

From the Book "**The Power of the spirit**" by **William Law**

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## **Chapter Five**

### **The Holy Spirit's**

#### **Continuous Inspiration**

"The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1Cor. 2:11). Without the present illumination of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God must remain a dead letter to every man, no matter how intelligent or well-educated he may be. The things of God "are spiritually discerned" (2:14), and therefore "the natural man receiveth them not . . . but God reveals them unto us by his Spirit" (2:14,2:10), This is telling us in the plainest terms that it is just as essential for the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth of Scripture to the reader today as it was necessary for Him to inspire the writers thereof in their day, For without the same inspiration and power of the Holy Spirit, it is no more possible for man in any age to experience the reality that is promised in Scripture, than it would have been possible for "holy men of God" to write the Scriptures without being "moved by the Holy Ghost" (2Pet. 1:21). Therefore to say that because we now have all the writings of Scripture complete we no longer need the miraculous inspiration of the Spirit among men as in former days, is a degree of blindness as great as any that can be charged upon the scribes and Pharisees. Nor can we possibly escape their same errors; for in denying the present inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we have made Scripture the province of the letter-learned scribe. The Holy Scriptures are an infallible history of God's dealings with men, and also an infallible guide for the seeking heart to that salvation which a Holy God offers to sinners. But the Scriptures themselves can go no further than to direct men to a relationship with God which only the Holy Spirit can give, since there is a vast difference between the Holy Spirit's actual workings in the heart of man, and reports about these workings. This is plain from the words of our Lord, "When the Comforter is come, He will guide you into all truth, for he shall take of mine and show it unto You; and he shall teach you all things" (John L6:13, 15). Therefore the Scriptures should only be read in an attitude of prayer, trusting to the inward working of the Holy Spirit to make their truths a living reality within us. Jesus Christ, who is the one and only Savior of mankind, said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). What a delusion, however, for any man to think that he has this life from God and is on this straight and narrow way, simply because he makes a mental assent to these words or preaches eloquently in their favor. "I know you not" (Matt .7:23), says Christ to those who have not been born through this seed of the Word being brought to life within them by the Holy Spirit. Since a birth is only the beginning of life, the Word of God through which we are begotten becomes the necessary food that nourishes the Christian. Even so the Holy Spirit must continue His work within those who are born of the Spirit, illuminating and applying the Word to men's hearts for Christian growth. Christ's words to Nicodemus tell us plainly that none may have eternal life except those who are

born from above. This is a full proof that the continual inspiration of the Holy Spirit is essential; for we are born of the Spirit to the end that we might live and walk in the Spirit. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25), wrote Paul, "for as many as are led of the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14). Are we not here plainly taught that to be led of the Spirit is just as vital as to be born of the Spirit? Therefore the necessity of a continual inspiration by the Holy Spirit, as the only possible power and preservation of a divine life in man, stands upon the same ground as the new birth. Poor and miserable is the man who strives with all the sophistry of human wit and learning to be delivered from the immediate, continual operation and government of the Spirit of God. He does not consider that where God is not, there is the Devil; and where the Spirit rules not, there all is the work of the flesh, though nothing be talked of but spiritual and Christian matters. I say talked of for the best ability of the natural man can go no further than talk and notions and opinions about Scripture words and doctrines. In these he may be a great scholar, an acute teacher, a dramatic orator, a moving preacher, and know everything of Scripture except the Spirit and power. How much is it to be lamented that from one end of learned Christendom to the other little is thought of as the true and proper means of attaining divine knowledge, but that which every natural, selfish, proud, vain-glorious worldly man can do. The scriptures are studied much as the arts and sciences, as though a learned comprehension of doctrines is everything, and the present inspiration of the Holy Spirit is nothing. Where is the divinity student who was ever taught to think of partaking of the light of the gospel in any other way than by doing with the Scriptures that which he does with pagan writers, whether poets, orators, or comedians: namely, exercise his logic, rhetoric, and critical skill in analyzing and expounding upon them? Having done these things, he is thought by himself and often by others to have a sufficiency of divine apostolic knowledge. So that there are Christian leaders in abundance who have become experts in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit without experiencing His leading and power in their lives. What wonder, then, if it should sometimes happen that the very same vain and corrupt natural writing abilities that raise one man to be a poet laureate should set another in a divinity chair. Paul said that he determined not to preach with the wisdom of human learning and skill or oratory; yet this same natural wisdom is the chief object of Christian circles, especially by those who seek positions of leadership in the church. And the very "demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 2:4) which Paul said made his preaching effective is not only uncultivated and unknown by pastors and teachers, but more lamentable, those who claim to stand the most strongly for the truth of all that Paul wrote, deny and decry any thought of a manifestation of this power such as he experienced in his day. Need any more than this be known to explain why the Church of Christ today is in a fallen and apostate condition? Paul said, "My preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:4). Who then could be a greater enemy of the gospel than those leaders and shepherds of the flock, who write and preach against the manifest power of the Holy Spirit as if it were as much to be avoided in our day as Paul said it was vital in his own. For without this continual inspiration and powerful working of the Spirit, we are left, as Paul said, to a faith that stands upon conflicting opinions about the letter of Scriptural zealously interpreted by man's own wisdom. Indeed, the diligent proclamation of the gospel has become just so much vanity of words, unless the Holy Spirit is presently manifesting the reality of that Christianity to which the New Testament bears such full witness. This failure to look solely to the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit has left the Church in weakness and confusion. Many who most fervently summon their

logic and reason to contend that the Scriptures give a true account of the miraculous works of God in the days of the holy apostles, use the same natural reasoning powers in an attempt to prove from Scripture a denial of the miraculous power of God in the present day. Should not the Church rather tremble at the apostles warning? "Beware lest that also come upon you which was spoken of by the prophets, saying, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I work a work in your day, which ye will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13:40-41)! The fruits of the spirit, so often mentioned in Scripture, are not things different or separate from the Spirit; and if the Spirit be not dwelling and working in us. His fruits must be as absent from us as He is. If there is not granted by God a divine encounter and the inner realization that the fruits and gifts of the Spirit proceed from His present workings in our hearts, then how could we know that they are of the Spirit? For the fruits of the Spirit are living, and can only be living in us as the Spirit manifests Himself through us. And since the "manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit thereby" (1 Cor. 12:7), how can any deny such present workings of the Holy Spirit in the church, unless they also deny His presence? "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 John 4:13). Here is a sure statement that there is no higher proof of our being indwelt by the risen Christ than the inward working in our hearts and lives of His Holy Spirit as a present reality which can be recognized by every child of God. For John was not inspired to write, "Hereby you will know that you are saved, because these words on the page tell you so"-although it is our faith in these promises of God that brings us into the gospel kingdom. But John was inspired to hold out to every believer the promise of that witness of the spirit in the heart which he himself had from God. Thereby we receive that same conscious assurance that John's words are inspired by the spirit which he had when he was moved by the Holy Spirit to write them. Thus the witness that we are the sons of God comes not from just the truth of Scripture, which we believe; but from a present reality of the indwelling Spirit, of which it can be said, "he that believeth on the Son of God has the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10).

## **A Christian can only know God as His Holy Spirit reveals Him from His Word**

All truth about God must be revealed by God – and can only be known by a person's heart

Matt 11:25 Jesus said, "I thank You, Father...that You have hidden these things (about Yourself, God) from the wise and prudent (the intelligent and well educated) and have revealed them to babies (to Your little spiritual children)".

John 3:27 A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.

1 Cor 2:14 The natural man (and the human part of the Christian) does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (and only received in the heart).

Acts 16:14 Lydia...who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed (hear, understand and believe) the things (God's words) spoken by Paul.

Luke 24:45 Jesus opened their (the disciples) understanding (spiritual understanding, which is their hearts) so that they could comprehend the Scriptures.

Eph 3:3-4 (Paul) ...By revelation...by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ (it's not directly knowable to our intellect)

God's New Covenant with us is not His written word but His word made alive by His Spirit

2 Cor 3:6 (God) who made us able ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (to the written word).

1 Co 15:56 ...The strength of sin is the law (the written word without the Spirit).

Rom 6:16 ...Sin which results in death (to God - sin cannot be joined to righteousness)

Matt 23:15 Scribes and Pharisees (who preach the law)...a son of hell as yourselves.

2 Tim 4:3-4 ...They will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, having itching ears (for teachings favorable to their flesh), they will heap up for themselves teachers; and turn their ears away from the truth...to fables (like: you don't need the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to understand scripture).

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is given by (current) inspiration of God...

Prov 1:23 (God)...I will pour out my Spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.

3 simple requirements to receive the Holy Spirit – desire, obedience and belief of His word

Luke 11:13 (Jesus) ...How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! (as in, who really, really want to be controlled by Him)?

Acts 5:32 ...The Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who (are willing to) obey Him.

Gal 3:2 Did you receive the Holy Spirit as the result of obeying the Law and doing its (AMP) works, or by hearing (the Gospel promise of the Spirit) and believing it?