

## Articles and Sermons :: The Manifestations of the Holy Spirit - by Bill Konstantopolous

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### The Manifestations of the Holy Spirit

by Bill Konstantopolous

The Bible contains the mystery of the power of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of His ministry in the world, in the church and in the life of the individual believer. There is no other theme so interwoven from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation.

Quite often He is addressed in the language of the Bible as the "Holy Spirit"; the "Spirit of Wisdom"; the "Spirit of Christ"; the "Spirit of Revelation" and the "Spirit of Fire." The Bible says, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" Gen. 2:2.

Again it says, "For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" 2 Cor. 3:6. It was, therefore, the Holy Spirit that breathed into the nostrils of man and he became a living soul; for the Spirit is the breath of God. Thus God says, "Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" Zachariah 4:6. It is not an accident that the human heart always prays, "And take not thy Holy Spirit from me" Ps. 51: 11. And the hymn writer expresses the longing of every believer when he says, "With thy Spirit fill me, make me wholly Thine, I pray."

Yet, the conflict and the confusion over the Holy Spirit are greater today than they were at the church of Corinth. There are so many things which are attributed to the Holy Spirit that some of them border blasphemy. Since we lack the discernment of the Spirit the danger exists in our thirst for excitement to attribute things to Him which are contrary to His nature. The irony of our day is that the great controversy is not so much over the Holy Spirit, but over His manifestations. It appears that so many are after His manifestations than they are after Him.

The controversy is over the chrisma or the anointing of the Spirit. Those who promote it give the impression that the place and the person are in control of the anointing. It is Jesus prerogative who will receive the anointing through the Spirit. The Greek word chrisma from chrio, to anoint, specially the anointing of oil in the Old Testament (Ex. 29: 7; 30: 25) is used only four times in the New Testament, in I John 2: 20, 27 and is combined with the words echete (you have), "elabete" (you received); "Menei" (abides in you) and "didaskel" (teaches you). It appears to give preeminence to what the readers had experienced as well as referring to the Old Testament practice; but more so he reminds them of their calling and work (I Pet. 2: 5, 9). The anointing of God is indispensable in our life:

1.

The anointing of the Spirit comes upon our life as a calling to be separated for God to an office of service or ministry. Simply, it is a call to serve God. The Spirit of God came upon Samson. The Spirit of God came upon John the Baptist and the Spirit of God came upon Paul identifying him as the apostle to the Gentiles.

2.

The anointing comes in order to equip us to speak boldly at the moment with revelation, clarity and authority, unfolding the word of God. Jesus says, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted," Luke 4: 18-19.

The great deception of the day is that people are in control of the anointing of the Spirit and that they can manipulate it or even impart it to others. You can be faithful, obedient and totally submissive to the Lord, but you do not have control over the anointing of the Spirit. It is like the wind. It will invade your soul at the time of God's choosing. It will not make you get out of the order of God. It is not intended to give you a super spiritual hype or make you feel super spiritual. The anointing of the Spirit comes to fulfill the purpose of God and that is all. It is not a self gratification experience.

The second area of controversy is over the charismata or the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The singular is charisma which derives from charizomai - "to show grace." "It is a gift of grace or undeserved benefit." In

the N.T. it is only used for gifts and graces imparted from God I Cor. 7:7. Charisma is the instantaneous enablement of the Holy Spirit in the life of any believer to exercise a gift for the edification of others or the church. The Bible speaks freely of the gifts of the Spirit, and it is evident that when these are in operation, only then the church is both edified and perfected and disciples are equipped for ministry.

The apostle Paul states the primary gifts of the Spirit in Ephesians 4: 11 - 13: "And He himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. The purpose of these gifts is to edify the body of Christ, to disciple believers, to equip them to do the work of the ministry.

Then you have the secondary gifts of the Spirit whose purpose is again to edify the body of Christ and complement each other for the work of the ministry and the glorification of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 12, "But the manifestation (Singular - phanerosis) of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all." Then he begins to name those gifts: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, and different kind of tongues. But all these are helps to the ministry, and the focus should be placed on the giver who is the Spirit. Their purpose is to edify the church, to improve its life and direct it; but all work in harmony with each other.

The third area of controversy is in the area of the phenomena of the Spirit or the manifestations. A phenomenon is known through the senses rather than through knowledge or intuition. You cannot fully understand or explain it. We must confess that at times there is a great mystery when it comes to the manifestations of the Spirit. Some people appear to be confused between the gifts and the manifestations of the Spirit. Even though there is a relationship between the two, yet, there is a distinct difference.

In our days there is the claim of four manifestations of the Spirit which causes controversy, division and confusion across the body of Christ. These manifestations are promoted as the evidence of the Holy Spirit and as His authentic work. Two of these are the slain in the Spirit and the holy laughter. In the slain of the Spirit someone touches you on the forehead and you fall practically unconscious. There is no Biblical foundation for such a practice and it is strange to the New Testament as a manifestation of the Spirit. The holy laughter again it has no Biblical foundation and nowhere in the N. T. seems to be the activity of the Holy Spirit.

The manifestation in speaking in an unknown tongue or prayer language has some scriptural validity; not as such, but as a genuine gift of the Spirit in speaking in other languages. The Biblical gift of tongues or other languages has two purposes according to the N. T. One is the means that God chooses to communicate His Word where there is no other means; and the other serves as a sign to the unbeliever. But nowhere in the N.T. states or implies that in speaking in tongues is the evidence that one has the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost it was said by the audience, "We hear them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." Acts 2: 11

The apostle Paul says to the Corinthians, "Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to the unbeliever," I Cor. 14: 22. God is not the author of confusion or division. But the promotion of the so called manifestations of the Spirit is causing both confusion and division in the body of Christ. We are so hyped with the counterfeit manifestation that we ignore the true ones which contribute to the unity of the body and the spreading of the Gospel. It will be helpful if we review these.

It is painted clear in the N.T. that the first manifestation of the Spirit is conviction. Jesus said, "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" John 16: 8. The Holy Spirit reveals convicts and rebukes sin. He reminds us of sin and its consequence in one's life. Conviction is the exclusive work of the Holy Spirit. This is why on the day of Pentecost people cried out, "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart (katenygesan), and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren what shall we do?' Acts 2: 37.

It is interesting to note that the second manifestation of the Spirit is the unity of believers or the church. He breaks down the barriers that divide people. He baptizes with fire and love; and he changes human nature to the extent that we are drawn to each other. Thus it was said about the believers after the Pentecost, "Now all who believed were together" Acts 2: 44. "Now the multitudes of those who believed were of one heart and one soul" Acts 4:32. The apostle Paul admonishes us to live in the unity of the Spirit when he says, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" Eph. 4: 3. Wherever the Holy Spirit is at work people are united and live harmoniously for the cause of Christ. He draws people, who believe, to Christ and to each other.

Praise is another manifestation of the Spirit. It is His purpose to exalt and lift up Christ. Since the Holy Spirit puts joy in our heart, for joy is the fruit of the Spirit, then He fills our lips with praise. Jesus makes it clear that the Holy Spirit will speak

k of Him and that He will glorify Him, John 16: 14. There is no dull worship, dull singing and dull living when the Holy Spirit is at work among God's people. His praise fills their lips with psalms and spiritual songs.

It will not be strange and inconsistent with the N. T. to say that another manifestation of the Spirit is prayer. Prayer is the activity of the Holy Spirit. He teaches us to pray, but also helps us to pray and makes intercession on our behalf. "Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the SPIRIT HIMSELF MAKES INTERCESSION FOR US WITH GROANINGS WHICH CANNOT BE UTTERED." Now he who searches the heart knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" Rom 8: 26- 27. Any individual or group movement of prayer is influenced by the Spirit and He makes the discipline of prayer to come alive.

There is another manifestation of the Spirit which decorates the life of God's people and that is holiness of life. He is our purifier and sanctifier. The absence of holiness clouds out any other manifestation of the Spirit. Holiness is the nature of the Spirit and whosoever He possesses lives in the spirit of holiness. It is unrealistic to expect the manifestations of the Spirit where holiness is absent. It is He who helps us to be partakers of Christ's holiness (Heb. 12: 10) and enables us to perfect holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7: 1). Besides He produces in us the fruit of holiness to the extent that all our members become servants of holiness. You may not have many gifts or other things when the Holy Spirit possesses your life, but you cannot be possessed by Him and remain unholy.

It is evident, to a student of the Bible, that the manifestations of the Spirit are several, but I would like to mention one more which is twofold in nature. The one is the manifestation of spiritual power which is the ability to stand or do the will of God and fulfill His purpose. The other is authority over the enemy. This is spiritual authority to subdue and overcome the enemy. It is to the authority of the Spirit that the powers of darkness are subjected and His power that enables us to be effective in the ministry of the Gospel. To that effect, the Lord Jesus Christ said to His disciples not to leave Jerusalem till they received power from on high, and then He stated, "But ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost of the earth" Acts 1: 8.

The manifestations of the Spirit are as essential as the gifts are, but not as essential as the Holy Spirit. Too often we get enamored with the gifts that we forget the giver. God wants to give us the giver of the gifts; thus His promise, "Ye shall receive the promise of the Father," and "I will not leave you comfortless, I will send you another comforter." This is the most explosive promise of the Bible. Also notice the prescription that God gives concerning the Holy Spirit: "Be filled with the Spirit";

"Walk in the Spirit"; "Live in the Spirit" and "Grieve not the Holy Spirit with which you have been sealed." Then He outlines the purpose of the spirit to deal with our needs, to be our helper, and to help us in our struggles. He is to help us in our weaknesses, to teach us, guide us, empower us and sanctify us so that we could effectively edify His church and confront the world with the Good News of the Gospel. God wants us to experience His Spirit, His conviction, His sanctification, His power, His peace and His joy. Have you experienced Him? The Lord says "It is not by power nor by might but by my Spirit saith the Lord." No doubt such a genuine experience is needed in the church today.