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# The Holy Spirit and Baptism

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## I

THE first mention of Christian baptism after Pentecost asserts that through this rite the "gift of the Holy Ghost" is conferred on those who repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts ii. 38). Both in the converts' question, "What shall we do?", and in St. Peter's answer, this passage recalls John's proclamation of a baptism of repentance (Luke iii. 3), and the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost had already been connected by Jesus with John's baptism as the fulfilment for which his rite (to be understood as a piece of prophetic symbolism, translating into action the numerous Old Testament prophecies which portray the purification of God's people and the inauguration of an age of blessedness under the imagery of cleansing by water) was a preparation signifying the purging of the elect Remnant for an imminent judgment, and the future realization of the ancient eschatological hope of a general outpouring of the divine Spirit.

In the Johannine rite baptism is thus already directly connected with the bestowal of the Spirit, but the relationship between them is that of preparation to fulfilment. The gift awaits the advent of the Messiah, who was regarded in the Old Testament expectation as one pre-eminently possessed of the Spirit (cf. Isa. xi. 2, Enoch lxii. 2 and xlix. 3) and sometimes as the agent of a universal dispensation of the Spirit upon God's people (cf. Ps. Sal. xvii. 42, Test. Lev. xviii, and John viii. 38-41). The event, however, proved that the fulfilment of John's promise of a baptism with Holy Spirit waited not only upon the advent of the "stronger one" but on the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Servant-Messiah.

While the multitude was baptized as a penitent Remnant, Jesus received at the moment of His baptism an immediate realization of the promise. In His submission to a baptism of repentance, Jesus identified Himself with sinners awaiting judgment. As the righteous Servant He became the bearer of the "sins of many". In view of the Old Testament imagery of the deep and the waters as a symbol of death, His baptism no doubt foreshadows His descent into the abyss of death and His rising from the grave. Jesus connects His coming death with baptism on two occasions (Mark x. 38; Luke xii. 50), and in doing so He probably looks back to His baptism by John as a prefiguring of its consummation at Calvary. It was not until that consummation had been effected that the promise of a general bestowal of the Spirit could be fulfilled. As the Fourth Evangelist expresses it, "Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified". The baptism of Jesus was proleptic in that it foreshadows the Cross and it was also an anticipation of His reception of the "promise of the Holy Spirit" after His ascension (Acts ii. 35; cf. Eph. iv. 4-10). The giver of the Spirit to Christian believers is

the risen and ascended Lord. Hence the emphasis laid by the Marcan and Matthaean narratives on the *ascension* of Christ from the water which symbolizes the "depths" of Hades (εὐθέως ἀναβαίνων, ἀνέβη εὐθύς : the word ἀναβαίνειν being used seven times in the New Testament of the Ascension of Christ). Luke omits this symbolism, probably because he is going to record the Ascension itself ; he reproduces the language of Mark-Matthew in his account of a Christian baptism (Acts viii. 38-9), perhaps to signify that the Christian rite re-enacts the baptism of Jesus.

At His baptism the Spirit descends upon Jesus and the heavenly voice declares Him to be Son of God. His reception of the Spirit is not a possession by an impersonal force, but a ratification of His personal union with the Father. Sonship and Spirit-possession are two aspects of the one relationship to the Father. Moreover, He is proclaimed Son of God in language which, according to Mark and the Alexandrian text in Luke, connect Messianic Sonship with the role of the Servant of the Lord, and perhaps, in the word ἀγαπητός, with that of Isaac, the son who is also a sacrificial victim.

These foreshadowings were manifested in their fulfilment at the Cross and the Resurrection. When Christ's saving work had been completed, His disciples were told that the fulfilment of promise which had taken place at His own baptism was soon to be extended to them. John's baptism, which they had probably received, would be completed by a baptism of the Spirit (Acts i. 5) ; and, as the Fourth Gospel also tells us in a different picture from that of the Lucan Pentecost, the ancient hope of a general outpouring of the Spirit through the Messiah was, in fact, fulfilled by the action of the risen and glorified Christ. Baptism, as administered in the Church after Pentecost, was therefore a baptism of fulfilment, and no longer of mere expectation, although its significance was still eschatological since the gift of the Spirit was itself the ground of a new hope of the final total redemption at the Parousia. It was still the rite practised by John, but it was now transformed. It was "in" or "into" the name of Jesus Messiah, and through it the Spirit was actually received (Acts ii. 38). The reason for this transformation is to be found in the baptism of Jesus. It is to the latter, and not to the rite of preparation only, that Christian baptism corresponds. His baptism looked forward to His death ; the baptism of Christians looks back to it and applies its saving efficacy to present believers as they symbolically participate in it. As He was designated Son of God, so do they obtain the status of adopted sons. His baptism accompanied that of "all the people" (Luke iii. 21) ; they are incorporated through baptism into the new people of God. The only differences are, of course, that they are baptized for the remission of their own sins, and that their sonship is by grace.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. L. S. Thornton maintains that this correspondence should involve a series of events in Christian initiation instead of a single moment of baptism in water in which the Spirit is bestowed : "Christ was baptized, ascended from the water, and received the descent of the Spirit ; He died and rose, ascended, and enabled the Spirit to descend at Pentecost". He infers a similar sequence in initiation, in which baptism and rising from the water should be followed by a

## II

Our evidence for the significance of baptism in the primitive Jerusalem Church is derived from St. Luke, who has his own distinctive conception of the operation of the Spirit. For him the Spirit is pre-eminently the Spirit of prophecy; hence his great emphasis on the prophetic character of Jesus (cf. Luke iv. 18 ff.; vii. 16; xxiv. 19; Acts iii. 22; vii. 37). It is the missionary Spirit, the driving-force and inspiration of the Church's mission to the world, and although the Spirit can be said to "forbid" and "allow", yet he conceives of the Spirit primarily in terms of *dynamis* (cf. Luke i. 35, xxiv. 49; Acts i. 8, iv. 33, vi. 3, 8) manifested in prophecy, "tongues" ("a sign to the unbelieving"—1 Cor. xiv. 22), and wonders accompanying the missionary preaching. His conception of the Spirit is thus somewhat undeveloped as regards personality, and resembles the Old Testament notion of the *ruach*.<sup>8</sup> Yet St. Luke, like the New Testament writers as a whole, bears witness to the fact that the Church is a Spirit-possessed body, that the Spirit is received through Christ, and that baptism is the means by which converts come to belong to Christ by being entered in His name as members of His people, and so receive a share in that anointing with the Spirit which He received at His own baptism (cf. Luke iv. 18; Acts x. 38).

If this represents the theory of baptism in the early community, the Pauline doctrine is in its essentials by no means an innovation. The Lucan writings themselves suggest the incorporation of the believer into the crucified and risen Christ by means of the old rite which had been employed by John but was transformed by the new situation caused by the general bestowal of the Spirit by the ascended Lord. St. Paul, however, presents us with a deeper understanding of the implications of these truths. His doctrine is more profoundly Christocentric, owing to the fact that he makes the Atonement and the sinner's justification central in his baptismal teaching, and virtually identifies the operation of the Spirit with that of the risen Lord in the Church and in the individual. Hence, because baptism signifies the "putting on" of Christ (Gal. iii. 27), it effects the state of being in the Spirit by which the believer is "washed", justified, and sanctified (cf. 1 Cor. vi. 11). As the Israelites were baptized into Moses in the Exodus, Christians baptized in Christ's name are given the status of being in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. x. 2). It is baptism into the saving death and resurrection of Christ, and by virtue of participation in His death and

further effective symbol of the descent of the Spirit (*C.R.* 198, p. 3). But this is not so. In the baptismal "burial" and "rising" the believer is united with Christ; he "puts on" Christ crucified, risen, and ascended, and thereby shares by grace in His sonship and His Spirit. A single act of incorporation into Christ causes him to enter into what happened to Christ in a sequence of events.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Thornton (op. cit. p. 4) objects strongly to this view of the Lucan theology of the Spirit as an underrating of an inspired writer. The only argument, however, which he adduces against it is the assertion that in presenting this theology St. Luke is showing his skill as an historian in reproducing the mental outlook of the early Jewish Christians whose story he is telling. This is, of course, to miss the point. St. Luke's capacity as an historian is not in question, but his distinctive conception of the Spirit runs through the whole of his writings and is not to be attributed to any desire for historical verisimilitude.

resurrection the Christian receives the promise of the Spirit; but since the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the condition of being in Christ is identical with that of being in the Spirit. As at Jesus' baptism, Spirit-possession implies the assurance of sonship (Rom. viii. 15-16). This union with Christ involves a new creation, the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new man renewed after the image of the Creator. The believer is incorporated into the new humanity. Baptism, therefore, corresponds as an antitype to circumcision, since it means a putting off of the whole "body of the flesh" (Col. ii. 11-12), and the reception of the Spirit fulfils the ancient hope of an inward circumcision of the heart, the expected sign of the new Covenant (cf. Rom. ii. 28-9, Phil. iii. 3).

Baptism, being the means of the reception of the Spirit, is also necessarily the means of entry into the fellowship which is the sphere of the Spirit's *koinonia*. The reception of the Spirit is the *arrhabon*, the token first instalment, of the salvation of the whole man. It is the seal which stamps the believer as God's property, recognisable as His own, and marked for redemption in the last day (cf. 2 Cor. i. 21-22, Eph. i. 13, iv. 30). This sealing is clearly associated with a definite moment in the convert's experience. The analogy both of Pauline and of New Testament teaching as a whole indicates that the moment is that of baptism. To be joined to Christ in baptism involves participation in His baptismal anointing with the Spirit which is for the Christian the inward seal of his membership of the people of the covenant and the assurance of final redemption.<sup>3</sup> Since the redemption is to be total, the effect of the baptismal reception of the Spirit is to assure the believer of the raising of his body as well as his soul to the condition of being "spiritual". This may explain the allusion to "baptism for the dead" (1 Cor. xv. 29). If there is no resurrection, baptism is, so far as the body is concerned, a baptism on behalf of corpses, for the body will have no profit thereby. Such is the interpretation of this difficult passage furnished, as I have found after advancing this view in *The Seal of the Spirit* (p. 94), by Chrysostom (*Hom.* 40. 1 in 1 Cor.), Theodoret (1 Cor. xv. 29), and Cosmas (*top.* 7; P.G. 88. 352A).

The Epistle to Titus (iii. 5) adds to this teaching the idea of regeneration, which is probably to be understood of the eschatological renewal of Matt. xix. 28 and is closely parallel to the Pauline doctrine of new creation. This passage does not indicate a dichotomy between baptism in water and "Spirit-baptism" conceived as separate sacramental rites: the genitives, "of regeneration" and "of renewal of Holy Spirit", are co-ordinate, depending on "laver". The same thought is found more fully developed in the Fourth Gospel, which also indicates the simultaneity of baptism and the gift of the Spirit.

The First Epistle of St. John speaks of the unction which Christians possess from the Holy One. The context and the language of the passage (ii. 18, 20, 27), recalling the anointing of Christ with the Spirit, clearly show that the allusion is to their possession of the gift of the

<sup>3</sup> This aspect of the operation of the Spirit in baptism is the theme of my book, *The Seal of the Spirit* (Longmans, 1951).

Spirit which distinguishes them as anointed *christoi* from the "many *antichristoi*" of heresy. Believers share in Christ's own anointing, and the general teaching of the New Testament leaves us in no doubt that the moment of this anointing is baptism. It is conceivable that in the apostolic age a physical anointing took place in the rite of initiation, such as we find in the developed use of the time of Hippolytus; but this is highly unlikely. The Pauline and Johannine references to anointing are clearly intended to recall the baptismal anointing of Jesus, where no literal unction occurred, and it is almost certain that they allude to the anointing of the believer with the inward unction of the divine Spirit. What is quite certain is that these passages do not, as Dr. Dix and Dr. Thornton have maintained, suggest that baptism in water was regarded in the primitive Church as a mere preparation or cleansing administered before a "Spirit-baptism" whose sacramental sign was unction.

### III

The New Testament doctrine, so far as we have followed it, is that the Spirit is conferred in baptism because by baptism the convert is incorporated into Christ, sharing by adoption in His Sonship, and receives the application to himself of the saving effects of Christ's death and resurrection in which he figuratively participates. The gift of the Spirit cannot be separated from the act of being made a member of Christ, nor can possession of the Spirit be distinguished from ingrafting into the Body of Christ. We are presented with two aspects of a single reality. If baptism is the medium of the one, it is also the medium of the other. It required no supplementation by any other rite intended to effect the bestowal of the Spirit. Nor does it appear probable that at this time the rite itself was complex, involving other ceremonies besides baptism in water as part of the regular administration of the sacrament. The continued use of the word *baptisma*, which designated the Johannine rite, suggests that the character of baptism remained unchanged, and the origins of the rite in John's baptism and its transformation by Christ support this probability.

An apparent objection to this view is presented by the narratives of Acts viii. 9-18, ix. 17-18, and xix. 1-6, where the Spirit is bestowed after (or in ix. 17, 18 before) baptism by the imposition of the hands of the apostles or of Ananias who, having seen the Lord and been sent by Him, may perhaps be reckoned as an apostle for the purpose of his mission to Saul. In these passages St. Luke appears superficially to be inconsistent in his doctrine of the Spirit in relation to baptism. At Pentecost the first converts were promised the gift of the Spirit through baptism. Nothing suggests that baptism here involved more than the rite as it had become familiar since the time of the Baptist, with the addition that it was in the name of Jesus Christ. We cannot suppose that the promise was unfulfilled. The Ethiopian is baptized by Philip, but the bestowal of the Spirit is not mentioned except in the "Western" text (cf. Ephrem's commentary *ad loc.*) where the difficulty of the story has evidently been noted and removed. Possibly, however, the description of the eunuch going on his way "rejoicing"

is intended to signify his possession of the Spirit.<sup>4</sup> It may, however, be the case that St. Luke is not greatly concerned with the Spirit as the inner principle of the ordinary believer's life in Christ, being chiefly interested in the Spirit as the power of the Church's mission. Nor is there any mention of the Spirit in the cases of Lydia and the jailer at Philippi (though in the latter instance there is another possibly significant reference to "joy"), or in that of Crispus and others at Corinth. The episode of Cornelius is unique and in no way typical of early baptisms. At Samaria, however, converts are baptized, but their reception of the Spirit is delayed until Peter and John have laid their hands upon them after prayer. To the view that this was the sacrament of Confirmation, regularly practised in the apostolic Church either as part of the initiation or, as in this instance, as a separate rite, and that it was the normal sign of the gift of the Spirit (a theory on which Puller and Mason based their depreciation of baptism as the sacrament of the Spirit in favour of the imposition of hands), there are obvious objections. St. Paul never alludes to the practice; there is no indication that hands were laid on the 3,000 converts at Pentecost; and on this view the baptism of the Ethiopian was presumably never completed with the positive gift, for if Philip could have laid hands upon him the visit of the great apostles to Samaria would become inexplicable. So far as the Samaritans are concerned it may be that the imposition of hands was primarily a sign of fellowship with the original Jerusalem apostles. In view of the situation of the Samaritans *vis-à-vis* the Jews, they could perhaps not be sure that they had actually been received into fellowship with the Jerusalem Christians until the two "pillar" apostles gave them this sign, enabling them as members of the community of Christ to receive the Spirit. On this view the imposition of hands "is only secondarily a symbol of the gift of the Spirit; it becomes such" (and was intended to be such by the apostles) "solely in virtue of being a sign of incorporation into the Church of the Spirit".<sup>5</sup>

Such a theory will not, however, account for the other two instances in Acts of the connection of the bestowal of the Spirit with the laying on of hands. Dr. Dix suggested a possible clue when he interpreted the rite as a form of ordination,<sup>6</sup> but his theory that it denotes an ordination of prophets is on the whole unlikely. More probably, in view of St. Luke's special interests in the missionary aspect of the Spirit's activity, we are to see in the conversion of Samaritans, Saul, and the first Christians at Ephesus (who were presumably disciples of Apollos who knew only John's baptism of repentance, no doubt as it had been practised by the disciples of Jesus during the earthly ministry), great turning-points in the expansion of the Church, with

<sup>4</sup> For the association of "joy" with the Spirit, cf. Luke x. 21; Acts xiii. 52; 1 Thess. i. 6; Gal. v. 22; *Hermas*, *sim.* 9. 24. 2.

<sup>5</sup> *The Seal of the Spirit*, p. 70, which I quote in view of Dr. Thornton's total misrepresentation of my argument (*op. cit.*, p. 4), and his characterization of it as a perversion of evidence. He ignores the fact that I do not maintain the particular theory which he misrepresents, and confuses the issue by conflating my comments on Heb. vi. 2 with what I have to say on Acts viii. 14-18.

<sup>6</sup> *Confirmation or the Laying on of Hands?* p. 18.

new manifestations of the Pentecostal gifts of the Spirit for the furtherance of the Gospel. The Samaritans evidently displayed impressive visible signs of the Spirit ; Paul immediately "preached with power" after his meeting with Ananias, and the nucleus of the Church at the great centre of the Pauline mission, Ephesus, exhibited the signs of the operation of the Spirit in the form of "tongues" and prophecy.

The rite therefore appears to confer a share, as it were, in the "apostolicity" of the Church, that is, in the active missionary task in the power of the Pentecostal Spirit. If this is true, the use of this rite in Confirmation, even if not directly warranted by these passages, is obviously highly appropriate.

It is possible that what had been a special sign of the commissioning of new members for the missionary work of the apostolic Church, with a particular endowment of the Spirit for that task, did become locally a general practice associated with baptism. Such is one legitimate interpretation of the obscure passage, Heb. vi. 2. In that case it probably represents a sign of the new fellowship of the baptized convert with the leaders and brethren of the community into which he has been incorporated—not unlike the handshake with which a new member would be received by the president of a modern society. But the use of the word *baptismoi* in this text instead of the *baptisma* which we should expect (the former, even in the singular, is not elsewhere found in the New Testament of Christian baptism and is rare in the Fathers) may indicate that Christian initiation is not here referred to at all. Nairne suggests, and G. H. Lang maintains, that the whole passage alludes to Old Testament "rudiments". The lack of evidence for the imposition of hands in initiation in the century after St. Paul's death tells against the view that it became regularly attached to baptism at an early date.

It remains true that in the New Testament baptism is the sacrament in which men are made members of Christ and, by virtue of belonging to Him, sharers in the Spirit. At the same time there is plenty of evidence for the bestowal of fresh endowments of the Spirit, or renewed apprehension of the Spirit for particular purposes ; but a special gift of the Spirit, such as is received in the post-Scriptural but most necessary rite of Confirmation, is not the primary indwelling of the Spirit which the Christian possesses through becoming a member of Christ.

Those who, like Dix and Thornton, deny this conclusion and postulate a distinct "Spirit-baptism" and who, unlike Mason, seek it in a rite of anointing, have argued that the sequence of Jewish initiation, circumcision, baptism, sacrifice, corresponds to a Christian sequence, chrismation, baptism, Eucharist. Circumcision, however, is not likened by the New Testament to any Christian rite. It is brought into relation with baptism itself, but by way of contrast. The latter effects a spiritual circumcision in the total putting off of the old man ; it is also the sign of the covenant. Nor, so far as I am aware, does any earlier Father than Ephrem (and he is an isolated instance) find an antitype to circumcision in chrismation. The order, as distinct from the character of the constituent elements, of Jewish initiation ceremonies, does not, as Dix supposed, lend

support to his theory of a correspondence. That order was based on the sequence of circumcision, baptism, sacrifice which the Rabbis discerned in Jos. v. 5, Ex. xix. 10, and Num. xv. 14. No such sequence ("confirmation" followed by baptism) can be read, as Dix attempted to read it, out of 1 Cor. x. 1-2, where the typological order (cloud and sea, corresponding on this theory to Spirit and water) is simply that in which the Exodus events took place; nor does 1 Jo. v. 7, correctly interpreted, support Dix's equation. The peculiar Syrian order in initiation (chrismation, as a sign of the gift of the Spirit, followed by water-baptism) first appears in the *Acts of Thomas* and probably reflects the high importance which Gnostic circles attached to Spirit-baptisms independent of the actual "laver" and conferred by anointing. There is no evidence that it dates from the Apostolic age<sup>7</sup>.

## IV

The relatively scanty evidence from the second century, from which we must beware of drawing arguments *ex silentio*, appears to show that the New Testament doctrine of the relation of Baptism to the gift of the Spirit remained unchanged. "Barnabas" reaffirms the association of baptism with remission of sins and the gift of the Spirit, and looks on it as the counterpart of circumcision under the Old Covenant (ix. 6; xi. 11). Hermas declares that the "seal" is the water into which men descend as "dead" and from which they ascend alive (*sim.* 9. 16. 3-4). Penance is a second sealing, a restoration of the Spirit that has been lost through sin (*ibid.* 8. 6. 3). Justin contrasts baptism, as being a baptism with the Spirit, with the circumcision and baptism of the Jews (*dial.* 29. 1). He says much about the sacrament, and it is important to observe that we cannot find in him, or in any other author before him, any support for the theory of a distinction between a water- and a Spirit-baptism, except in the sense that the one is the outward sign of the other, nor any indication that they knew of a second sacramental rite (or even a second part of a single rite) through which Spirit-baptism was conferred. That this is true of Justin has been clarified by the discussion between Oulton, Dix and Ratcliff in *Theology* (1947-48). The attempt of the last-named to read into Justin a belief that the Spirit was conferred after,

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Thornton (op. cit., p. 2) appears to suggest that to deny that St. Paul must have sought a Christian equivalent of circumcision in addition to baptism is to fail to take adequate account of the Jewish background of his thought, and to forget that the apostle had been a rabbi. It should therefore be observed that, while it is perfectly true that the background of St. Paul's thought is Jewish and that rabbinic thought is everywhere present in his writings, he was none the less a converted rabbi. To resent, in the name of Pauline theology, doctrines such as Dix's "equation, circumcision=confirmation" on the ground that their acceptance would undermine the Gospel and bring us into the bondage of the Law, is not to fall, as Thornton supposes (p. 3), into the heresy of Marcion. There is a contrast between Law and Gospel, a Pauline and New Testament contrast, not a Marcionite one. Such theories as those which we are discussing can find no support in the Pauline writings. To wrest those writings into conformity with unsupported speculations about what St. Paul as a Christian rabbi must be supposed to have believed in the light of our own hypotheses about first-century Judaism is to impose a novel and highly dangerous form of "unwritten tradition" upon us as our criterion of the interpretation of Scripture.

and not in, baptism on the ground of his statement that the Spirit came upon Jesus when He had emerged from the water is unconvincing. Thornton (*C.R.* 198, p. 7) alleges that "in *Dialogue* 29. 1 Justin repudiates the two Jewish rites of initiation, placing them in their Jewish order: (a) circumcision, (b) baptism. In 43. 2-3 he says that we received a 'spiritual circumcision through baptism', and his use of Joshua's story (*Jos. v. 2-12*) makes the meaning clear. We pass through the waters of Jordan with Jesus to receive the seal of circumcision on the further side. Thus the typology fits a reversal of the Jewish order. For now Confirmation follows Baptism". We have already indicated above that Justin repudiates circumcision and Jewish baptism, but he does so in order to assert the superiority of Christian baptism. Thornton's curious exegesis fails to observe: (1) that Justin introduces the Joshua story, in a context which has no bearing on the manner of the Christian rite of initiation (*dial.* 24), in order to show that circumcision is obsolete since Jesus ("Joshua") circumcises all who wish with "knives of stone", i.e., as he explains later (*ibid.* 113) with Himself as the "stone" foretold by the prophets; (2) that in *dial.* 43 there is no reference to the Joshua story at all, and the discussion is concerned with Abraham's circumcision. Justin maintains that Christians have no need of fleshly circumcision, since they receive a spiritual circumcision such as the righteous of pre-Abrahamic days possessed, and they obtain it through baptism ( $\delta\iota\alpha$  τοῦ βαπτίσματος), which certainly cannot mean "after passing through baptism".

Such freaks of interpretation strongly confirm the truth of the view that the biblical doctrine of baptism and the Holy Spirit remained unchanged in Justin's time, and indeed afterwards, for Irenaeus holds substantially the same theory. Irenaeus, however, in a passing allusion to Acts viii. 17, suggests that the Corinthians could not receive the "meat" of the Spirit (1 Cor. iii. 2), because St. Paul had not laid his hands upon them. This is the first indication of the impact which Acts viii. was to have upon the patristic doctrine of the gift of the Spirit in initiation. Dix rightly observes that Irenaeus is thinking of the Lucan narrative rather than of the practice of his own day (*Confirmation or the Laying on of Hands?* p. 19). He is scarcely a witness to the imposition of hands after baptism in his own time; but he illustrates the cause of the confusion of thought which became so prominent in the West, especially in Tertullian and Cyprian, when the apparently puzzling narrative of Acts had to be harmonised uneasily with the received tradition that the gift of the Spirit was an essential aspect of water-baptism itself. Melito similarly affords no trace of a separation of Spirit- from water-baptism. He is an early upholder of the later very common, though unscriptural, doctrine of a "real presence" of the Spirit in the water.

Theophilus of Antioch may possibly indicate that unction had begun to be practised in initiation in his day (*Autol.* 1. 12), but it is more likely that he is referring to the spiritual anointing of Christians who have been made members of the Messiah. The first genuine separation of water- from Spirit-baptism is made by the Gnostics. The "pneumatic" baptism of redemption or perfection is dis-

tinguished from water-baptism, which, if practised at all, is for remission of sins. It is administered in varying ways, but, especially among the Ophites, the Marcosians, the Valentinians and the followers of Marcion, by unction. Their strong predilection for chrismation is connected with the popular Jewish fables about a saving unguent emanating from the Tree of Life. Their distinction of baptisms is due to their abandonment of the true doctrine of redemption, and of a Christo-centric conception of baptism, and their desire to obtain a semi-magical seal as a passport through the successive heavenly spheres of the *archontes*. Valentinus, though a former distinguished member of the Church at Rome, is far more likely to have taken his baptismal theory and practice from the Ophites of the East than from early Roman tradition.

The practice of post-baptismal unction, however, and the gradual tendency to see in it the moment in the complex initiation-rite when the gift of the Spirit was bestowed, may perhaps have entered into orthodox circles from Gnosticism. Borrowing, even from heterodox sources, was easy in an age of very fluid practice. It is no answer to this suggestion to assert with Thornton (*op. cit.*, p. 6) that to allege pagan and Gnostic borrowings in the late second or early third century is to repeat the error of those who used to ascribe such borrowings to St. Paul.

In the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, which reflects practice which had already become traditional (though not necessarily very old), we find that the rite of initiation has become complex. It concludes with an episcopal prayer for the newly baptized and consignation with the Cross, made with chrism. In the Eastern versions of the treatise this part of the rite is the moment of the gift of the Spirit. In the Latin version the Spirit's activity is connected with the regeneration in the font and the object of the "Confirmation" is rather to confer grace to serve God faithfully in the Christian life. It is hard to decide between these texts, but the Latin has a certain claim to priority.

From the third century onwards patristic thought on this subject is confused. The gift of the Spirit is associated sometimes with baptism itself, sometimes with chrismation by the bishop following the "laver", sometimes, especially in the West, with the imposition of hands. Much depends on the suggestions afforded by particular biblical texts. So long, however, as the rite remained a single complex whole, these variations do not greatly matter. When, however, the rite breaks up (in the West) and the bishop's part of the ceremony becomes detached, owing largely to the growth of the Church and especially to the general practice of infant baptism, the confusion becomes serious. The nature and purpose of the rite of consignation present a problem to which answers are given ranging from the association of the gift of the indwelling Spirit with this rite to Jerome's attempt to minimise its significance. The reply given by the Gallican homily on Pentecost, once attributed to Eusebius of Emesa and ascribed by Morin to Faustus of Riez, to the question, "What is the benefit of Confirmation?" (a term which appears in canon 2 of the First Council of Orange (441) and becomes general), is that it constitutes an arming

of the baptized Christian soldier with the weapons of his warfare. In it the Spirit bestows an *augmentum ad gratiam*, and a strengthening for the fight. This became the standard teaching of the Middle Ages and was inherited by our Reformers.

For the Christian baptized in infancy, who, since he has been made a member of Christ, must *ipso facto* be in some sense a partaker of His Spirit, Confirmation is a completion of baptism by such a strengthening and arming; it is the occasion of a renewed apprehension of the Spirit corresponding to his affirmation of personal faith (an aspect of Confirmation rightly emphasized by the Reformers), and an equipping by special gifts of grace for the active Christian life. It may also, if our interpretation of Acts be correct, signify a share in the Church's apostolic mission. For the person baptized as a believer it is also an "equipping" and commissioning, but the strong element of ratification, both of divine promises and of personal faith, is scarcely present and the rite could be appropriately brought back as an integral part of the initiation itself.

What must be affirmed against the modern attempts to deny it, is the indissoluble connection of the reception of the indwelling Spirit of God with the sacrament which is the efficacious sign of the believer's incorporation into Christ in His Body, the Church.

## The Holy Spirit in St. Paul's Writings\*

BY THE REV. PROF. R. F. HETTLINGER, M.A.

ANY attempted exposition of St. Paul's teaching on the Holy Spirit is involved in two difficulties—quite apart from the inevitable limitations of the writer's knowledge and understanding. In the first place, it is more difficult in this than in any other area of Pauline thought to isolate one strand of doctrine from the others. The doctrine of the Spirit is integral to his doctrine of God, of man, of incarnation, of atonement, of the church and sacraments, and of eschatology. It is inevitable that this paper should assume much in these cognate areas which is open to discussion, and inevitable that the treatment of the subject should be somewhat amorphous. But in the second place, there is no subject on which the thought of the Apostle is less systematically expressed. His teaching, as Dr. Kirk<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Hodgson<sup>2</sup> have reminded us, was not the result of theological speculation but of empirical experience, and all his references to the Spirit are within the context of immediate religious needs or of ecclesiastical controversy. It is not difficult to find passages which are formally contradictory. All that we can do is to point out, as Canon Wilfred Knox<sup>3</sup> suggested

\* A paper read at the Annual Conference of the Evangelical Fellowship for Theological Literature, held at Cambridge, June, 1952.

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation*, pp. 168, 221.

<sup>2</sup> *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 50, 59.

<sup>3</sup> *St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles*, p. 117.