

What The Holy Spirit Does

The Actions of the Holy Spirit

Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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The following that I am going to read is a personal, eyewitness account. It is quoted from a lady who is the photographer at the Brownsville Assemblies of God, Pensacola, Florida. I will quote this exactly as she wrote in an email to someone else, published on the Internet.

I was being filled with a fresh anointing of the Holy Ghost. This continued all the way home. I have no idea how I drove. I would start wailing out loud, then would just grin a few minutes, and then back to wailing. I feel like I was in intercession for loved ones.

When I walked in the door [to her home she means] my husband thought I had been accosted in the parking lot, or something. I continued jerking and extremely deep inhaling so much that I had to sleep on the couch.

It was the most awesome night! I would drift off to sleep and awaken with the biggest jerk! The breathing and the pushing back of my head have continued today, although not to the same degree. Oh I just love being filled with the Holy Ghost!

Hector said [I do not know who he is, maybe a church leader?] before he prayed for us, he wanted us to be filled with the Holy Ghost, even to the point of being drunk, and that the world, and even our natural mind would not understand. When a person is drunk, they are usually more bold and have less fears.

This sort of phenomenon is a regular occurrence among Charismatics who participate in what has come to be known as "The Toronto Blessing" or in this case, it is called, "The Brownsville Outpouring" down there in the panhandle of Florida. Some call it the "Holy Laughter Movement" because these people break out into hysterical laughter. And they say that they are being filled with the Holy Ghost.

It is Pentecostalism on steroids, if you want to put it that way.

It is more than just speaking in tongues or handling snakes, but also laughing

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hysterically; making animal sounds like barking or roaring like a lion; being slain in the spirit, which is supposed to be having the spirit come on you with such force that the person is knocked out—falls backward—and cannot move or talk. It is like he is dead. He is slain in the spirit.

In one of the things that I read, this one man, a pastor of a church, was slain in the spirit one day and he was out for two hours. He had to be helped home because he could not walk or function. He could not preach or anything else for two weeks after being slain in the spirit. It took him that long to recover from this coma-like state.

It is also behaving as if you are drunk. This is one of the things that are happening in this "Brownsville Outpouring." These people leave church services on Sunday, get in their cars and actually behave as if they are drunk with alcohol. They often get stopped by the police, but pass their sobriety tests because they are not filled with alcohol. They do not have the .08 limit. They are filled with something else.

One other thing that I read on the internet said that the police have started just passing people on after these church services when the people get pulled over and say, "Oh I am just drunk in the Lord."

All of the proponents of these movements say that these things come at the instigation of the Holy Ghost.

Is that what God inspires in us through His Holy Spirit? What will the Holy Spirit do for us and in us?

That is my question for today: "What does the Holy Spirit do in us?" Once we understand how the Holy Spirit works and what it is going to be doing and what God sets it to do, we can have a better understanding of what it will inspire in us, and what our actions and reactions and responses should be. Then we will be able to respond properly if we know that it is of God.

Or, on the other hand, we will know how to resist if it is inspiration from another spirit. Our surest, safest course in all of this is to follow what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit, and not what any man says the Holy Spirit does for us. We can look into the Bible and see what God Himself says His Spirit will do. From what we can see from God's Word, we can derive a few principles that will help to guide us in deciding whether what we are being inspired to do is what we should do or not.

As is a good place, a good thing to do, is go to the beginning.

Believe it or not, the Holy Spirit makes its first appearance in Genesis 1:2. We are going to go back there and see this because it is important from the standpoint of the law of first mention. I have told you about this principle before. The law of first mention says that the first time, the first occurrence of a subject in the Bible characterizes how it is used throughout the rest of the Bible. It is basic but it is helpful in getting an understanding on it because the Bible is consistent. God himself inspired the Bible to be this way. So, how we see it in the Bible, where it first arises, gives us a clue as to how it works or what it means in the rest of the Bible.

This is the first occurrence of God's Spirit in the Bible.

Genesis 1:1-3 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

What can we take from these three verses, especially verse 2, will help us characterize the Holy Spirit for the rest of the Bible? I have come up with three different points, three different things that just struck me right off the top.

The first one is that it says specifically "this is the Spirit of God." It is the Spirit **of** God. That word "**of**" is paramount. What it shows is that this Spirit belongs to Him. It is something of Him, of God.

It is not, as some people, Trinitarians, want to say, God the Spirit. The Bible does not call it that. It says the Spirit of God. It is not some third person of the Trinity. It is very interesting to me that in the second verse of the Bible God scotches that argument. It is His Spirit. It is not some other person in the Godhead. Here we have first off that the Spirit is something that He possesses and that He uses.

The second thing that I saw here is what the Spirit was doing. The verse says that it was hovering over the face of the waters. The old King James says, "moved," I think. Hovering is better because it is a bit more picturesque. The actual word in Hebrew gives the impression of fluttering or flitting like a bird. That is interesting from the standpoint that when the Spirit descends upon Jesus, it was in the form of a dove. That harkens back to this here in Genesis 1:2.

This Hebrew word, which suggests fluttering or flitting like a bird, creates an image in our mind of movement, as it says in the King James, but it is not just movement, but

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constant movement. Think of any kind of bird over water. It cannot land. What does a bird which cannot land on the water do? It has to stay aloft by beating its wings. And so it is flitting and fluttering.

What impression does that give you? Movement. There is constant movement. But, it is not just movement, it is constant activity and expectancy—an eager readiness to act and move. So you get the idea that the Holy Spirit is something that is constantly active and ready to act at God's command. It is not something that is static or passive. This is a dynamic force. It is constantly moving and ready to do whatever God wills.

That leads into the third point: The Spirit does not act—in this case, as a means of creation—until God speaks. That is why I read verse three. God spoke, "Let there be light," and then there was light. We are supposed to take from this that the Spirit hovering over the waters was the method or the means by which these things were done so that when God the Father said to the Word, "Let there be light," the one who became Jesus said as the Spokesman, "Let there be light," and the Holy Spirit went out from Him, and made light.

What we can take from this, then, is that God's will, revealed by His spoken word, directs the Spirit; and then the Spirit acts.

So, these are the three things: 1) The Spirit belongs to God. 2) The Spirit is constantly active, and ready to do God's will. 3) The Spirit does God's will at His behest when He speaks.

Here is the first occurrence of the Spirit in the Bible, and we already have these foundational ideas. The rest of the Bible fills in the details. This is how we understand the Spirit to be. Of course, we could go far deeper than this, but this is what God wanted to impress upon us immediately.

We are going to be taking a survey of various other scriptures, most of them in the Old Testament, to see what the Spirit does. I wanted to go through the Old Testament scriptures, because they tend to be a little more concrete. They give us illustrations and they help us to better understand what it is that the Spirit does.

While the New Testament, written in Greek, tends to be a bit more abstract, the Old Testament, written in Hebrew, tends to be very picturesque. And, by using concrete examples—people doing things, things happening, activities, events—we can get a really good grasp of how the Holy Spirit is used by God the Father and His Son.

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Right now, we will go to Genesis 41, the story of Joseph, and we will read three verses to get another idea of what the Holy Spirit does. A bit of background: Joseph has just interpreted Pharaoh's dream. He has given his advice to Pharaoh that he should appoint an overseer for the production, storage, and distribution of Egypt's food over the next 14 years. And, Pharaoh has an idea of who should fill that job.

Genesis 41:37-39 So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you.

Pharaoh recognized the difference between Joseph and other men. He clearly attributes this to the presence of God's Spirit in Joseph. What Pharaoh saw here was Joseph's discernment and wisdom. In these qualities, he was a notch above everybody else. As Pharaoh tells us here, it was God's Spirit in him that prompted, shaped, and guided him in this wisdom and discernment. Here is a pagan king who could see this clearly in this Israelite.

Let us take a moment to see the idea of the difference between these two words, discernment and wisdom. These are *Webster's* definitions of these: "Discernment is the quality of being able to grasp and comprehend what is obscure. And, it has an emphasis on accuracy." This is what Joseph had done. He had taken Pharaoh's obscure dreams and he had accurately told the dreams and been able to interpret what they meant. So he was able to discern, using God's Spirit, the meaning of these things and then his wisdom kicked in.

This is the definition of wisdom: "The quality of having deep understanding, keen discernment (so it overlaps somewhat with discernment), and sound judgment."

Not only was Joseph able to tell these obscure things, he was also able, then, to make sound judgments upon them and put them into action. As we know, the Bible emphasizes, in terms of wisdom, making right decisions and following a godly and prudent course of action.

The first thing that we take from this is: The Holy Spirit sets a person apart as different from other people and it promotes in these other people deep understanding and wise action. This is what is so clearly seen in Joseph. It does not create simpletons and fools.

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To my mind, what this "Brownsville Outpouring" and the "Toronto Blessing" has done is to make people look simplistic and foolish in their understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Let us go to Isaiah 11 because Joseph is a type of Jesus Christ, and I want you to see here that Jesus had these same qualities as Joseph.

Isaiah 11:1-2 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Jesus, like Joseph, demonstrated this throughout His entire life. It says in one place that He grew in favor with God and man because He had these very outstanding qualities. So, because He had the same Spirit, Jesus had the same qualities. And here is added to discernment and wisdom, the qualities of counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the Lord. Spirit is not limited to giving us wisdom and discernment, but also giving us these other things as well.

Let us go on to Exodus 31. This is the chapter that eventually gets to the Sabbath covenant, but I want the first five verses. This is where God separates Bezaleel to construct the Tabernacle. Notice what He says here:

Exodus 31:1-5 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.

This is a kind of strange one. We usually think of the Spirit of God functioning on a spiritual level. But here, the Spirit of God filled this man, who we figure was probably not converted—we do not know his spiritual state—but God filled him with these abilities to do His Work for Him.

So, Bezaleel is endowed with all the gifts that he needs, both mental and physical, to craft the Tabernacle and all of its accoutrements. It was not just the one thing. He was not just putting the building up; he was also crafting all of its details and all of the things going into it.

We can take from this that the Holy Spirit enhances the talents that we have—our physical talents. I am sure that this man was not just some carter or something, and God said that he was not doing anything, let Me pick him out of the crowd and give him a few talents and let him work for Me. I am sure that he had these talents to start with. He had probably used them in Egypt as a slave.

But God said that He would put His Spirit on him and enhance these talents because He was going to be instrumental in making His own Tabernacle. And He wanted it to be of the most excellent quality. He took this man's talents in workmanship and He raised them a notch or two.

So, the Holy Spirit enhanced his talents, it affected his attitude, and it inspired excellence. This was all pointed toward doing a work for God. He did not give him these talents and attitudes and so forth so that he could make a lot of money. He gave him these things so that He could put his talents and efforts into doing what God wanted him to do.

God's Work, if we wanted to go off into that direction, is a very broad subject. Here it was specifically the building of the Tabernacle and the crafting of all the things to be used there. But later on, for the apostles, it was preaching the Gospel. For a minister, it is teaching and serving; and for all of us whether we are ordained or not, it is growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and preparing for His kingdom.

And so, God gives us talents. God gives us attitudes. God gives us a motivation towards excellence and all these sorts of things that we need so that we will do the work that God has given us to do—whatever it is that He has given us to do.

And as I said, for all of us, we have a work in coming into the image of Jesus Christ. And so, He helps us in these things. I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4, and many other passages in the Bible speak about the spiritual gifts God gives us through His Spirit. But we see here that the foundation has been laid in the Old Testament in this physical circumstance and in the same way God gives us gifts to do His Work.

This next one is interesting. Please go to Numbers 24. I have used these scriptures before. They are right in the middle of the story of Balaam. I happen to like the story of Balaam. I am just going to pull out a few verses here, particularly the first five verses. This is another thing that the Holy Spirit does for us. It did it here for this pagan sorcerer.

Numbers 24:1-2 Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his

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face toward the wilderness. And Balaam raised his eyes, and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Let us notice what the Spirit does to Balaam:

Numbers 24:3-5 Then he took up his oracle and said: "The utterance of Balaam the son of Beor, the utterance of the man whose eyes are opened, the utterance of him who hears the words of God, who sees the vision of the Almighty, who falls down, with eyes wide open: How lovely are your tents, O Jacob! Your dwellings, O Israel!

What happened when God sent His Spirit upon this pagan sorcerer? It opened his eyes! It made him see. This is one of the chief effects of the Holy Spirit. It reveals the truth to a person. Now I did not say that the person accepted the truth, in this case with this man, he certainly did not over the long haul. But the Holy Spirit came in power and opened his eyes so that he could see what God saw. God saw Israel defeating all his enemies, being blessed, and having all these good things happen. Later on, in verse 17, he even gives a prophesy of the Savior coming from Israel, the Redeemer of mankind!

So, the Holy Spirit, when it comes upon a person, makes a person see what is real, makes him see reality, makes him see what is actually going on. Like I said, as God sees things. As it says there in I Corinthians 2, we have the mind of Christ; that is what happens when it comes upon us. We can then look at situations, doctrines, or whatever, and have an understanding of what God is trying to make us see. It opens our eyes to what is true, and what is real.

To use another metaphor, it takes the blinders off that Satan's deceptions have clamped on the whole world. When a horse has blinders on, it can only see straight ahead. It cannot see the whole picture. But when you take the blinders off, he can see everything around him and all the influences of what is happening. The same thing happens with us. We may have an understanding, a very narrow understanding, of the Bible before we are ever called. But when the Holy Spirit comes everything is opened wide. We see things in a way that we never saw them before because it is the way that God looks at things.

Now, obviously when we are first called, we do not have that perfect vision. As a matter of fact, it grows over the course of our conversion. But it is the Holy Spirit working in us throughout this period of time that gives us this wider vision, this godly vision of what is.

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God's truth is reality and it is the Holy Spirit that reveals it to us.

Here is an interesting thing in II Kings 6. I told you the Old Testament tends to put things in concrete form. And, this is one of those instances where the Old Testament gives us an example of how this works.

To give you a bit of background, the Assyrian king was trying to find Elisha and he could not find him because God was hiding him. But, he does finally find him:

II Kings 6:13-14 So he [the Assyrian king] said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." And it was told him, saying, "Surely he is in Dothan." Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city.

Elisha was trapped, and could not get out.

II Kings 6:15-16 And when the servant of [Elisha] the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

I can just see this servant saying, "Come on! They have got thousands of men and chariots around here. We cannot get through!"

II Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." [Let him see the reality, the truth, what is really going on here.] Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

God sent His army against the army of Assyria, and it was there ready to step in if need be. If you wanted to read on a bit, it says that Elisha prayed, and said, "Make all these Assyrians blind!" And so God did! He then went up to them and said, "Come with me." He took them right into the city of Samaria and they were surrounded by Israelites.

That was reality. The reality was that there were more for Elisha than there were against him, but it took the Spirit of God to fall upon this young servant to let him know what was

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what.

The same thing happens to us but in a spiritual sense. We can have this same confidence that Elisha had. He did not need to fear. Like he said, "Do not fear. There are more for us than there are for them."

So, he was able to go and do his work in confidence knowing that God was there at his back. And since God had given him assurance of some things in the past, Elisha had faith to carry through and carry on. It works the very same way with us.

Let us look at another one in Deuteronomy 34—right at the end of the Pentateuch, Moses is about to die:

Deuteronomy 34:9 Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses.

The Holy Spirit is instrumental in ordination, or the setting apart for a special use. Moses had laid his hands on Joshua, and God had given Joshua a special measure of His Spirit to lead His people into the Promised Land. Joshua became the prophet. Joshua became the leader of Israel and their judge.

Now, this is not just in the case of ordination to the ministry. Go with me to Acts 20, and this same thing happens except it is to the ministry in the church of God. Paul tells these men:

Acts 20:28 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.

These men were ordained to a special use within the church of God—a special purpose; a special office; a special function—through the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands.

But, do not think yourself out of the picture here, because this also occurs at baptism. Did you know that you are ordained? Is that not what happened when you came up out of the water? Did a minister of God lay hands on you and ask for the Holy Spirit to be given to you? That was an ordination.

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Go to Acts 8. This is not an ordination to the ministry. In a way, this is better. It is an ordination to be God's child.

Acts 8:14-15 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

This was after Philip had gone down there and baptized but they had not had hands laid upon them.

Acts 8:16-17 For as yet the Holy Spirit had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they [the apostles] laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Now on to Romans 8 and we will see what happened here when they had hands laid upon them.

Romans 8:14-15 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption [sonship] by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

We have a right, then, by this Spirit of adoption, this Spirit of sonship, to call Him our Father! It is not a spirit of bondage to fear, but it is a Spirit of sonship.

Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

What the Holy Spirit does is that it makes us sons and daughters of God the Father and sets us on this path toward the kingdom of God to the point that we inherit what Christ has already inherited; that we receive the Glory that He has already received as the Archegos—the Author of our salvation.

So, we are set apart, and shown to be different, made very sons and daughters of God,

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heirs of all things by His Spirit in us.

I Corinthians 6:11 says very specifically that we are justified by the name of Jesus, and by God's Spirit being given to us. So the Spirit not only sets us apart—which is sanctification—but it also plays a role in our justification as well, allowing us to appear before God, and be accepted before Him. This is another thing that the Holy Spirit does—it sets us apart.

Next we go to Judges 14. If you know your chapters, you know that this is one of the Samson chapters. We are going to pick out verses 5 and 6. This is just after Samson told his father that he wanted to take a wife of the Philistines:

Judges 14:5-6 So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.

What does the Holy Spirit do? The Holy Spirit gives us strength. This is a word picture here of what the Holy Spirit can do in us. Samson is just an example—a very extreme example using physical terms. But, it is the same thing that happens with us. Did you know that you have a comparable strength to Samson? Not in physical terms, but in spiritual terms.

These things happened to Samson. They are part of the record of God's Work. But, they are a type to us of what God's Spirit can do within us. I do not want you all getting hernias trying to lift cars and throw them or anything like that. Remember, this is a physical example that equates with a spiritual thing in our lives.

So, out of the blue a lion charges Samson but God's Spirit suddenly infuses him, energizing him, and strengthening him so that he can meet the attack, and overcome the enemy.

What is the spiritual counterpart? Well, under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit strengthens us in our struggles to put on the new man, and strengthens us in our fight with Satan the Devil.

Ephesians 3:14-16 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord

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Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, [we just went through all that, the Spirit put us into that Family], that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,

God strengthens us through His Spirit in the inner man.

It is interesting that Samson had to fight a lion. Go to I Peter 5 and you will see what I mean.

I Peter 5:8-9 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

This has similar language to what is said back in Judges 14:5, ". . .now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. . ." seeking to devour him, you might say. The Holy Spirit gave Samson the strength to tear that lion to shreds.

Satan, as a roaring lion, as our chief enemy, often attacks us from the blind side just as this lion did with Samson, and we should be able to call upon God to send His Spirit to empower us to withstand that attack, and even repel him because He who is with us is greater than he who is against us.

God lives in us by His Spirit and Satan cannot stand against God. If we lacked God in us by His Spirit, the lion would win. We would be goners for sure. But God gives us strength through His Spirit to give us the might, the power, to resist and even to overcome and prevail.

Let us go to Acts 10 and see another great example of this:

Acts 10:38 [H]ow God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Jesus, too, was empowered by the Holy Spirit, and He used this same power to do good. It was not just to repel the enemy but He channeled this power into acts of service

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toward other people. So, this empowerment through the Holy Spirit has a kind edge to it as well. It is not just to defeat our enemies, it is also to do service to our fellow brethren and to others who need our help.

Turn to Romans 15 and we will see that the apostle Paul had this same might.

Romans 15:18-19 [Paul says] For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient—in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

This same might and power filled the apostle Paul to perform signs and wonders as well as to preach. This is another one of the things that the Holy Spirit does. It fills us with power and strength.

Turn back to II Chronicles 20. This is in the life of Jehoshaphat. We will read verses 1, 3, and then 13-18. We will be able to pick up from these verses what is going on here:

II Chronicles 20:1 It happened after this that the people of Moab with the people of Ammon, and others with them besides the Ammonites, came to battle against Jehoshaphat.

II Chronicles 20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

And then, he gives a prayer down through verse 12.

II Chronicles 20:13-18 Now all Judah, with their little ones, their wives, and their children, stood before the Lord. Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. And he said, "Listen, all you of Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem, and you, King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the Lord to you: 'Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow go down against them. They will surely come up by the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the Wilderness of Jeruel. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position

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yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem!' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you." And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the Lord, worshiping the Lord.

If you are worried, it comes out okay! What happens is that their enemies all fight and kill each other, and the men of Judah just come in there and take the spoil back to Jerusalem.

Judah, in this case, is facing certain defeat by this confederacy that is set against it. So, the people and king prayed for God's help and God sends His Spirit on this Jahaziel. (Nothing else is ever said about him.) This man, upon whom God's Spirit fell, says just the right thing at the right time to give the Judeans hope and encouragement and faith. Does it not say in Proverbs 25:11, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver"?

This is one of the things that the Holy Spirit does. It gives us fitting words to speak in whatever the circumstance is.

Turn to Matthew 10. I am going to read several verses here in Matthew, Mark, and Luke because they all are basically the same. I want you to see that Jesus upholds this principle in the New Testament.

Matthew 10:19-20 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Mark 13:11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

Luke 12:11-12 Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.

Luke 21:12-15 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you

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and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

Here we have four different places in the Gospels where Jesus Himself says this very same thing, "Don't worry. I will send the Spirit of My Father, and give you the words to speak. And it will turn out to be a way you can witness because they will not be able to gainsay you. The Spirit will give you truth to tell."

This is the same function as the inspiration given to the writers of the Bible. It works the same way. They did not know what they were going to say. But God inspired them by His Holy Spirit, and they wrote down His words.

Want to see this? This is found in I Peter 1:12 and II Peter 1:21. I want to go to the one in I Peter 1:12 because we do not go to that one very often.

I Peter 1:12 To them [the prophets] it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

The prophets themselves were inspired to write the things that are in the scriptures, and then the ministers and apostles whom God was using were also inspired to preach these same things to the people. These are things that even the angels did not have access to until they were revealed through the prophets and apostles. It is very interesting.

We can also include the ministry are also inspired when they give an inspired message. We could go to I Corinthians 2:13 which says that the Spirit reveals these things, as well as I Corinthians 14:1-3, the tongues chapter, where Paul said that he would rather that someone be inspired to preach rather just to speak in tongues because it is better, more edifying, and encouraging.

Just one more example of this, in Ezekiel 11, where we will see one of these prophets and this worked on him. This is a very stark example:

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Ezekiel 11:5 Then the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and said to me, "Speak! 'Thus says the Lord. . .

It does not matter at this point what he said, but this is what the Holy Spirit does. It falls—but I do not want you to get the impression it is like a piano going out a ninth story window and hitting you at the bottom with a big *thunk*. The idea of falling here means it came out from heaven. When something comes from way up high, it falls down. So, he is saying that the Spirit comes out of heaven and comes upon a person. And what does it do? It gives them the words to speak, the words of God.

This is another one of the things that the Spirit does for us or in us.

Turn to II Corinthians 13. This is another important one especially for us, even right now:

II Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

What does the Holy Spirit do? My margin says that an alternative word for communion is "fellowship." I personally think that it is a better word. Communion means fellowship. But, we think of communion in terms of what the Catholics do. They take communion when they go to church every Sunday or some people take it every day, it just depends on how devoted they are. But, it basically means fellowship. We have a back-and-forth relationship. We get together and communicate, we are able to share things with one another.

God's Spirit, Paul is saying, is the link that connects us to the Father and to Christ, as well as to all the others who also have the Holy Spirit of God in them.

So he is saying, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be upon you. The love of God be upon you. And the fellowship of the Spirit be upon you." He wants all these things for these Corinthians, as well as for us. He wants us to have the grace, the love, and the fellowship. This is not saying that there is a third member of the God Family, but it is saying that the Holy Spirit is the facilitator of our fellowship.

How do I know this? Turn to I John 1:3. We are going to break into John's thought here. He is just saying that his authority for saying these things is that he saw, touched, and heard Jesus Christ. He was with Him, and so as an apostle with this pedigree, he has the authority to say these things.

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I John 1:3 [T]hat which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

So, who is our fellowship with? Each other—with us all—and with the Father, and with the Son.

Do we have fellowship with the Holy Spirit? No, because the Holy Spirit is the link. There is no person there to have fellowship with. There is no being that is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the power and mind of God that gets us all thinking and saying the same thing, and doing the same thing.

The Holy Spirit puts us in fellowship with one another. So, if you should go to Africa for the Feast of Tabernacles, and meet people you have never known before, you have fellowship with them because they think the same things as you do, because they are all linked into God by the same Holy Spirit, just like you are.

I just gave you eight points of what the Holy Spirit does:

- 1) The Holy Spirit is constantly at work doing God's will. I could have gone to the book of John where Jesus says, "the Father works until now, and I work." And, the way they work is through the Holy Spirit.
- 2) The Holy Spirit gives wisdom and discernment; and we can also add knowledge, counsel, and the fear of the Lord.
- 3) The Holy Spirit endows us with the strengths and abilities to do God's Work, whether personal or more general in whatever work He is doing in the world.
- 4) The Holy Spirit opens our eyes to the truth.
- 5) The Holy Spirit sets us apart as holy to God; justifying and sanctifying us as His children.
- 6) The Holy Spirit gives us power to overcome. That could be Satan or our other enemies; it could be ourselves; it could be this world. Whatever strength we need it can come from the Holy Spirit which is God in us; and by that strength we can prevail. "We are more than conquerors," it says.

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7) The Holy Spirit inspires us to speak fitting words to provide encouragement, hope, truth, and a godly witness.

8) The Holy Spirit allows us to have fellowship with God, Jesus Christ, and fellow believers.

Before we close, we should see a couple of overall principles in determining whether we are being inspired by God's Spirit or by some other spirit. There are two overall principles which blend a bit into each other.

The first is in Romans 5:5, a memory scripture.

Romans 5:5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given to us.

Remember how Mr. Armstrong talked about the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us. The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. This is an important overall principle. You might even call it an overarching principle. It covers everything that the Holy Spirit does.

The Holy Spirit pours out God's love in our hearts. We can cross-reference this with I Corinthians 13, the love chapter. By putting these two together, we can understand, then, that God's Spirit will never inspire us to do something that is not an act of love. God's Spirit is a spirit of love. It will only inspire loving thoughts, loving words, and loving deeds.

Do you know what this means? It means we have to have a handle on what the love of God is. We have to understand that it is not the sentimental love of Protestantism, as in, "God loves you just the way you are," or "God will take you as you are."

The *agape* love of God is not that way. In fact, at its extreme it can even do loving acts in a very cold manner. It does not **necessarily** have to include emotion.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

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This does not mean that everything that happens under the aegis of God's love seems to be good. But, God says that in the end, all things work together for good.

Some of the things that God has done through His love have been quite destructive. This makes it difficult for us to understand. But God was working out a purpose to bring about something good in the end. That is why with our limited abilities as human beings, we have a hard time seeing the love of God in certain things.

So, this is just a general over-arching principle that the Holy Spirit will never get us to do anything that is not an act of love.

But, on the other hand, we should not be rationalizing away something that we do to people, or for people as if it were God's love when it is not. That is why I said that we really have to come to understand what the love of God is. It is not an easy thing, but we have to add this into the mix.

The things that God's Spirit will inspire us to do will be loving toward God, loving toward neighbor, or loving toward the self. So we need to have a good grasp of what the love of God is and does.

The second overall principle is found in II Timothy 1:6-7 where Paul speaks to Timothy. Timothy seems to have been a somewhat timid soul and so Paul gives him this encouragement.

II Timothy 1:6-7 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Here Paul expands out a bit on these basic points of the Holy Spirit. It is a powerful force within us. Its acts are based in love, as in Romans 5:5. And it imparts a sound mind. It helps us to make good decisions—godly decisions.

So, any word or act that God's Spirit inspires in us will not fall outside of these bounds. In other words, the Spirit of God will not urge us to do anything stupid. That would not be of a sound mind. It will not inspire us to do things that are crazy, like cluck, or roar, or bark, or act drunk; or speak in gibberish. It will not cause us to do things that are foolish or might hurt other people or things that are, just on their face, harmful.

But it will give courage and strength, and it will give godly reason to do something

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helpful and good.

These are the things that we have to base our thinking on when we feel inspired to do something. We have to stop for a moment and think, "Is God's Spirit urging me to do this or is there another spirit here that is urging me to do this? And if I do this thing, is it going to be a loving act or is it going to be a harmful act? Am I going to be crazy? Or am I going to be sane and sober, or appear to be sane and sober as I am doing this?"

Now, I have to give a caution here. The things that Ezekiel did under the inspiration of the Spirit seemed crazy. He would lay on one side for months at a time and then lay on the other side for more months. But, these were things that we know were done under the direct inspiration of God's Spirit.

How did Ezekiel know whether these things were of God or whether they were of Satan or some demon? That will have to wait for another time because there is a way to look at this and John calls it "testing the spirits."

What we have gone over today should give us a good start in evaluating with the inspiration of God's Spirit and then after that, cooperating with the work of God's Spirit in us, or resisting the influence of an alien spirit. But, at least what we have gone over today will give us the groundwork for that.

Next time I speak, God willing, we will pursue what Jesus says of the Comforter, and then go on to the concept of testing the spirits.