

Which Church Has the HOLY SPIRIT?

*Somewhere on earth God is using and guiding HIS Church!
That Church is empowered by His Spirit to do His work. Do you
know where that Church is today?*

by Roderick C. Meredith

I WAS reared as a member of a large Protestant denomination. All my family were members. We attended regularly. It seemed the thing to do.

It never occurred to me, then, to question whether or not *my* church was really the *true* Church—guided and empowered by God's Holy Spirit. In fact, even to *think* about such things was considered "dangerous" by some people.

The Holy Spirit?

As a boy, I remember the congregation reciting "responsive readings" in which the words "Holy Ghost" or "Holy Spirit" were mentioned. But nothing was ever said about what this "Holy Ghost" really was. I wondered, but somehow didn't ask. I *assumed* that the other people in the congregation probably knew.

Since that time I have learned better.

From *much experience*, I know that very few in that congregation—and very few professing Christians generally—have any concrete idea about what the Holy Spirit really is, and does.

Most people ASSUME that they are somehow "just born" with the Holy Spirit. Some think they automatically receive it at confirmation or baptism. But—*somehow*—they get it.

Another ASSUMPTION many seem to have is that ALL people and ALL religious denominations possess the Holy Spirit.

People are told: "Attend the church of YOUR choice." It is assumed that this must be all right with God. And it is ASSUMED—at least by most people—that EVERY church on EVERY street corner is in some way led by the Holy Spirit.

After all, they all *talk about* the Holy Spirit or "Holy Ghost." They all *appear* to know something about it.

What is the TRUTH?

Who Receives God's Spirit?

Does *everyone* just automatically receive God's Spirit at birth—or at baptism or confirmation?

The plain answer of your Bible is a resounding "NO." The Holy Spirit is a precious GIFT from God that—after Adam's sin—was *not even available* to mankind in general until the Day of Pentecost, 31 A.D. At that time, the Apostle Peter was inspired to state how men might receive this gift. "Then Peter said unto them, *repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

Notice the *two conditions* to receiving God's Holy Spirit. These conditions don't "earn" the Holy Spirit—NOTHING could earn this precious gift of the very *nature and life* of God. But a person must show his humility and obedience by fulfilling these conditions, or God will NOT grant him the Holy Spirit.

First, REPENTANCE of your personal sins and of your vain, selfish "self" is absolutely necessary. Since you are baptized "for the remission of sins" and "sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4), you must REPENT of breaking God's holy, spiritual Law contained in the Ten Commandments.

More than just repenting of your letter-of-the-law sins, you must repent of your carnal SELF! You must be brought down and humbled to the place that you are willing to look at yourself as you really are. Notice how God brought Job to this place of *real* repentance: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I ABHOR myself, and REPENT in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5-6).

Once you have come to this place you will be willing—in *unconditional surrender* to the God of the Bible—to symbolically BURY yourself in baptism, which is the next step. For baptism pictures the *burial* of your old self (Rom. 6:3-4), and your resurrection to a new life in Christ.

This repentance and baptism must be REAL. To repent not only means to be sorry, but to be *so sorry* that you are willing to QUIT sinning—QUIT BREAKING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS!

After Pentecost, the inspired Peter showed that this is what repentance really means. He stated, concerning Christ's death and resurrection, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so also the holy spirit, *whom God hath given to them that OBEY Him*" (Acts 5:32).

So you can see that not just "anybody" is granted the priceless gift of God's Spirit. Only those who have truly SURRENDERED to their Maker—who have been CONQUERED by the true Creator God and submit themselves to His Word and His Law—they and they *only* are granted the precious GIFT of the very *Spirit and nature* of God Himself.

What the Holy Spirit Does

"If ye love me, *keep my commandments*. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another *Comforter* that He may abide with you forever; even the SPIRIT of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:15-17).

In this passage, the Christ of your Bible showed that those who were *obedient* to God would receive the "Comforter." In this day of mass frustration and mental sickness, it is im-

portant to realize that the Holy Spirit of God gives real *comfort* that can be derived from no other source.

Notice the *results* which the Holy Spirit will produce in the lives of true Christians possessing it: "But the fruit of the spirit is *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance* [or, *self-control*]: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

Where do you find people who are literally *filled* with LOVE and JOY and PEACE? These are things to look for in the lives of those who possess God's Holy Spirit. If these qualities are missing, then very frankly *the Holy Spirit is missing also!*

In Romans 5:5, Paul tells us that "the *love of God* is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit which is given unto us." How is this divine love manifested in our lives?

The inspired answer is given in I John 5:3: "For this *IS* the love of God, that *WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS*: and His commandments are not grievous."

God's love is expressed in OBEDIENCE to Him, and in *wisdom, unselfishness* and *self-control* in our dealings with our fellowman.

A *softness* and *humility*, and a willingness to CHANGE and GROW are evident in one who truly has God's Spirit. For Jesus Christ stated: "Howbeit when He, the *spirit of truth*, is come, *He will guide you INTO all truth*: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (John 16:13).

We are promised that the Holy Spirit will guide us INTO all truth, and we are exhorted: "But GROW in *grace* and in the *knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 3:18).

Therefore, those who truly have God's Spirit will reflect these attitudes and qualities.

The Right ATTITUDE Tells the Tale

Wherever God's true Church is on earth today, it is guided and *empowered* by the Holy Spirit. "For as many as are LED BY the spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

On the negative side, the Apostle Paul was inspired to warn: "Now if any man

have not the spirit of Christ, *he is none of His*" (Rom. 8:9).

Notice some of the attitudes we have already discussed which distinguish those in God's true Church—those who are LED BY the Holy Spirit and therefore have these attitudes.

First of all, they do not "join" the Church—for they CANNOT!

As we have already seen, one must REPENT to get in, and then *be baptized* as an outward symbol of the willingness to BURY the old self in surrender to God and His Law. People in God's true Church have this *yielded attitude of repentance, submission* and *humility*. They don't have a "cocksure" or "know it all" argumentative attitude. They have been HUMBLED—*beaten down to size* by their Maker. All the "chips" are off their shoulders—they are through *arguing and making excuses*.

This is a *very important attitude* and you should reread this description carefully to fully grasp what is meant.

Secondly, notice that the Holy Spirit guides those in the true Church in a certain WAY OF LIFE. In fact, in the book of Acts, it is called "this way" and "that way" many times (Acts. 9:2, 18:25-26; 19:23; etc.). This *way of life* is based upon OBEDIENCE to the Commandments of Almighty God. It is based upon Jesus' searching statement: "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments*" (Mat. 19:17).

Those guided by God's Spirit are willing literally to LIVE *by every Word of God* (Mat. 4:4). They daily search the scriptures to find—not what men THINK, but what God SAYS about how to live and what the laws and purposes of life really are.

This is a basic *attitude* of the true Church. It cannot be successfully counterfeited.

A *third basic attitude* we have seen that the Holy Spirit imparts is a *willingness to ADMIT ERROR* and CHANGE. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would *guide us INTO all truth*. Peter said that we must GROW in grace and in knowledge. Each converted human being, therefore, must CHANGE and GROW.

A church is simply the sum total of its members. So the church that is truly guided by God's Holy Spirit will be constantly GROWING in grace and in

knowledge of God's revealed will.

As the true Church's leaders and membership GROW in each age, they will not have to admit past mistakes and change quite as often as they once did, but nevertheless they WILL acknowledge error and CHANGE whenever they are proved wrong by God's Word! Besides this they are constantly GROWING into new truth that may not have been revealed before.

For instance, most of the end-time prophecy has been CLOSED and *sealed* until the time we are now living in! (Dan. 12:9).

WHERE—on earth today—is the church that has proved itself willing to acknowledge error when necessary, and to GROW in new truth constantly? Only GOD'S Church will do these things! And *only* the church with these "fruits" is guided by the Holy Spirit!

Who Is Doing the WORK of Christ?

Jesus said: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe me not, BELIEVE THE WORKS: that you may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in Him" (John 10:37-38).

Throughout the New Testament, the true Church is consistently referred to as the "body" of Christ (I Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:22-23). Jesus Himself having ascended to the right hand of God in Heaven, the Church is the *instrument* or physical "body" through which Christ now does His work on earth today.

WHO is doing that work?

In John 16:13, Jesus not only stated that the Spirit "will guide you INTO all truth," but that "He will show you THINGS TO COME." Wherever the Holy Spirit is working, it reveals the *true understanding* of Biblical PROPHECY!

Stating in principle the *way God works*, the inspired prophet Amos wrote: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing but He REVEALETH His secret unto His SERVANTS the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

Then Amos continued: "The lion has roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (verse 8).

Yes, wherever God's Church is in this climactic end time in which we are now
(Please continue on page 24)

Jesus tells His Church today: "For verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come" (Mat. 10:23).

Very few professing Christian leaders or organizations have the faintest idea where "Israel" in fact really is today. Lacking this understanding—and lacking even the willingness to obtain it—they are certainly NOT carrying this message to God's people in Britain and America.

Possessing the "key" to our national identity and the "key" to the Book of Revelation, we are able to tell you DEFINITELY what is going to happen to the major nations of this earth during the next few years of YOUR LIFE! If you do not yet possess these "keys," then write immediately for the *free* booklets: "*The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy*," and "*The Key to the Book of Revelation*."

For more than a quarter of a century, this work of God has *definitely* and *specifically* warned of a coming United States of Europe dominated by a great false church. We have *specifically* stated that this revival of the "Holy Roman Empire" would take place in Central Europe and be an amalgamation of ten nations or groups of nations which would all pledge their allegiance to one military-political leader and to one great religious leader whom the Bible describes as the "great false prophet." In the face of physical evidence that pointed to the contrary, we have repeatedly stated that it will NOT be Russia which attacks and conquers the United States and Great Britain, but rather this *fast-rising European combine*.

These are not nebulous "theories" which may go untested and unproved for generations. They are *definite* prophetic statements affecting the MAJOR NATIONS OF THIS EARTH!

You can KNOW whether these things be true! You can PROVE where God's Spirit is working today—if you *honestly want to!*

May God grant you *understanding* to find where HE is working, where HIS servants the prophets are today—where His TRUE Church is working and CHANGING the lives of its members to be like Him through the POWER of the Holy Spirit!

Which Church Has the Holy Spirit?

(Continued from page 20)

living, it is BOUND to be prophesying and warning the world of EXACTLY and *specifically* what is ahead so they may understand and repent before it is too late! As we have told you repeatedly over *The World Tomorrow* broadcast and in the pages of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine, this warning message must specially be taken to the United States, the British Commonwealth and the democratic nations of Northwestern Europe. For they are identified as the physical remnant of the "lost ten tribes of Israel" described in your Bible.

In the prophecy extending through the centuries to His second coming,