a revival of the gift of tongues and other special miraculous gifts were aimed at, led to a discussion which, like the manifestations with which it was concerned, has left no special permanent effect upon the Church at large. In this respect this movement has followed the Anabaptist and Quaker movements of earlier periods.

After Heber, the next important contribution to the subject was made by Archdeacon Julius Charles Hare in his "Mission of the Comforter," a series of sermons preached in 1840 before the University of Cambridge. In a volume of very full notes he reviews the literature of the subject. In 1868 Oxford was again to the front, when Bishop (then Dr.) Moberly carried the doctrine a stage further in his Bampton Lectures already referred to, the Rev. A. Short having preached a similar course in 1846, under the title "The Witness of the Holy Spirit." Dr. H. E. Manning had in 1865 published his "Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost," and in 1875 he followed this with the "Internal Mission," both written from the Roman Catholic point of view. Professor Swete's historical treatises, the "Early History of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" and the "History of the Doctrine of the Procession of the Holy Spirit," were published in 1873 and 1876 respectively. Archdeacon Hutchings, Professor Moule, Bishop Bickersteth of Exeter, and Bishop Webb have published useful devotional treatises. Among the Presbyterians, Professor Milligan, Professor Smeaton, Dr. Elder Cumming, and the Rev. T. Adamson have produced valuable Scriptural studies. The Rev. A. Murray, in addition to his own devotional writings, has printed a volume of extracts from W. Law. The Rev. E. W. Moore, the Rev. E. Boys, and many minor writers, have written devout and practical works for general readers. One of the best and most comprehensive books on the subject is the excellent little work of the Rev. C. R. Ball, published by the Christian Knowledge Society.

It is still true, no doubt, that comparatively few have devoted close study to this great subject, destined, as we may hope, to be a leading subject of the future. At the same time, the list of works dealing with it extends to upwards of

four hundred volumes, ancient and modern, and this cannot be said to comprise the whole number.

The tendency of to-day, however, is to return to the primitive conception of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. That Divine Person seems to stand, at the door of the twentieth century, waiting to reveal Himself to the Church of Jesus Christ in a larger, fuller measure than ever before since Apostolic days. What lessons He may have for us, as we follow up His indications, we cannot fully forecast. But among the earliest and chiefest we may surely anticipate the following—can any of us say that we have as yet mastered them?

1. First, the lesson of individual sanctification. This is the lesson that each soul must learn for itself, however it may be learned in sympathy with others—the consecration of all we have, of all we are, the absolute gift of the heart to Christ, followed by God's sanctifying seal, an internal work, ever deepening, ever widening, with the Holy Spirit's flow.

2. Next, the lesson of Christian unity, the corporate life of the Spirit-bearing Church. The time is surely coming when we shall no longer be content with a divided Christianity, when we shall see that the life of the Vine, the life of the Body, is one, and that the Administrator of the kingdom of God on earth cannot act effectually in a commonwealth divided by faction nor in the baptized schism of a mere agreement to differ. We shall be joined together as "one stick" in His hand, and then, like Aaron's rod, shall bud forth into manifested life, and bear fragrant flowers and mellow fruit.

3. Again, there will be the hard-learned lesson of Sacramental grace. In the midst of the strife and controversy which now inevitably surround this sacred topic there lies an innermost shrine of truth. To reach this, if indeed we may be so blest, will bring us a new and deeper view, a fuller, richer experience. The true theory of the Sacraments, the clue that will at last put a period to controversy, the secret of the conscious reception of the fulness of the grace that is in them, lies along the path of the doctrine of the Holy Ghost.

4. Lastly, there will be the lesson of successful aggressive warfare upon the kingdom of Satan. The old waste places round about the Church at home, the dry and stony wilderness of heathenism abroad, will assume a new meaning and put forth a new claim for us, when the power for united Christian testimony and endeavour has been realized by us, as it was realized by Apostles under the kindling and illuminating fires of Pentecost. The forts of folly will shake before

the Church; the ramparts of idolatry will fall, as did the walls of Jericho before the invisible Captain of the hosts of Israel, when once the Holy Ghost is truly understood and received among us. This is the focal centre which as yet we have not found, the missing link of Christendom. In the unhindered ministration of this Divine Paraclete we shall gain a deeper knowledge, a truer experience of Christ—a tenderer, more long-enduring love for one another and for all who are called by the One Name. By this supernal gift we shall receive a more perfect equipment, enabling us to issue forth against the hosts of evil that threaten us at home and the vast and massing legions of heathen humanity dumbly waiting our attack in the benighted continents where lies the future of the war of God. It will be the healing of our wounds, the crown of our labour, the victory whereby we shall overcome the world. For the Spirit of God has not come, as some imagine, to supply the place of an absent Christ, but to cause that He shall be evermore present with us. This alone can illuminate those two sayings of Christ, each so tender, yet so hard at first to harmonize: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

A. C. DOWNER.

ART. VII.—THE ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY SINCE THE RESTORATION.

CHARLES MANNERS-SUTTON (*continued*).

WE had last month the beginning of the Church Missionary Society, on Friday, April 12, 1799. Its first thought was for Africa, "the blood-stained coast upon which English traders were still carrying on the accursed traffic in slaves;" but other fields almost immediately opened to their vision. The first measure taken was a grant of money to the Cambridge Professor of Arabic to produce the Scriptures in that language. But men for missionaries were not forthcoming. At the anniversary meeting in 1802 not a single man had been engaged; yet the founders did not lose heart. In the course of that year two candidates were obtained from Germany, and one brilliant Englishman, Henry Martyn, offered his services. He was a Senior Wrangler and Fellow of his College. Simeon wanted him to go to India, but the East India Company would not hear of a missionary. Nevertheless, an appoint-