

PNEUMATOLOGY

**The doctrine of the Person and
Work of the Holy Spirit**



by

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Kreuzlingen, January 2019

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Introduction

5 The word “*Pneumatology*” is a combination of the following two Greek words: “*pneuma*”¹ and “*logos*”² meaning “*teaching (or doctrine) of the Spirit (of God)*”. When speaking of “*Pneumatology*”, we are in no way thinking of teachings concerning spirits (i.e. the good and bad or fallen angels). That would be “*Angelology*”.³ *Pneumatology* is the study of the person and work of the third person of the triune God (trinity).

10 In our day and age, there is no other area of Christian doctrine which has given rise to so many false or heretical teachings as Pneumatology, i.e. the teaching about the Holy Spirit. Unusual teachings in this area often lead to church splits. I therefore feel it is of great importance, and even imperative to inform our churches over what the Word of God says concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

15 I refer here to the fact that my notes are based on those of Heinz Weber, a former lecturer at Brake Bible College (Germany). In many parts I also make use of René Pache’s outlines and sometimes also his explanations.⁴

¹ Τὸ πνεῦμα (*to pneuma*), Greek, a noun of neuter gender, which, depending on the context, can have the following meanings: “*spirit*” (of God or for example of man), “*wind*”, “*breath*” or “*a spirit*” in the sense of an angelic being. In the latter case, it should be possible to know if it is an evil spirit (a so-called *demon*, i.e. a fallen angel) or a good spirit (i.e. an angel of God) by an attribute, an apposition, a genitive or simply the context. When it is the third person of the Trinity, the word *pneuma* is usually followed by a genitive: “*of God*” (τοῦ θεοῦ), “*of the Father*”, “*of Jesus*”, “*of Christ*” or by the attribute “*holy*” (in Greek: ἅγιον [*hagion*]).

² Greek ὁ λόγος (*ho logos*). This word can have various meanings: *word, assertion, matter, reason, the Word* (i.e. *Christ*: see Joh 1:1ff and Rev 19:13) etc.

³ From the Greek ὁ ἄγγελος (*Angelos = angel*).

⁴ René Pache, *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, Paperback Edition (Chicago: Moody Press Chicago, 1979).

I. The Holy Spirit is a person

A. The Holy Spirit acts as a person

	Joh 14:16-17	He remains
	15:26	He testifies
5	16:13	He guides into all truth; he hears, speaks, tells what is to come
	2Pe 1:21	He inspires the Holy Scriptures
	Act 13:2	He calls to the ministry
	Rom 8:26	He intercedes (for God's children)

B. The Holy Spirit possesses the essential attributes of personality

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He possesses:

	A will:	1Co 12:11: <i>He gives to each one, just as he determines</i>
15	Knowledge:	Rom 8:27: <i>He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit...</i> 1Co 2:10-11: <i>The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.</i>
20	Love:	Rom 15:30: <i>I urge you . . . by the love of the Spirit</i>
	Goodness:	Neh 9:20: <i>You gave your good Spirit to instruct them</i>

C. The names which are given to him reveal both his personality and his divinity

25	• Spirit:	Gen 6:3
	• The Spirit of God:	2Ch 15:1 (רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים) [<i>Rū^ach 'Elohím</i>]; Rom 8:9 (πνεῦμα θεοῦ [<i>pneuma theou</i>])
	• The Spirit of Yahweh:	Isa 11:2
	• The Breath of the Almighty:	Job 32:8
30	• The Spirit of the Father:	Mat 10:20
	• The Spirit of Jesus:	Act 16:7
	• The Spirit of Christ:	Rom 8:9

- The Spirit of His Son: Gal 4:6

5 Since the three persons of the Godhead are one, it is not surprising that the Holy Spirit should receive one or the other of these appellations. The following attributes again underline his qualities.

He is the Spirit of:

10	Holiness:	Psa 51:13; Rom 1:4
	Wisdom:	Isa 11:2
	Understanding:	Isa 11:2
	Counsel:	Isa 11:2
	Power:	Isa 11:2
	Life:	Rom 8:2
15	Prayer (Supplication):	Zec 12:10
	Revelation:	Eph 1:17
	Eternity – the eternal Spirit:	Heb 9:14
	Grace:	Heb 10:29

D. The Holy Spirit can be treated as a person

20 He can be:

	lied to:	Act 5:3
	tempted:	Act 5:9
	resisted:	Act 7:51
25	grieved:	Eph 4:30
	insulted:	Heb 10:29
	blasphemed against:	Mat 12:31

30 Some expositors interpret Eze 37:9 as inferring that we can call on the Holy Spirit. We should however take note that this is the only Bible passage that, purely from the wording, can be interpreted in this way. It must also be mentioned that the word “*rū^ach*” (רוּחַ) in this passage can also be translated as “*wind*” or “*breath*”, just as is the case also with the word “*pneuma*” (πνεῦμα) in Greek. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find an example of someone directly addressing the Holy Spirit in prayer.

35 E. Where Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit, the Greek uses a masculine pronoun and not a neutral one

For example: Joh 16:7.8.13.14. It is obvious that the Holy Spirit is not simply a *thing*, i.e. a *power* or *energy*.⁵ He is rather a person. One could say he is *a mighty person*. He is the third person of the Trinity and therefore of course almighty.

⁵ See Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1984), p. 96: "Though *pneuma* is neuter, yet the masculine pronoun *ekeinós* is used of the Spirit in John 16:14; and in Eph. 1:14 some of the best authorities have the masculine relative pronoun *hos*. Moreover, the name Parakletos is applied to him, John

II. The Holy Spirit is God

A. He has divine names

- The Spirit of God: Rom 8:9; 1Co 2:11
- The Spirit of Yahweh: Isa 11:2

5 B. He has godly attributes

- omniscience: 1Co 2:10
- omnipresence: Psa 139:7; Joh 14:17 (with all believers at the same time)
- omnipotence: Zec 4:6; Psa 104:30; Job 33:4
- truth: 1Jo 5:6 (cf. the same for Jesus in Joh 14:6)

10 C. He is the third person of the Trinity

- at his baptism: Mat 28:19
- in the blessing: 2Co 13:14 (cf. Aaronic blessing in Num 6:24-26)
- God's temple/Holy Spirit: 1Co 3:16; 6:19
- Christ in you: Col 1:27 (cf. Rom 8:9)

15 D. He is God himself

Joh 4:24 *God is Spirit, and his worshippers must worship in Spirit and in truth.*

2Co 3:17 *Now the Lord is the Spirit (ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν [ho de kýrios to pneuma estin])*

20

This means that God is Spirit, but the Spirit himself is also God. An outstanding example of this is found in the following passages that are to do with this same fact: Isa 6:8-10; Joh 12:38-41 and Act 28:25-27: In Isa 6:8-10 it says that the Lord (Adonai, i.e. Yahweh, cf. v. 3) spoke to Isaiah. In Joh 12:38-41 John says that it was Jesus whom Isaiah saw in his holiness.

25 Luke writes in Act 28:25-27 that Paul quoted Isa 6:8-10 and said concerning this: "*The Holy*

14:26; 15:26; 16:7, which cannot be translated by "comfort," or be regarded as the name of any abstract influence. That a person is meant is indicated by the fact that the Holy Spirit as Comforter is placed in juxtaposition with Christ as the Comforter about to depart, to whom the same term is applied in I John 2:1..."

Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet...” Paul attributed these words spoken to Isaiah to the Holy Spirit. This is in fact also a further example which emphasises the doctrine of the Trinity.

E. Is there any difference between the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Jesus?

Eph 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit...*

1Co 12:11: *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit...*

10 1Co 12:13 *For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body...*

15 **According to the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Jesus are one and the same person.** At this point I want to point out the teaching about the so called *double source of the Spirit* that means the biblical teaching whereby the Spirit proceeds from the Father as well as the Son. This teaching is also called “*Filioque*”. This expression comes from the Latin: “*filius*” meaning “*son*”. “*Filio*” is the ablative case and means “*from the Son*”. “*Que*” can be translated by “*and*” or “*also*”. “*Filioque*” therefore means: “*And [also] from the Son*”. In other words, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and also the Son.

20 **Joh 14:15-31** teaches us that as soon as the Holy Spirit takes residence in us, in fact all three persons of the trinity come into our hearts at the same time. Take special note of **verse 23**. At the very moment when the Holy Spirit enters a life it is as if the Father and the Son have taken up residence. In reality the three persons of the Trinity cannot be separated from each other. This is the biblical truth of the doctrine of the “**mutual indwelling of the three persons of the Trinity**” or also “*perichoresis*” (from the Greek word: περιχώρησις [*perichōrēsis*]). The Latin for this is “*circumincessio*”.

F. If there is only one Spirit of God, why do certain Bible passages speak of the seven spirits of God?

30 See **Rev 1:4; 3:1; 4:5** and **5:6**: Since other passages say that there is only one Holy Spirit (cf. **Eph 4:4**), it is obvious that the above passages in Revelation which mention seven spirits cannot be understood literally as seven (different) spirits of God. As we know there are many symbolic expressions or images in the book of Revelation. Commentators are united in saying that **the number 7** symbolises **perfection**. In the same way **Rev 5:6** also sees the Lamb (of God) as having **7 horns** and **7 eyes**. It says there that the 7 eyes are the 7 spirits. A *horn* in the Old Testament is a synonym for *power, strength*. The **7 horns** therefore point to the omnipotence and the **7 eyes** to the omniscience of the Lamb, given him by the Spirit (also perfect – therefore also *7 spirits*). Concerning the omnipotence of Christ compare for example **Mat 28:18**. By the way, in **Isa 11:2** the Spirit of God is characterised by seven attributes. The “*7 spirits of God*” in the book of revelation are undoubtedly to be interpreted in this way.

III. The symbols of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Scripture uses the following symbols, among others, to reveal to us who the Holy Spirit is:

A. Breath or wind

5 **Gen 2:7** ...*Yahweh Elohim . . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.*

Joh 3:8 *The wind blows wherever it pleases.*

10 **Act 2:2** ...*a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven...*

The wind symbolises without doubt **power** and **life** (the wind blows from above).

B. The dove

Luk 3:22 *And the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove.*

15 **Gen 8:8-12** The dove which Noah sent out from the ark.

The dove is a symbol illustrating the **love**, **goodness** and **gentleness** of the Spirit of God. In today's "world" the dove is a symbol of peace. In the *French Larousse* dictionary *colombe de l'arche* (= *dove of the ark*) is translated by "*the dove of peace*".

20 C. Oil

Lev 8:30 **The Aaronic priests were anointed with oil** to consecrate them for ministry.

25 **1Sa 16:13** **David** was **anointed with oil** to set him apart as king.

Luk 4:18 and **Jesus** was anointed with the
Act 10:38 **Holy Spirit.**

30 **2Co 1:21** and The **apostles** and other **believers**
1Jo 2:20 were **baptised with the Holy Spirit.**

Just as oil gives **light**, so are we illuminated through the Holy Spirit. Oil can be used as a symbol of **consecration** to the Lord's service.

D. Fire

Act 2:3-4 On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down on the disciples in the form of tongues of fire.

5 Luk 3:16-17 John the Baptist said: “*He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*” Then he said that Jesus would burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

10 1Co 3:13-15 The works of believers will be tested by fire.

Fire can therefore be seen as a symbol of **cleansing** or of **judgement**.

E. Living water

15 Joh 7:38-39 *Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.*

This can also be compared with the Samaritan woman **Joh 4:14**, to whom Jesus said that she would never thirst again if she drank from the water that he could offer her. Living water symbolises therefore **fullness of life** or the **fruit of the Spirit**.

F. The seal

20 Eph 1:13; 4:30 *Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit...*

25 2Co 1:22 *He has also sealed us and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit...*

The seal symbolises **ownership** (we are Christ's).

G. Guarantee or deposit

30 Eph 1:13-14 *...you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance...*

30 2Co 1:21-22 *But the one who gives us security with you in Christ and who anointed us is God; he has also sealed us and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

35 Guarantee and deposit symbolise therefore **guarantee, assurance** and **security** (namely of being saved through Christ).

IV. The Holy Spirit before Pentecost

A. The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

1. His role in creation

Because he is one of the persons of the triune God the Holy Spirit was involved in creation.

5

Gen 1:1 *In the beginning God created (אֱלֹהִים: 'Elohím: "im" = Hebrew ending for the masculine plural) heaven and earth.*

Gen 1:2 *...and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*

10

Gen 1:26 *...let us make man in our image, in our likeness (in Hebrew this verb is in the cohortative plural: נַעֲשֶׂה [na^aseh] = let us make, or we will make).*

Job 33:4 *The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.⁶*

15

Compare also with Psa 104:30 and Gen 2:7.

2. His work in the hearts of men in the O. T.

Joh 7:39 confirms that, under the old covenant (i.e. before Pentecost), the Holy Spirit was not granted on a permanent basis:

20

The Spirit was not given to all (believers) but only to individuals for a special task or occasion:

25

- Bezaleel, for the construction of the tabernacle (Exo 31:3)
- Othniel, Gideon and Jephthah, all judges (Jud 3:10; 6:34; 11:29)
- David the king (1Sa 16:13; cf. Psa 51:13)
- The prophets when they were inspired (for passing on the Word of God: 1Pe 1:10-11; 2Pe 1:21)

30

At that time the Spirit was temporarily given and could be withdrawn:

⁶ In Joh 1:3 ff, Col 1:16 and Heb 1:2 it says that all things are made through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus did in fact claim to be almighty (cf. Mat 28:18). You could say that the Father decreed creation and that the Son carried out the decree through the Holy Spirit, just as the latter was also involved in redemption. In Heb 9:14 it says explicitly that Jesus offered himself through the eternal Spirit.

- Samson the judge: received the Spirit (Jud 13:25); the Spirit was withdrawn (Jud 16:20)
- Saul the King: received the Spirit (1Sa 10:10); the Spirit was withdrawn (1Sa 16:14)
- 5 • David the King prayed: “...do not...take your Holy Spirit from me!” (Psa 51:11)

The work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of (believing) people was still “incomplete” in that age.

- 10 Because Christ was not yet glorified (cf. Joh 7:38-39), believers could not yet be baptised with the Holy Spirit and were therefore not a part of the body of Christ.

At that time the Spirit acted upon Israel as a nation; he had not constituted it into one body as he later did for the church.

- 15 **Hag 2:5:** *And my Spirit remains among you.* (cf. also Neh 9:20.30; Isa 63:10.11.14)

- 20 Among other passages, the words of Jesus in Joh 11:52 “...*for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one [body]*” (in Greek: εἰς ἓν) highlight the fact that the Spirit was, at that time, not imparted to individual believers. This happened later for the church at Pentecost. From the perspective of the earthly life and work of Jesus this was still a future event (cf. **1Co 12:13**).

- 25 The sovereignty of the Spirit is very clearly shown to us in the Old Covenant:

- **Joh 3:8:** “*The wind blows wherever it pleases*” (We remind ourselves here that the New Covenant only began at Pentecost i.e. in Act 2).
 - The Spirit of God can even use enemies of God’s people: cf. **Balaam** (Num 24:2); **David’s enemies** (1Sa 19:20-23).
- 30

3. The Role of the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant, as predicted in the Old Testament

- 35 In the Old Covenant God dwelt by his Spirit in the tabernacle and then in the temple in Jerusalem (see **Act 7:47-50** and the pillar of cloud above the tabernacle **Exo 33:7ff**; **Num 9:15ff**), but not really in the hearts of individual believers. In the Old Covenant it was already announced that the time would come when the Holy Spirit would dwell in the hearts of men. (**Joe 2:28-32** [other versions 3:1-5]; **Isa 44:3-4**; **Eze 39:29**). Before Pentecost he already rested on Jesus: cf. **Isa 11:2**; **42:1**; **61:1**. Since Pentecost though the Spirit dwells in the hearts of all believers and no longer in a man-made temple: cf. **1Cor 3:16**; **6:19**.

- 40
- **The promise** of the coming of the Spirit: Joe 2:28-32 [3:1-5].
 - The Spirit thus given will remain **for ever**: Isa 59:21.
 - The Spirit will dwell **in the hearts of men**, whom he will renew and sanctify: Eze 37:14; 36:26-27; cf. Jer 31:33.
 - 45 • The Spirit shall rest **upon the Messiah**, the mediator of the New Covenant: Isa 11:2. For this reason the New Covenant is also called the “*Covenant of the Spirit*” (cf. 2Co 3:6).

B. The Holy Spirit in the Gospels

The time of the four Gospels is a period of transition from the Old to the New Covenant (Testament). During this period, the Holy Spirit was not given to believers in his fullness:

- 5 • People who did receive the Spirit at that time, pointed to Jesus: cf. e.g.: John the Baptist, Simeon, Anna and Elisabeth.
- What Jesus said at that time regarding the Holy Spirit was prophetic proclamation: cf. e.g. Luk 11:13; Joh 14:16; 15:26; 16:7-14.
- 10 • Jesus' disciples were, before Pentecost, not filled with the Holy Spirit: Joh 7:39; 16:7; cf. Luk 22:32.
- Jesus was, during his time on earth, constantly led by the Holy Spirit: cf. e.g. Mat 1:20; Luk 4:1.14.

In conclusion: The Holy Spirit was promised to us in the Gospels (cf. Joh 14:16). We can say in respect to the work of the Holy Spirit among men that there is no difference between the Old Testament and the Gospels: both belong to the Old Covenant.

C. The Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ at the time of the Gospels

- 20 • He was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Mat 1:20; Luk 1:35)
- He was anointed with the Holy Spirit (Luk 4:18; Act 10:38)
- He was sealed by the Holy Spirit (Joh 6:27)
- The Spirit dwelt in him (Joh 1:33)
- He was filled with the Holy Spirit (Luk 4:1)
- He acted in the power of the Holy Spirit and was led by him (Luk 4:1.2.14)
- 25 • It was by the Holy Spirit that he offered himself as a sacrifice (Heb 9:14)
- He was raised by the Holy Spirit (Rom 1:4; 8:11; cf. 1Ti 3:16)

V. The Holy Spirit and the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

5 The Spirit of God guided the authors (prophets, apostles) of the books of the Bible in what they wrote down. Therefore the Bible is not just a “product of men”, but at the same time the work of the Holy Spirit: cf. **1Pe 1:10-11** and especially **2Pe 1:21** and **2Ti 3:16**. See also in this respect **2Sa 23:2**. In the same way the Holy Spirit guides and illuminates those who read the Bible today: cf. **Joh 14:26** and **16:13**. For more on this topic see the chapter “*Inspiration*” on the subject of “*Bibliology*”.

VI. The Work of the Holy Spirit since Pentecost

The dispensation or age of the Holy Spirit

- 5 The Old Testament was a covenant based on law, which lasted until Pentecost. The New Testament is a covenant based on grace which covers the period from Pentecost to the rapture of the Church (cf. **2Co 3:6-8**).

10 It is not said implicitly in the Holy Scriptures, but maybe we can differentiate between the following three dispensations:

1. The dispensation of the Father: the Old Testament.
2. The dispensation of the Son: the times spoken of in the Gospels, i.e. from the birth until the ascension of Jesus Christ: Mat 1 until Act 1.
- 15 3. The dispensation of the Holy Spirit: the time from Pentecost until the rapture of the church (which is Christ's body, indwelt by the Holy Spirit).

A. The Holy Spirit convicts

1. The work of conviction

20 The first thing that the Holy Spirit does in peoples' hearts is to convict them of sin (namely of **sin** [singular = the sinful state, so called original sin] and of **sins** [Plural = the fruit or "the result" of the sinful nature of man]). As long as a person refuses this convicting power, the Holy Spirit will not further work in him.

a.) He convicts of sin

25 **Joh 16:8-9** The Holy Spirit does this through the Holy Scriptures and man's conscience (cf. Rom 2:14-15).

b.) He convicts of righteousness

Joh 16:8-9 *...he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and **righteousness** and judgement.*

c.) He convicts of judgement

30 **Joh 16:8-11** *...in regard to judgement because the prince of this world now stands condemned.*

In fact, those who do not belong to Christ are children of the devil (cf. Joh 8:44), who is the prince of this world, and hence will be judged like their lord, the devil.⁷

2. The sin against the Holy Spirit

a.) What is the “*sin against the Holy Spirit*”?

5 The following passages deal with this: **Mat 12:31-32; Mar 3:28-30; Luk 12:10** and probably also **1Jo 5:16-17**. If we also study the passages **Joh 12:37-40; Heb 10:26-31** and **Joh 16:8-9**, then we conclude that the sin against the Holy Spirit is nothing other than **a refusal to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who calls people to accept salvation in Jesus Christ (cf. Joh 16:8-9)**.

10

- Sin against the law (of Moses) in the Old Testament could be forgiven.
- Sin against Jesus (cf. Mat 12:31-32; Joh 15:22) can (or could be) forgiven as well.
- Sin against the Holy Spirit, who wants to convince people that Jesus is Redeemer and Lord, cannot be forgiven because there is no other sacrifice (nor will there ever be) through which people can receive forgiveness other than the death and resurrection of Jesus.

15

b.) What are the consequences of the sin against the Holy Spirit?

- God abandons man to himself (Mat 12:38-39 and 13:10.13).
- Man’s heart is hardened (Mat 13:14-15; Heb 3:7-8; compare with Pharaoh in Exo 9:12; 10:1.20.27).
- It becomes impossible for man to repent (Heb 6:6; Mat 13:15).
- Obtaining forgiveness is no longer possible (Mar 3:29; Heb 10:26-27).

20

B. Regeneration and baptism of the Holy Spirit

At the very moment that someone allows himself to be convicted of his sin and receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, i.e. at his conversion, the Holy Spirit works in his heart on the basis of his faith. At that same moment the following operations come about, these being but the different aspects of one and the same intervention of the Spirit of God:

25

- He regenerates the believer.
- He baptizes him (spiritually; careful, do not confuse the spiritual baptism with water baptism).
- He receives him.
- He adopts him.
- He sets a seal upon him.
- He gives him the earnest (guarantee) of eternal salvation.
- He takes up dwelling within him.
- He anoints him for service.

30

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⁷ Satan is (already) judged: cf. Heb 2:14; Col 2:15 and Mat 25:41 – he is however still at work during the time that God (as it were) allows it: cf. in this respect the passage Rev 12:12.

1. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit

a.) What is “regeneration”?

5 Regeneration is the same as renewal through the new birth (cf. Joh 3:3.7). We deserve death because of our sin (Rom 6:23). Regeneration is the miracle through which we are made alive by being transferred from death to everlasting life. Careful: Do not confuse regeneration and being born again with the resurrection of the body, this only takes place when Christ returns. Regeneration is rather a spiritual resurrection i.e. the imparting of new life. Since the fall of Adam, until this particular moment, man is by nature spiritually dead. Therefore, the apostle Paul shows for example in **Eph 2:1ff** that man is by nature spiritually dead in or through his sin. Paul also says in **Eph 2:5-6** that God, in his grace, has made us alive with (or through) Christ (συνήγειρεν [*sunēgeiren*]). In **Col 2:12** and **3:1** the same truth is expressed through the use of the passive verb. This makes it clear that man cannot do this himself, but that it is rather God’s gift of grace to all who believe: **Col 2:12**: “...*through* (or *in*) *whom* (namely Christ) *you were also raised with him* (συνηγέρθητε [*sunēgérthēte*]) *through faith*” **Col 3:1**: “*Since then you have been raised* (συνηγέρθητε [*sunēgérthēte*]) *with* (or *in*) *Christ.*”

b.) Who effects this regeneration?

Joh 3:5-6 ...*What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of Spirit is spirit.* (cf. Eze 36:26-28)

c.) When does regeneration take place?

20 Definitely at that very moment when Jesus Christ is received as Lord and Saviour: cf. **Joh 1:12-13; 3:36; 5:24.**

2. The baptism of the Holy Spirit

Mar 1:8 ...*he* (Jesus) *will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.*

25 **Act 1:4-5** In this passage, we see that Jesus promised this to his disciples after his resurrection and shortly before his ascension.

a.) What is the significance of “the baptism of the Holy Spirit”?

30 The clearest passage is without any doubt **1Co 12:13**: **the baptism of the Spirit is that act by which God makes us part of the body of Christ.** From this point of time the believer is *in Christ* (cf. **Joh 14:20** and **Eph 2:6**). The baptism of the Spirit is the act by which God gives to the believer his position in Christ: cf. **Gal 3:27; Rom 6:3-4.**

b.) There is only one baptism of the Spirit

35 According to **Eph 4:4-6** there is only one baptism. This is certainly the case with both water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit. In **1Co 12:13** Paul explains precisely that we are all, i.e. all Christians, baptised with one and the same Spirit to form (together) one body, namely the body of Christ. It concerns all Christians who are truly born again. Whoever is not baptised by

the Holy Spirit does not belong to the body of Christ and therefore not to Christ himself. As Paul says in **Rom 8:9**, if anyone does not have the Spirit of God, he does not belong to Christ. **The assertion that some Christians have received the Spirit and others not, must be refuted as unbiblical. The Scripture says clearly that he who has not received the Spirit, i.e. who has not been baptised by him, is not a Christian.**

c.) When are we baptised by the Holy Spirit?

Since the Spirit's baptism makes us members of the body of Christ (cf. **1Co 12:13**), there can be no doubt that we receive it when we accept Christ as Lord and Saviour and are converted. The baptism of the Spirit and regeneration (or new birth), occur simultaneously (cf. **Act 10:44; 11:15-16**).⁸ Herein lies the reason for the absence of any text in Scripture urging believers to seek the Spirit's baptism. It is interesting to note that when Paul writes to the believers about the baptism of the Spirit, he uses a passive form of the verb, which indicates that he is referring to something that has already happened. In the following passages, the Greek text only uses forms of the aorist indicative passive: **1Co 12:13; Gal 3:27** and **Rom 6:3-4**.

d.) In what way is the baptism of the Spirit received?

We receive it simply by faith: **Col 2:12; Gal 3:26-27**. Kuen says:

The presence of the Spirit in us is not a question of experience or perception, but of faith. . . . Just as we accept by faith that Jesus Christ died for us and that therefore our sins are forgiven so we must also by faith accept that he has given us his Holy Spirit, because »we live by faith not by sight« (2Co 5:7). We only need to thank him for his gift, rejoice in his presence with us and »live according to the Spirit«, that we »may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God« (Eph 3:19).⁹

This should also answer the question of whether the baptism of the Spirit is for everyone.

e.) Is the baptism of the Spirit for everyone?

See **1Co 12:13; Gal 3:26-27**: All who believe receive this baptism. As already mentioned above, according to **Rom 8:9-11** you do not belong to Christ if you have not received the Holy Spirit. It should therefore be clear that all believers have been baptised with the Holy Spirit. Now it happens that many believers maintain that the Holy Spirit is received in two stages; they speak of a baptism of the Holy Spirit being a second stage of development in the life of a Christian. They see conversion and the baptism of the Spirit as happening at two different times. This is the teaching of "the second blessing", in French "la deuxième bénédiction". The Scripture shows however that the baptism of the Spirit cannot be separated from the new birth; the latter is in fact effected by the baptism of the Spirit. Kuen, referring to the report of the conversion of the centurion and his household in Act 10–11, draws the following conclusions:

»The happening at Caesarea shows clearly that repentance, conversion, faith, salvation, the gift and receiving of the Spirit, also the baptism of the Spirit are

⁸ Compare in this respect also Ruth Paxson, *Das Leben im Geist: Der Heilsplan Gottes. Eine biblische Lehre in praktischer Darstellung*, 3rd edition (Beatenberg, Switzerland: Verlag Bibelschule Beatenberg, 1967), 403-405.

⁹ Alfred Kuen, *Baptisé et rempli de l'Esprit* (Saint-Légier: Editions Emmaüs, [2001]), 48 (We translated from French into English).

5 all equally part of the same experience. These are the only places in Acts in which the verb *baptise* is used together with the word *Spirit*. It shows us that the expression »baptised with the Holy Spirit« relates to the beginning of the Christian life (death and spiritual resurrection with Christ). It is one of many descriptions of the change that God brings about in the lives of true Christians who know that they belong to the body of Christ« . . . » The baptism of the Spirit unites people with Christ; those who receive him, belong to him, that means they are Christians« . . .¹⁰

10 So it is not surprising that believers are nowhere in the Scripture called upon to ask for, or to seek after the baptism in the Spirit. Flynn sums this up very well:

15 The believer is nowhere told to seek the baptism of the Spirit. At the moment of the new birth every believer is baptised by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. Someone who is not baptised in the Spirit is not in the body of Christ and therefore not saved, because there is no other way to become a member of the body of Christ. If someone is in the body of Christ, then he is baptised in the Spirit. This is the reason why we do not find a biblical call for believers to seek the baptism in the Spirit. Why seek after something which has already been received at the beginning of the life of faith?¹¹

20 Whoever makes a distinction between Christians who have received the Spirit and those who (allegedly) haven't is consciously or unconsciously guilty of false teaching and dividing the church. He distinguishes between two sorts of Christians: those who are baptised in the Spirit and those who are not yet baptised in the Spirit.

f.) What are the results of the baptism of the Spirit?

1. It makes us members of the body of Christ (cf. **1Co 12:13**).
- 25 2. It enables us to 'put on' Christ (**Gal 3:27**), that means, the new nature (cf. **2Co 5:17**).
3. It causes us to (spiritually) die and be raised again with Christ (**Col 2:12; 3:1; Rom 6:3-4**).
4. It creates unity among the children of God (**1Co 12:13**): Jews, Greeks, slave or free (cf. **Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:3.6**: one body, one Spirit!).
- 30 5. Is it necessary that certain outward manifestations should accompany the baptism of the Spirit? In the epistles, this is not mentioned or intimated. In the Acts of the Apostles we find the gift of tongues mentioned three times as accompanying the baptism of the Spirit: (a) **Act 2:4ff**: at Pentecost for believing Jews (the first disciples), (b) **Act 10:46** (cf. 11:15-16): the gentiles, with the Roman centurion Cornelius, who believed and (c) **Act 19:1ff**: the disciples of John the Baptist, who at that time had only been baptised by John and
- 35 6. Is there any connection between baptism by water and baptism of the Spirit? The baptism of the Spirit is the act whereby we have become members of the body of Christ, i.e. through which we have died (to sin) and have been raised with Christ (spiritually). Water

¹⁰ Alfred Kuen, op. cit., 77-78 (We translated it from French into English). Cf. Ruth Paxson, *Das Leben im Geist: Der Heilsplan Gottes. Eine biblische Lehre in praktischer Darstellung* (Beatenberg, Switzerland: published by Bible College Beatenberg, 1967), 404: "He [Jesus] did it on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descended and formed the Church, the body of Christ, to dwell in, on this earth. On that day the disciples, who were gathered in the upper room, were baptised with the Spirit. Since that day – as the godly account shows us – everyone who believes on the Saviour and is as a living member of his body joined to Him, has received the gift of the Holy Spirit." (We translated it from German into English)

¹¹ Leslie B. Flynn, *19 Gaben des Heiligen Geistes* (Original: *19 Gifts of the Spirit*, Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, SP Publications, 1974), 227 (We translated it from German into English).

baptism is the sign and outward testimony of the inward (spiritual) baptism that is conversion and renewal or new birth.

C. Receiving of the Holy Spirit

1. Things on which receiving the Holy Spirit is not dependent

5

a.) A period of waiting

When we truly believe, then we receive the Holy Spirit: **Gal 3:13-14; Eph 1:13.**

Exceptions: The Samaritans in **Act 8:12-17** and the disciples of John the Baptist in **Act 19.**
10 The only explanation for these can be that the Acts of the Apostles is a book of transition between the Old and New Covenants and that the Jews would not have accepted the despised Samaritans in the church if Peter had not himself been a witness of them receiving the Holy Spirit. I have already pointed out that the disciples of John the Baptist did not even know that the Holy Spirit existed and that they were not baptised in the name of Christ; they had only
15 received the baptism of repentance through John the Baptist. We must also remind ourselves that Jesus had given the apostle Peter the keys to the Kingdom of heaven (cf. **Mat 16:19**). That was also the reason why it pleased God that Peter should, at the beginning, be present on each occasion (i.e. three times):

- 20
1. In Jerusalem at Pentecost when **Jews** were converted (Act 2).
 2. In Samaria when **Samaritans** were converted (Act 8).
 3. In Caesarea when **Gentiles** were converted (Act 10).

25 After these “initial events”, the presence of Peter was no longer necessary. Every Christian could from now on lead someone to faith in Christ. It is also significant that from Act 13 onwards Peter is no longer the central figure in the reported happenings.

b.) Lengthy prayer in order to receive him

30 True faith is, according to **Gal 3:13-14** and other passages, sufficient for the reception of the Holy Spirit. It is not said that the believer must strive in prayer in order to receive him. It happens that certain expositors – referring especially to **Luk 11:13** – maintain that it is possible to pray to receive the Holy Spirit. I do not believe that Jesus was saying that here. It is conspicuous that in the Greek text there is no article before *Holy Spirit*. This could possibly indicate that whoever asks of the Father will have no lack of gifts of a spiritual nature (i.e. gifts that come from the Spirit of God; see the parallel verse in **Mat 7:11**; cf. **Jam 1:17**). Remember
35 that at the time that Jesus was on earth, the Spirit had neither been given nor poured out (also not on those who believed in him: cf. **Joh 7:37-39**).

c.) The laying on of hands

In the epistles we do not have any directions to do this. In the **Acts of the Apostles** we only find three examples (or happenings) in which the reception of the Holy Spirit followed the laying on of hands:

5

1. The Samaritans in **Act 8:17-18**.
2. Paul in **Act 9:17**.
3. The disciples of John the Baptist in **Act 19:6**.

10 In all the other conversions that are reported in the Acts of the Apostles, the laying on of hands is not mentioned. It cannot therefore be maintained that the laying on of hands is indispensable for receiving the Holy Spirit. The above mentioned three texts rather represent exceptions. God's purpose here was also that these people who received the laying on of hands should understand what happened to them inwardly at that moment.

15 d.) That receiving the Holy Spirit will be accompanied by speaking in tongues

This is not stated in the epistles and in the Acts of the Apostles speaking in tongues is mentioned in three incidents "only":

- 20
1. In **Act 2**, at Pentecost when the first **Jews** received the Holy Spirit.
 2. In **Act 10**, when the first **Gentiles** believed and received the Holy Spirit.
 3. In **Act 19**, when the disciples of John the Baptist understood and received the Holy Spirit.

25 **In these cases an outward sign was necessary, because otherwise the disciples would neither have understood that the Holy Spirit was henceforth poured out, nor that he would be given to everyone who believes both Jew and Gentile.** This is confirmed by such passages as **Act 10:46** and **Act 11:15-17**.

2. Things on which receiving the Holy Spirit is dependent

30 a.) Faith

See Joh 7:38-39; Eph 1:13; 3:16-17; Gal 3:2.5.

b.) Repentance

See Act 2:37-38; 11:18.

c.) Obedience

35 See Act 5:32; Heb 5:9 (cf. Jam 2:19).

d.) Accepting Jesus and confessing

See Joh 1:12; 1Co 6:17; 12:3; Rom 10:9-10. But it is to say that in these passages the Spirit is not explicitly mentioned.

D. The Holy Spirit gives us assurance of salvation

5 1. The Word of God is the written testimony of the Holy Spirit

Compare: Joh 6:63; 2Pe 1:21 or 2Ti 3:16.

2. The inner witness of the Holy Spirit

10 *“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” (Rom 8:15-16; cf. 2Co 1:21-22)*

E. The Spirit’s dwelling in the heart of the believer

1. The importance and certainty of this fact

15 The Spirit makes his dwelling in the hearts of believers: **Joh 16:7; 14:16-27** and **Rom 8:9-11**. We are in fact the temple of the Holy Spirit: **1Co 6:19-20**; cf. **1Co 3:16-17; 2Co 13:5** (**the Spirit, God** [the Father] and **the Son**): At one time it says that the Spirit indwells us (we are the temple of the Holy Spirit), at another that the Father is in us (we are the temple of God) or it is written that Christ indwells us (cf. **Gal 2:20**). This fact is illuminated especially in **Joh 14:23**. I direct your attention to the above chapter II.E, where the teaching of the *“Perichoresis”* or *“Circumincessio”* and the Filioque (the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son) is mentioned, meaning the mutual indwelling of the three persons of the Trinity.

2. Does the Holy Spirit alone indwell us?

a.) Together with the Spirit, the Father also takes up dwelling within us

See 1Jo 3:24; 1Co 3:16; Eph 2:22.

b.) Together with the Spirit, God the Son also takes up dwelling within us

See Eph 3:16-17; Gal 2:20: *Christ in us*; Joh 14:23: the Father and the Son.

3. How long does the Holy Spirit dwell within us?

5 **Joh 14:16** ...to be with you for ever.

In the new covenant, the Spirit of God is given **for ever** (cf. Isa 59:21).

4. Can a believer know whether the Spirit is dwelling in him or not?

10 Yes, because the Holy Scripture confirms it to us: **Joh 14:17.20**. I must say once again: we have to **believe** it!

F. Our relationship with the Holy Spirit

1. It is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit

Eph 4:30 *Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God...*

15 2. How can we grieve the Holy Spirit?

The verse **Eph 4:30** is surrounded by exhortations which throw light on this commandment (cf. **Eph 4:25–5:18**). The Holy Spirit is grieved by the following sins:

- Lying: **Eph 4:25**.
- 20 • Anger: **Eph 4:26**.
- Theft: **Eph. 4:28**.
- Unwholesome talk: **Eph 4:29** etc.

The names given to the Holy Spirit also teach us how we may grieve him:

- 25 • He is holy: **Rom 1:4**.
- He is wise: **Isa 11:2**.
- He is truth: **Joh 14:17**.

3. What are the consequences of grieving the Holy Spirit?

Does he depart from us? No, because he remains with us for ever (cf. **Joh 14:16**). We forego however power, spiritual authority, joy and fellowship with God:

5

- An example in the O.T.: Achan and Israel in **Jos 7:12-13**.
- Examples in the N.T.: The acts of the sinful nature and the fruit of the Spirit in **Gal 5:19-26**.

4. What is to be done after the Holy Spirit has been grieved?

10

a.) First confessing the sin

See 1Jo 1:9; Pro 28:13.

b.) Believing in God's forgiveness in Christ

See 1Jo 1:9; 2:1-2.

15 c.) What must we do in order to avoid grieving him again?

Resist and master sin: Gen 4:7; Pro 28:13; Rom 6:12; Jam 4:7ff.

G. The fullness of the Holy Spirit

The expression *the fullness of the Holy Spirit* is not found in the Bible, but it often speaks of being "*filled with the Holy Spirit*", which is actually the same.

20 1. The first disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit

Act 4:8: Peter

Act 7:55: Stephen

Act 13:9: Paul

Act 6:3.5: deacons

25 Act 4:4.31: all the disciples together

Act 13:52: the new believers in (Pisidian) Antioch

2. God commands believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit

Eph 5:18 ...*be filled with (or let yourselves be filled with) the Spirit.*

3. What is the meaning or implication of “being filled with the Holy Spirit”?

This does not imply that we have more of the Spirit but to the contrary that HE possesses more of us as we put ourselves entirely at his disposal. There is a danger of forgetting that the Holy Spirit is a person. He is not simply power, might, or energy. He is much more a mighty person. It is not a question of possessing more or less of the Holy Spirit as if he were a sort of liquid. We also cannot say that one Christian is (only) half filled with the Holy Spirit and another is completely filled with the Holy Spirit. No, the Holy Spirit dwells **personally** in every individual believer. But when a Christian doesn't live according to the will of God, when he acts according to his sinful nature, then the Spirit of God can no longer work in and through him. When the Spirit is grieved he remains silent. It is as if he were to confine himself to a small part of the believer's life because the person concerned limits him in his desire to work through him.

In **Joh 4:14** and **7:38-39** (the spring of living water), Jesus uses an illustration to show us what is meant by the “*fullness of the Spirit*”. The Holy Spirit in us is the same as the presence of Christ in us. When therefore – according to **Gal 2:20** – I no longer live, but Christ lives in me, then I will be filled with the Holy Spirit and this will manifest itself through various “fruits of the Spirit” such as *love, joy, peace, patience etc.*

4. What are the conditions of becoming filled with the Holy Spirit?

1. Confession of sin: **1Jo 1:9**.
2. Desiring the fullness of the Spirit: **Eph 5:18; Joh 7:37-39; Heb 12:14**.¹²
3. Complete dedication to God: **Luk 9:24; 14:33; Rom 12:1-2**.

5. How does the fullness of the Spirit come about?

1. The Spirit can suddenly fill the believer: **Act 2:4; 4:31; 9:17**.
2. It is possible to be filled with the Spirit without realising it.
3. The fullness of the Spirit can be lost. It is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit through sin and when this is not dealt with (through confession) then the Spirit ceases to work and his life giving power will no longer manifest itself through us as it did before. This is a constant battle (cf. **Rom 8:4-5; Gal 5:17**). At such a time the Spirit still remains in us but will no longer work in and through us (cf. **1Th 5:19**).
4. How can we retain the fullness of the Spirit? **Rom 8:4; Gal 5:16-17**: By living according to the Spirit (walking in the Spirit) and not according to the sinful nature.
5. What are the results of the fullness of the Spirit?
 - Abundant life and freedom: **Rom 8:2; Joh 6:63**.
 - Sanctification: **Gal 5:22**.

¹² Compare this with Ruth Paxson, op. cit., 405: “But the believer must know that this fullness is there for him; he must have a desire for it and it must be mediated. All this is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is his task to reveal Christ, in the perfection of his heavenly, holy life, to show the believer the unsearchable riches which are his as Christ's inheritance, and to awake in him the desire to possess that which is his. Then he mediates the overflowing life of the blessed Lord in heaven.” (Translated from German into English)

- Spiritual power and authority: **Act 1:8; 2:41** etc.
- Thanksgiving and praise: **Eph 5:18-21**.
- Real happiness: **Joh 4:14; 6:35; 10:10**.

5 H. The new nature and sanctification through the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ himself was made unto us righteousness and in him alone we are made “*holy*” (**1Co 1:30; Eph 1:1**). The Lord sanctifies us however through his Spirit: that is through the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.

10 “*Sanctification through the Spirit*”: **Rom 15:16; 1Co 6:11; 2Th 2:13; 1Pe 1:2**. In what way does sanctification through the Holy Spirit take place in us?

1. We receive the new nature at the time of our being born again

15 **2Pe 1:4** *so that through them you may participate in the divine nature.*

Eph 4:24 *...and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

2Co 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation...*

20 2. The new nature is not just a reformation of the old nature, but rather something entirely new

See **2Co 5:17b**. But careful, only the inner man (the spiritual) is renewed, not the old sinful nature, this remains sinful and subject to death: compare **Rom 6:6; 7:24; 8:23** (more below).

25 3. The Spirit in us has power to restrain our old sinful nature

a.) The new nature is in conflict with the old nature

See **Gal 5:16-17**, that means the battle of the Spirit against the old sinful nature. But with the help of the Spirit we can live in victory: cf. **Rom 8:2**.

b.) The foundation for this victory was laid at Calvary

30 See **Rom 6:6-7**.

c.) Through the Spirit we can keep the old sinful nature in subjection

See **Rom 8:12-13**: “...If by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.”

5 d.) The battle of the Spirit against the old sinful nature lasts a lifetime

To believe that with conversion and new life the temptations of the old sinful nature are a thing of the past is a dangerous and deceptive illusion. The body and the old sinful nature are not made new; the believer is “merely” spiritually born again and regenerated. The outward (material) man remains sinful until the return of Christ and even then the natural body of the believer will not inherit the kingdom of God (cf. **1Co 15:50**). The bodies of believers who are alive at the time of the return of Christ will be transformed while on the other hand the dead will rise with an incorruptible new body.¹³ The fact that the body of the believer still awaits its redemption is clearly shown in **Rom 8:22-25**.

15 4. Man and sanctification

I wonder why the subject of sanctification is hardly mentioned in books on Christian Theology. I think it would be good to present a short summary of the “development of faith” according to **Rom 1–8**.

a.) Since Adam all mankind is by nature lost in sin

20 See **Rom 1:18 to 3:20** (cf. Eph 2:1 ff).

b.) Believers have forgiveness through the grace of Jesus Christ

See **Rom 3:21 to 5:21**. The apostle Paul knew that some people misuse grace. He addresses this problem in **Rom 6:1**: “*What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means!*” Grace must not be misused. He who sins intentionally shows that he has not understood the Gospel and the authenticity of his conversion is in question.

c.) A Christian should no longer continue to live in sin

See **Rom 6**: Christ died for our sins, so how can we as Christians continue to live in sin? Paul says this should not be:

30 **Rom 6:11**: “*In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*” (See also Rom 6:12-13.19.22-23).

d.) A Christian will not succeed in his own strength

See **Rom 7:18-25**. Verse 22 could indicate that here he is talking about born again Christians, because normally only a child of God really has delight in God’s law; this can hardly be

¹³ Compare **1Th 4:14-17**; **1Co 15:50ff**; for more about this see the chapter on the resurrection in my treatise on Eschatology.

said of the natural man. Also the Christian must always battle with a power that indwells him and constantly urges him to do evil i.e. to act against the will of God; this power is **sin** (cf. **Rom 7:17**)! True, the spirit of believers is renewed, but his old sinful nature is not. This remains under the power of sin. For this reason our body is described as “*the body of sin*” (**Rom 6:6**) and “*the body of death*” (**Rom 7:24**) (cf. above).

Methods that do not help:

- 10 • **Asceticism** or **self-castigation** (which are practiced in various religions: e.g. in Buddhism and Hinduism, but also in certain circles in Catholicism¹⁴). Read **Col 2:18-23**.
- Or the opposite, namely: **Hedonism, Epicureanism, Libertarianism**. These conceptions maintain that there is no point in resisting bodily or fleshly lusts. You can do what you like with your body. Paul countered this philosophy for example in **1Co 6:12-20**.
- 15 • Another false way is **legalism**, i.e. trying in your own strength to do God’s will and keep all the commandments. Sooner or later these attempts end in failure, discouragement, lack of joy in Christ. There is also a danger of pride and a spirit of judgement. No one can keep all the commandments in his own strength (cf. **Jam 2:10; Gal 3:10-13; 5:3-4**).

e.) True sanctification is only possible with the help of the Holy Spirit

20 In regard to this, please, read **Rom 8:3-14**: Sanctification in or through the Holy Spirit. Victory over sin is only possible with the help of the Holy Spirit. With his aid it is possible to put to death the works of the flesh or to subdue the power of sin and flesh. An illustration of this is that if you want electricity you must plug into it.

f.) How can we then walk in the Spirit?

- 25 • We must have the will not to sin any more, then the Lord will grant success: cf. **Phi 2:13**.
- We must watch and pray: cf. **Mat 26:41** (see also **1Pe 5:8-9**).
- We must not unnecessarily expose ourselves to danger (temptation): cf. **Rom 13:14; 1Co 9:27**. We must avoid places, activities and people who could bring us into danger.
- 30 • We must remain humble (**Jam 4:6; 2Co 12:7-10; 1Co 10:12**), otherwise we risk becoming a target of the devil.
- We should always remember that all Christians must one day appear before the judgement seat of Christ: **Rom 14:10; 1Co 3:11-15; 2Co 5:10; Jam 3:1; 5:9; 1Jo 2:28** etc.

5. What are the fruits of sanctification?

a.) Sanctification produces the fruit of the Spirit in us

35 When the Spirit reigns in us, then our sanctified lives will manifest the fruit of the Spirit (cf. **Gal 5:22**).

¹⁴ *Self-castigation* means to cause oneself pain. In the area of religion this is done in the illusion of pleasing God (or the gods in polytheism). An example in Christianity: In countries that are strongly influenced by Catholicism, like the Philippines and Mexico, more and more Catholics let themselves be crucified. The people who allow themselves these torments believe mistakenly that they can win favour with God.

b.) Through sanctification we appropriate the righteousness required by the law

See Rom 8:2-4.

c.) Sanctification makes our consciences sensitive

5 The more we obey the voice of the Holy Spirit, the more sensitive we become to what will grieve him:

Rom 9:1 *I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit...*

d.) Sanctification establishes an ever increasing communion between God and ourselves

Sin separates us from God (cf. Isa 59:2); sanctification on the contrary draws us closer to him:

15 **Mat 5:8** *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.* (cf. Psa 15; 24:3 ff).

e.) Sanctification prepares us for the return of Christ

Compare Rom 13:11-12; Eph 5:27; Heb 12:14; 2Pe 3:9-14; Rev 22:11-12.

I. The comfort, teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit

20 1. The comfort of the Holy Spirit

Joh 14:16 *...and he will give you another Counsellor...*

1Pe 4:14 *If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*

25 2. The Holy Spirit's teaching

1Co 2:14 *The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God...*

30 Joh 14:26; 16:13 *But the Counsellor (or Comforter), the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things . . . he will guide you into all truth.*

3. The Holy Spirit's guidance

a.) Examples in Acts of where men of God were led by the Holy Spirit

	Act 8:29:	Philip the evangelist
5	Act 10:19-20:	Peter
	Act 13:2-4:	Paul and Barnabas
	Act 16:6-7:	Paul and his missionary companions

b.) Today the Holy Spirit leads us by enlightening us in our praying and reading or listening to the Word of God, which he himself has inspired

Concerning the inspiration of the Word of God see 2Pe 1:21. Concerning the help of the Holy Spirit in our praying, see Rom 8:26-27.

VII. The Holy Spirit and the Church

A. The Holy Spirit constitutes the Church

The Church, which is the body of Christ (cf. **1Co 12:13.27; Eph 5:23**), was founded at Pentecost (cf. **Act 2**).

5 B. The Holy Spirit ensures the unity of the Church

Eph 4:4 *...one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to one hope when you were called...*

What is the basis of the unity of the Church?

10

- One God and Father of all (**Eph 4:6**).
- One Lord (**Eph 4:5**).
- One Spirit (**Eph 4:4**).
- One faith (**Eph 4:5**; cf. **Jud 3**).¹⁵

15

- One baptism (**Eph 4:5**).
- One body [i.e. the church] (**Eph 4:4**).
- One hope (**Eph 4:4**).

20 **Take heed: There can be no true unity if it is sought at the cost of truth and righteousness!**

C. The Holy Spirit makes the Church His temple

Every believer is a temple of the Holy Spirit: **1Co 6:19**. But believers as a whole form one spiritual house, a dwelling place of God: cf. **1Pe 2:5** and **Eph 2:20-22**.

D. The Holy Spirit bestows his gifts on the Church

25 **1Co 12:11** *He (the Spirit) gives them to each one, just as he determines (more on this subject in VIII.B: The gifts of the Spirit).*

¹⁵ But careful, there is also *a faith which is dead*: compare **Jud 4-5.10.16-19; 2Ti 3:5; 1Jo 2:19; Jam 2:19.26**.

E. The Holy Spirit governs the Church

1. The Holy Spirit calls the servants of God

See for example Act 13:2; 20:28.

2. The Holy Spirit guides and upholds them in their ministry

5

See for example the experiences of the apostle Paul, who was led by the Holy Spirit: **Act 13:4.8.9; 16:6-7**. Peter see for example **1Pe 1:12**.

3. The Holy Spirit inspires the Church's decisions

Act 15:28 *It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us...*

10

This does not mean that the Holy Spirit is responsible for all the decisions made by the various churches (confessions and denominations). This is only the case when a church allows itself to be fully led by the Holy Spirit, where the decisions are not made according to unspiritual motives of those in responsibility.

4. The Holy Spirit speaks to the Church

15

See for example in the seven letters to the churches in **Apo 2 to 3**. It says seven times: "*He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches!*"

VIII. The Holy Spirit and service

A. The anointing of the Holy Spirit

1. What is the significance of the “*anointing of the Spirit*”?

5 a.) In the O. T. the anointing was with oil

- **The priests:** Exo 28:41; 40:13-15.
- **The kings:** 1Sa 10:1 (Saul); 1Sa 16:13 (David); 1Ki 1:39 (Solomon).
- **The prophets:** 1Ki 19:16 (Elisha is anointed by Elijah)

b.) In the N. T. we are also called priests and kings

- 10 • **Priests:** 1Pe 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:10.
- **Kings:** Rev 1:6; 20:4-6.

New Covenant believers are not anointed with oil but with the Holy Spirit (cf. **1Jo 2:20; 2Co 1:21-22**).

15 2. What does the anointing of the Holy Spirit impart to us?

a.) It equips us with power

See for example Act 10:38.

b.) It equips us with true knowledge

20 See for example 1Jo 2:27.

3. When and how do we receive the Spirit’s anointing?

We see in the Old Testament that kings, priests and prophets were anointed before their ministry began in order that they might be equipped for it.

It is the same for us under the New Covenant: We receive the anointing of the Spirit at the beginning of our ministry that is when we are born again and made new. This is the case for all members of the body of Christ, because all have been given a gift (or several) and a particular function within the body of Christ, which is the Church.

5 B. The gifts of the Holy Spirit

1. What is a “gift of the Spirit” or “a spiritual gift”?

10 It is a qualification or endowment given by the Holy Spirit to each individual believer to enable him to serve within the framework of the body of Christ. In the lists of spiritual gifts in Rom 12 and 1Co 12¹⁶ Paul uses the Greek word τὸ χάρισμα (*to charisma*): in the plural τὰ
 10 *χαρίσματα* (*ta charismata*). The Greek word (feminine) ἡ χάρις (*hē charis*) means “*grace*”. The suffix “*ma*” (*charis-ma*) is typical for a neuter form and indicates that it is something springing out of *charis* (grace). It could be interpreted as “something that extends out of grace”, in other words “*a gift of grace = a spiritual gift*”.¹⁷

15 Paul explains the distribution of spiritual gifts by using the image of *the body and its parts* (1Co 12). The body is a unit and is made up of many parts, all of which are indispensable because each fulfils a special function and compliments the other parts. It is just the same with believers: They are members who together build the body of Christ, each taking on a special function. Each receives from the Spirit one particular (or several) gift(s) which enables
 20 them to fulfil their individual function (cf. 1Co 12:11,27).

2. What are the different spiritual gifts?

The Spirit who gives is one and the same Spirit, but he distributes various gifts for the different ministries within the church. Here is a list of the gifts which are mentioned in the New
 25 Testament:

- The gift of wisdom (1Co 12:8)
- The gift of knowledge (1Co 12:8)
- The gift of faith (1Co 12:9)
- The gift of healing (1Co 12:9)
- 30 • The gift of the working of miracles (1Co 12:10)
- The gift of prophecy (1Co 12:10; 14:1ff; Rom 12:6; Eph 4:11)
- The gift of the discerning of spirits (1Co 12:10)
- The gift of tongues (1Co 12:10)
- The gift of interpretation of tongues (1Co 12:10)
- 35 • The gift of apostleship (1Co 12:28; Eph 4:11)
- The gift of teaching (1Co 12:28; Rom 12:7; Eph 4:11)

¹⁶ See Rom 12:6 and 1Co 12:4.

¹⁷ In German “Geistesgabe”, i.e. “gift of grace” see e.g. German “*Einheitsübersetzung*” (1979) and “*Zürcherbibel*”.

- The gift of helping (**1Co 12:28**);¹⁸ in **Rom 12:8** called *mercy*.
- The gift of leadership (**1Co 12:28; Rom 12:8**)
- The gift of being an evangelist (**Eph 4:11**)
- The gift of being a pastor or shepherd (**Eph 4:11**)
- 5 • The gift of giving or contributing to the need of others (**Rom 12:8**)
- The gift of encouragement (**Rom 12:8**)

Maybe we could also consider **celibacy** in order to serve the Lord as a spiritual gift (cf. **1Co 7:1-9.25-38**).

10 **3. Who chooses the gift (or gifts) which we should receive?**

1Co 12:11 *All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he [the Spirit] determines.*

15 **Heb 2:4** *God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

4. Every child of God is allocated a gift

20 **1Co 12:6-7.11.27** *...but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good [the church] . . . just as he determines... etc.*

It is not so important whether you have one or the other of the previously mentioned gifts as long as you have received some sort of a gift (maybe a hidden one but which comes from God). We are though responsible to examine whether we could be a parasitical or paralysed member of the body of Christ.¹⁹

25

5. Believers do not all receive the same gift

1Co 12:8-10 *To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith (cf. 1Co 12:28-30).*

30

Rom 12:4-6 *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function...*

¹⁸ Some examples of this: a ministry in the area of nursing, or a support ministry in the area of technology on the mission field, e.g. computer technology.

¹⁹ See René Pache, op. cit. pp. 182-183.

6. Do some gifts carry greater importance than others?

Yes is the answer to this question:

5 **1Co 14:5.19.39** *I would like everyone of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue . . . be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues...*

10 It is a matter of controversy as to whether the following verse also indicates a sort of graduation:

1Co 12:28 *And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then...*

15 This can just as well be simply an enumeration of the various gifts (i.e. ministries) without reference to different levels of importance.

7. Are the spiritual gifts given to the same extent in every age?

20 Many Christians have the honest desire to follow their Lord with all their hearts according to the Word of God. When an attentive believer reads the book of Acts at the beginning of the 21st century, he will probably ask the following question: ***“Why are the same miracles not taking place in our churches that took place at the time of the apostles?”*** I think Pache gives a balanced answer to this question:

25 Often believers have been troubled by the fact that miraculous gifts, which were so abundant in the time of the Apostles, are so infrequently met with in our age, and many have believed that if our faith were greater we also should see the same supernatural power at work again. It is quite obvious that the power of God has not changed, and that if we were in closer communion with
30 Him, this power would reveal itself more strongly on our behalf. But close examination of the Bible leads us to these two following conclusions:

a. If we look down the list of spiritual gifts, we note that the majority of them (wisdom, understanding, faith; evangelists, teachers, pastors; government, assistance, liberality, etc.) has at all times been granted to the faithful
35 according to their faith; and yet these are as supernatural as those gifts which are called “miraculous,” since they all come from the Holy Spirit. If “miraculous” gifts (healing, miracles, prophecy, tongues) have been absent at certain times, the probable cause has lain not always in man’s unbelief, but in the will of God. If it were otherwise, why should the Spirit unceasingly give certain
40 gifts (quoted by Paul at the head of his list) while failing to bestow others?

b. In the Old as in the New Testament, God increased the number of miracles at certain given moments, for reasons which are easily recognized. When He called the Israelites out of Egypt to make them his people, and again when He gave them His law at Sinai and led them into Palestine, He performed through His servants certain extraordinary signs, thus furnishing proof both of His intervention, and of the supernatural origin of the Old Covenant. Then miracles ceased for many centuries only to become more frequent again during the ministry of Elijah and Elisha, a period marked not by spiritual awakening but by infidelity. Great men of God such as Abraham, David, John the Baptist, performed no miracles to the best of our knowledge, and yet their absence was not due to lack of belief, because John the Baptist, for example, was declared to be the greatest of them all (Matt. 11:11; John 10:41).

Again in the Gospels and in Acts, numerous miracles accompanied the founding of the New Covenant, testifying to the divine origin of the message proclaimed by Christ and the Apostles. They were indispensable to convince the religious Jews bound to the Mosaic Law, and those who could then have had no other proof of the truth of the Gospel. This is the primary meaning of the words of Jesus: "These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18). All these miracles (except that of poisonous drink) are to be found in the Acts, but nowhere in the Epistles, which form a fully defined statement of the laws of spiritual life, are we given to understand that in the present dispensation they are the indispensable adjunct of preaching and of faith. Passages such as Romans 15:19; II Corinthians 12:12, and Hebrews 2:3-4 would seem to refer to historical signs performed by the Apostles to support the original proclamation of the Gospel.

If such signs are today reproduced largely in mission fields, it is because the situation there closely resembles that prevalent in the Roman world, nineteen centuries ago. In our countries, where the Gospel has been preached for some considerable time, knowledge of the New Testament, together with the history of the faithful Church and the actual presence of a host of true believers, provides any honest soul with new and irrefutable proofs. Thus, from this point of view, miracles are not so indispensable as they were in the days of the Early Church. Of course, God is almighty and it is for Him to decide if He wishes to give the same signs or the same gifts as in times past.

It is, however, arresting to note that Scripture, speaking of the last days, makes persistent reference to miracles performed not by God and those that are His, but by the adversary and his myrmidons. "For there shall arise false Christs²⁰ and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect" (Matt. 24:24). "Even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing, be-

²⁰ Better would be 'christs'.

cause they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:9-10). The false prophet "doeth great signs . . . and he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which was given him to do in the sight of the beast" (Rev. 13:13-14).

5 Let us therefore be on our guard. While forbearing [sic; correct forbearing] to limit the expression of God's power by our incredulity or lack of obedience, let us bear in mind that there are miracles and spiritual gifts counterfeited by the enemy of our souls and that, in our day preceding the anticipated return of Christ, these counterfeits will become more and more numerous. Already Spiritism, Science (self-styled Christian), Buddhism and many other movements, certain of which have nothing in common with the Gospel, do miracles, heal the sick, prophesy and speak with tongues. Perfect submission to God's Spirit and to *His whole Word* alone can save us from error.²¹

15 I am fully in agreement with what René Pache writes here. Concerning the statement about the sovereignty of God and the fact that he can do the same miracles today, I can point out the testimonies of missionaries who, at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have been eye witnesses of such miracles, e.g. resurrections in Indonesia – or members of a South American Indian tribe who understood the missionaries who came to them although they did not know each other's language. Another South American tribe was prepared by a dream for the coming of a white man who would bring them the truth. The missionary found a mission field that was already prepared. I personally know several people who, following prayer and the laying on of hands through brothers and sisters in the faith (cf. **Jam 5:14ff**), were healed of cancer or tumours which had been declared as incurable by doctors. God can do the same miracles today as he did formerly, but it must be according to his will (cf. **1Jo 5:14**). If someone is not healed (in spite of prayer, anointing with oil and laying on of hands), the reason is not necessarily (as is unfortunately often said) unbelief. No, it can in fact be the will of God for this person. No one would dispute that the apostle Paul was a champion of faith, and in spite of this it pleased God not to free him from his physical suffering (cf. **2Co 12:7-10**). If you try to force a miracle, then there is a danger of exposing yourself to the attack of the devil or demonic powers. Satan possesses power and strength to imitate miracles of God. God does not let himself be forced into action i.e. intervention; he is sovereign and does what he wills, just as the Holy Spirit "blows" (like the wind), wherever he pleases (cf. **Joh 3:8-9**).

35 8. Are spiritual gifts always a guarantee of real spiritual life?

No! Paul wrote to the Corinthians, that they did not lack any gift and implied that speaking in tongues was often practiced by them; yet he added that they were still carnal, children in Christ and unable to bear solid food: cf. **1Co 1:7; 3:1-3** and chapter **14**. See also **1Pe 4:10-11**. The possession of a spiritual gift is therefore in no way a guarantee of spirituality.²²

²¹ René Pache, op. cit., pp. 183-186.

²² Compare also Alfred Kuen, op. cit., p. 106.

9. An examination of some of the spiritual gifts

a.) The gift of faith

See **1Co 12:9**:

5 This surely does not mean faith which is necessary for salvation, because all believers possess this faith without which they would otherwise not be saved. In 1Co 12 (especially vv 28 ff) Paul says clearly that the various gifts are not given to all, rather to one the gift of apostleship (missionary), to another the gift of tongues and so on. But not all are apostles and not all speak in tongues. The gift of faith is therefore probably a special gift enabling someone to
10 fulfil a certain ministry, for example the ministry of a pioneer missionary in a hard and/or dangerous area. You could think of a “good dose” of trust, of a firm assurance of the presence of God. Here are some examples from the Holy Scripture:

In the O. T.:

15

- Moses when leaving Egypt and later in the desert (Exo 3ff).
- Joshua at Jericho (Jos 6).
- Elijah and Elisha (1Ki 17:1ff and 2Ki 2:12ff).
- Daniel and his friends (Dan 3 and 6).

20

In the N.T.:

- Peter and John: Act 4–5.
- Stephen: Act 7.
- 25 • Paul: e.g. in Act 16:23ff; cf. 1Co 15:32; 2Co 10:4-5 etc.

b.) The gift of healing

See **1Co 12:9**:

- It is not given to all (cf. **1Co 12:30**).
- 30 • It may be withdrawn or at least not be effective in every case. Here an example: Paul healed many people (e.g. in Ephesus: **Act 19:11-12**), but he could not heal his fellow worker Trophimus in Miletus **2Ti 4:20**, nor Timothy (**1Ti 5:23**), and as I said previously also not himself (**2Co 12:7-10**).
- The gift of healing is not effective in every case. Otherwise we would never (be able) to
35 die! Here is another example from Paul **2Co 12:7-9**.
- The gift of healing is often feigned: If there is any field in which the adversary seeks to produce false miracles, i.e. miracles to deceive people, it is most certainly in that of healings. Jesus and the apostles warn us of the danger of miracles which are not of God: Jesus see **Mat 7:22; 24:24**; Paul see **2Th 2:9-11**; John see **Rev 13:12 ff**.

40

c.) The gift of prophecy

See **1Co 12:10; Rom 12:6; Eph 4:11**:

This gift does not solely convey the faculty of foretelling the future, but also, according to the definition found in **1Co 14:3-4**, that of edifying, exhorting, and comforting believers.

5 It is easily understood why this gift is so important and why Paul urges us to seek it more than
 10 that of speaking in tongues (cf. 1Co 14:1). At the time of the apostles, the Christians did not
 15 possess the New Testament as we do today and they did not always have an apostle among
 them who was able to give them reliable teaching. This role was often filled by prophets.
 Since we now have all the Holy Scripture (O.T. and N.T.), the gift of prophecy often blends
 with that of exhortation and preaching based on the Word of God (exhorting, edifying, com-
 forting, see 1Co 14:3-4). As far as the sermon is concerned, it is important to take note of Rev
 22:18-19. The biblical canon is complete. Nothing more can be added to it. We do not need
 new revelations (apparently) from God, because that which we need has been given to us by
 him – the Bible which we today have in our hands. I believe that God guided the Church
 through his Spirit when it had to be decided once and for all which books are inspired and
 therefore have godly authority. Compare this with the chapter on inspiration and the biblical
 canon in Bibliology (Systematic Theology).

d.) The gift of discerning of spirits

See **1Co 12:10; 1Jo 4:1ff; 1Th 5:19-22:**

20 Few ages have required this gift as much as ours. The spirit of the Antichrist is everywhere at
 work and is increasingly manifest in deception and rebellion against God, his Son and his
 Word. Satan and those who are his, will perform miracles in order to (if it were possible) de-
 ceive the elect (**Mat 24:24; cf. 2Th 2:9-12; 2Co 11:14**). Since God has placed us in such cir-
 25 cumstances, let us ask of him, in all humility, an appropriate measure of the gift of discerning
 of spirits.

e.) The gift of speaking in tongues

See **1Co 12:10:**

(1) Are there two kinds of “speaking in tongues”?

- 30 • This is the gift of speaking in one or more foreign languages without having learned them.
 The events at Pentecost demonstrate this gift. The 120 disciples received the gift of speak-
 ing in at least 15 different languages or dialects which were unknown to them prior to this
 (see **Act 2:4.8.11** – verse 4 is especially explicit).
- 35 • Many commentators are of the opinion that there is also another sort of speaking in
 tongues, the gift of speaking to God in a kind of ecstasy, in a language incomprehensible to
 both others and the person exercising the gift (cf. 1Co 14:14), giving to the listener the im-
 pression of inarticulate sounds. They base this on **1Co 14:2.14**. Those who represent this
 40 interpretation are of the opinion that the use of the Greek word γλῶσσα (*glōssa*) in 1Co 14
 points to this interpretation. However, since in Acts 2:4-14 in the Greek the word διάλεκτος
 (*diálekτος*) and also the word γλῶσσα (*glōssa*) are used for the one and the same phenome-
 non i.e. existing languages, this interpretation seems questionable to me and even out of
 context.²³ It is by the way quite possible that Paul’s words in **1Co 14:2.4** are to be under-

²³ Ralph Shallis is also of this opinion in *Le don de parler diverses langues: Une analyse détaillée des textes bibliques suivie de quelques réflexions* (Liginiac, France: Editions du C.C.B.P., 1982). See especially chapter 5: “Deux sortes de parler en langues?”, pp 61-75.

stood ironically. I am more in agreement with Shallis and others who say that there is only one sort of speaking in tongues, namely that of speaking in languages spoken today. The miracle then is “simply” that those who speak in tongues do not themselves understand the language but others do. Consequently, the **gift of interpretation** would mean that someone is able to translate or interpret a language (or tongue) which he does not know and has not learned. It should be mentioned that Paul in **1Co 13:1** does not say that someone can speak in the language of the angels. Paul’s words are hypothetical. The meaning seems to be this: *“Even if I were to speak in the languages of men and of angels but had not love . . . then this would not be of any use.”*

10 (2) Speaking in tongues serves personal edification

“For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God . . . He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself...” (1Co 14:2.4). For this reason, Paul says that this gift of itself is of little value to the Church (cf. **1Co 14:6.9.11.16-17.19**). As I indicated above, there are commentators who suspect that the words of Paul in **1Co 14:2ff** relating to self-edification are to be considered ironic. In other words, Paul does not really mean that the person who (just for himself) speaks in tongues really edifies himself; rather he means that this is of no help for others because no one understands it. And because no one else understands, it is **as if** the person in question were edifying himself. In reality he is not being edified. I do not feel able to give a definite answer in this question of detail and would rather leave it open. On the other hand I think that 1Co 14 says clearly that the gift of speaking in tongues is less useful for the Church. We must also not forget that Paul teaches in 1Co 12, using the example of the body and its members, that God gives spiritual gifts for the benefit (edification) of the Church (explicitly verse 7; cf. 1Pe 4:10-11). Why should the gift of speaking in tongues be an exception to this? In fact, when someone speaks in tongues alone in his room, it is difficult to see how this could be of benefit to others. This is in fact the main reason why many see the words of Paul in 1Co 14:4 as ironic.²⁴

(3) When someone in the Church speaks in tongues, then it should be interpreted

See **1Co 14:13.27-28**.

30 (4) Only one person at a time may speak in tongues

See **1Co 14:23.26-27**. Here you have to ask the question of why in spite of Paul’s clear instruction, simultaneous speaking in tongues is practiced in many churches and this without interpretation? Does this really come from God? Paul’s comment in 1Co 14:23-27 is: *“...will they not say that you are out of your mind?”*

35 (5) The gift of speaking in tongues is not given to all

1Co 12:8-11.29-30

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom . . . to another speaking in different kinds of tongues . . . Are all

²⁴ If this gift were really intended for personal use, what would be the point of “interpretation” which according to 2Co 14:13 is indispensable for speaking in tongues? See however verses 23-27.

apostles? . . . Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

5 The context does not leave any room to doubt that the answer to this rhetorical question of the apostle Paul is **“No!”** Not all believers speak in tongues – neither are all a priori “spiritual” Christians – as many commentators insist. Verses 29-30 and the example of the body with its many parts and their (various) functions (gifts) in 1Co 12 demonstrate this without any doubt.

10 The book of Acts confirms these words of the apostle Paul: Speaking in tongues is only mentioned three times in the whole book. We have already looked at that above: For the 120 disciples at Pentecost (**Act 2:4**), for the gentiles with Cornelius and also (especially) for Peter (**Act 10:44-46**) this was a clear sign that they had received the Holy Spirit. The same is true for John the Baptist’s disciples in **Act 19:6-7**.

15 If we insist that all (true) Christians have, a priori, the gift of speaking in tongues, then they must consequently also be able to cast out demons, take up snakes without being hurt and be immune to all poisons (cf. **Mar 16:17-18**) etc.

(6) The gift of speaking in tongues is not a sign of being baptised in the Holy Spirit.

20 Harris asks: *“WHAT IS THE VALUE OF GLOSSOLALIA?”* The first of his five answers is: “It is usually an outward sign that a person is baptised with the Holy Spirit.”²⁵ The objection to this is: In the same chapter Paul says explicitly that not all speak in tongues, but all are baptised in the Holy Spirit (cf. **1Co 12:10.30** with **12:13**). Whoever insists, in spite of this, that speaking in tongues is an indispensable sign of receiving the Holy Spirit, contradicts clearly
25 the apostle Paul’s teaching. It is finally doubly heretical: **(1)** To insist that there are some Christians who are (already) baptised in the Holy Spirit and some who are not (yet), contradicts Paul’s statements in **Rom 8:9-11** and **1Co 12:13**; **(2)** To insist that all (real) Christians must be able to speak in tongues because this is the indispensable sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit or of receiving the Holy Spirit, contradicts the apostle Paul’s words in **1Co 12**
30 (especially the verses 28-30).

(7) Do not forbid speaking in tongues, but everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way

See **1Co 14:39**: Pache says “The whole of chapter 14 of the first epistle to the Corinthians is devoted to the explanation and proper evaluation of the gift of tongues.”²⁶ It seems that at this
35 time in the church in Corinth there was some abuse in the use of this gift. So Paul gives them precise rules and lays down certain restrictions, adding at the end: *“For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. . . . Therefore my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues! But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”* (**1Co 14:33.39-40**) These words hardly encourage speaking in tongues; yet they were necessary
40 because the Corinthians might have over-reacted by going to the other extreme and forbidding

²⁵ Ralph W. Harris, *Wenn der Geist redet...* (Original: *Spoken by the Spirit*, Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1973) (Baden, Germany: Dynamis-Verlag, 1974), p. 126. (We translated it from the German edition into English because the American original was not available for us)

²⁶ René Pache, op. cit., p. 194.

the use of speaking in tongues. Setting up regulations to limit the working of the Spirit must, of course, be avoided.

At this point, I must comment on a **false interpretation** which in the final analysis is nothing other than an extreme reaction against the false teaching presented above. This is the assertion that **the gift of speaking in tongues and prophecy finished with the completion of the biblical canon**. The exponents of this (false) teaching quote especially **1Co 13:8-10**. They see the word “*perfection*” in **1Co 13:10** as pointing to the “*the biblical canon*”. Therefore for them the gift of speaking in tongues and prophecy came to an end at the moment that believers received the New Testament as well as the Old. In other words, the gifts of speaking in tongues and prophecy supposedly stopped when the apostle John received the book of Revelation (Rev 22:18-19 is also quoted). Two facts, among others, speak against this theory: (1) Exponents of this supposition are consequently forced to insist that today the knowledge of the Christians is complete (see however verse 9). (2) The context of the passage speaks against this interpretation: verses 11-12, which follow, indicate what is really meant by “**perfection**” in verse 10; it means clearly the return of Christ. “**Perfection**” **does not refer to the biblical canon, but rather to Jesus Christ personally**. We will only see him *face to face* (verse 12) at his return. This teaching is in principle just as dangerous as that which is being opposed. Why? Because it implies that believers have had complete knowledge since the 2nd century. That is obviously not the case. We will only have perfect knowledge when we see the Lord face to face. This should serve us as an example of how dangerous it is to go from one extreme to another. We must not say that the Bible says something which it really does not say.

f.) The gift of helping others or of mercy

The gift of helping others, see **1Co 12:28**, or the gift of mercy in **Rom 12:8**. This gift is often considered unimportant, so much so that it is hardly considered to be a spiritual gift. But we can see for example in **Act 9:36-39** that the help given by Tabitha was acknowledged by both God and man.

g.) The gift of administration (or government)

See **1Co 12:28**.

1Ti 3:1-5 **An overseer (bishop)**²⁷ cares for the church of God.

Rom 12:8 *...if it is leadership, let him govern diligently...*

Heb 13:17 *Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. Then they keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, and not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

h.) The gift of contributing to the needs of others

Rom 12:6-8 *We have different gifts, according to the grace given us . . . if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously...*

²⁷ In Greek ὁ ἐπίσκοπος (*ho episkopos*), literally meaning “*overseer*”.

All Christians, of course, are called upon to contribute to God's work (**1Co 16:2**), here the apostle refers to those who have received from God the privilege of giving wisely and generously towards the needs of his cause (contributing, see **Mat 24:45-47; 2Co 9:6-11**).

10. The exercising of gifts

5 Spiritual gifts are not intended for personal gratification or for self-seeking glory, but for the service of God and of other believers: *"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good [of the church]."* (1Co 12:7).

10 *"So it is with you, since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church."* (1Co 14:12)

15 *"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..."* (Eph 4:11-12)

In this respect, the following exhortation of the apostle Peter is especially pertinent:

20 *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."* (1Pe 4:10-11: cf. Rom 12:6-8)

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My special thanks are due to Ulrich and Marion Bruderer-Jeffery for translating this brochure from German into English as well as to Heinz Weber, my former teacher, on whose notes large parts of this brochure are built up.

Kreuzlingen, January 2019

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