

The
Seven Spirits
of
God

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of
God

from
Kingdom Bible Studies in
End-Time Revelation
by the Lord Jesus Christ
through J. Preston Eby
as rewritten and amended by
Paul A. Lindberg

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by the Lord Jesus Christ
through J. Preston Eby and Paul A. Lindberg

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Introductory Notes

This book originated with 19 sermons – Kingdom Bible Studies in End Time Revelation – written by J. Preston Eby and freely mailed to many believers. When our fellowship group found some, we got excited. These sermons needed to be compiled into a book and published, for the blessing of all God’s people! We wrote to Pastor Eby, and he gladly granted us his permission to do whatever the Lord led us, and even sent us the original text for us to modify.

After a year of rewriting, editing, and compiling into the format that you see, I realized that the message was incomplete. We had “taken God apart” into seven Spirits, but had failed to “put Him back together again,” for there is only “... one Spirit... one Lord... one God and Father of all...” (Eph. 4:4-6) I wrote the final two chapters to do just that.

So this book has two authors. But it’s not as simple as that. Both Pastor Eby and we believe that the real Author is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose Holy Spirit led us to write everything that is presented here. So to Him belongs all the glory and honor. May His Holy Spirit speak to you through this work, for we dedicate it all to Him for the growth of His Kingdom.

Much of Brother Eby’s original work was in the “King James English.” I cleaned this up to take out the “thee’s and thou’s” and make it more understandable to the modern reader, while still trying to leave as much of the poetic beauty of the King James Version as possible.

One thing I did not change: in the days of King James “men” was commonly used for “mankind” and understood to include both genders. This is pretty widespread in this book, as it talks a lot about the “sons of God.” Of course these “sons” are also known as the Bride of Christ and as the many-membered body of saints with Christ as the head. Thus, it certainly includes both men and women, for in Christ “there is neither male nor female.” (Gal. 3:28) So I trust that my dear Readers of the female gender will understand and not take offence.

All that was back in 1994. Since then, Brother Eby has also updated and published his 19 Kingdom Bible Studies on the seven Spirits of God. It is now available on his website: www.KingdomBibleStudies.org. Of course, his independent update is very different from mine.

As you read, please bear in mind that our goal is not to teach technical knowledge about God or about religion. God is far too big for us to wrap our human mental facilities around. Instead, our goal is to discuss the nature and character of God in such a way that avenues of communication are opened up with the Holy Spirit Himself. He can take these weak and inadequate words and impart Himself to us, Spirit to spirit. That way, rather than merely learning about God, we will be learning to know God in an ever-deeper, fuller way. For in truth, no matter how much we know about God and no matter how well we understand His wisdom and His ways, “He is always bigger than that.”

That has become my lifetime motto. During the year I spent editing and adding to this work, my own knowledge and relationship with God has grown immeasurably, but more than ever, “He is always bigger than that.” Indeed, I see better than ever before that His plan for me, His love for me, His glory, His everything is bigger and better than I could even ask or imagine. I hope and pray that it will be so for you, dear Reader, as well.

Prayer and Dedication

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the universe, Master and absolute Sovereign over all Your creation, we dedicate this work to You. We ask that you please grant the following special anointing of Your infinite grace to every Reader:

- deliverance from past bondages in spirit, mind, will, emotions, and body,
- a transformation of the whole being, quickened by the life of Your Spirit,
- a re-sensitized conscience and renewed communion with Your Spirit,
- an open heart to receive all that You wish to say through this book,
- a forever-more increasing appreciation of and gratitude for Your Spirit, in reverent awe and wonder, and
- a strengthened dedication to yield ourselves totally, for You to accomplish Your perfect will in and through us by Your seven-fold Holy Spirit.

Thank You! We love You! We give You all praise, glory, and honor for all that You choose to bring forth through this book and through each Reader.

In Your holy and beautiful name and by Your blood, *O Lord Jesus Christ!*

Amen.

Chapter 1 – How Does God “Dispense” Sonship?

Ministers of the New Testament

Lev. 17:11; Lk. 22:19-20; Jn. 5:39; 6:53; 7:37-39;
10:10; 2 Cor. 3:6-9; Heb. 8:7-11

“Who also has made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministration of death [the old covenant], written and engraved in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be even more glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more does the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.” (2 Cor. 3:6-9)

These verses contain two important phrases, “Who has made us able ministers of the New Testament... of the Spirit” and “the ministration of... Spirit.”

The New Testament is not the black, leather-covered book called the Bible, containing four gospels, twenty-one epistles, one book of history and one of prophecy. That book is what Paul calls “the letter.” It is the law, the record, the history which tells us many things about the historical man called Jesus, the Son of God. Many Christians have found the New Testament only in this realm of “the letter.” They know much about God, can quote volumes of Scripture, and articulate persuasively their particular doctrines and beliefs. To these Christians, their intellectual understanding of God and

the Bible is an end in itself. But the New Testament is not the Bible. The twenty-seven books called the New Testament are merely the letter – the guide given to point us to the true New Testament, Jesus, the Christ of God. Never once in Scripture is the New Testament called a book or referred to as being written on parchments or paper.

Consider these statements, “And He took... the cup after supper saying, “This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you...” (Lk. 22:19-20) “... God who also has made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit...” (2 Cor. 3:5-6) Jesus did not say, “The Bible is the New Testament.” Nor did Jesus say, “The New Testament is in the Bible.” He said, “This [Passover] cup [of wine] is [represents] the New Testament in My blood.” The New Testament can be found only in the blood of Jesus Christ.

One of the redemptive laws of God is, “I will even set My face against that soul that eats blood... for the life of the flesh is in the blood.” (Lev. 17:11) Blood speaks of life, for physical life is in the blood. The life of the Son of God comes to us in His blood. Jesus declared, “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood, has eternal life.” (Jn. 6:53-54) The New Testament, therefore, is the very life of Jesus poured out for us and imparted to us. Of course we do not drink the physical blood of Christ, which poured

from His veins on Golgotha 2000 years ago, but we do drink the life in that blood. That life is the very Spirit of God! Now we can understand why Jesus cried out, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He who believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this He spoke of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive...)" (Jn. 7:37-39)

The English word "testament" is from the Greek word "diatheke" which means "a covenant." This is translated "testament" 18 times and "covenant" 20 times in the King James version. With this in mind, we read, "Behold, the days come, says the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel... I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, or every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord' for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest." (Heb. 8:8-11) These verses tell us three things about the New Covenant: (1) God writes it in our minds and hearts. (2) The essence of the covenant is that God is our God, and we are His people. (3) In this New Covenant, we come to know God. In contrast, the Old Covenant, "written in letters engraved on stones," ministered to the people only a knowledge about God and His commands, but not the knowing of God Himself in any kind of a personal relationship.

The New Testament is not a book; it is a Person. The New Testament is Jesus.

He said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me. And you

will not come unto Me, that you might have life." (Jn. 5:39-40) Jesus came into the world to be a demonstration of God-life right here upon the earth. Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (Jn. 10:10) To "minister the New Testament" does not mean to preach sermons, doctrines, laws, or truths about Jesus Christ. To minister the New Testament is to minister the very life of God which is in Jesus in the Spirit. "He has made us able ministers of... the Spirit."

The word "minister" carries the idea: to serve, impart, to wait on or give out. As a member of the new creation you have been called to be an able minister of the New Testament, a minister of the Spirit.

The Dispensation of God

Jn. 8:32; 14:17; 16:13; 1 Cor. 3:6; 1 Tim. 1:3-4

This reveals the true purpose of God in Christ: to dispense Himself into humanity. "... charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith." (1 Tim. 1:3-4) This passage is translated more clearly in the American Standard Version, "... command certain ones not to teach a different doctrine, nor to pay attention to false stories and to genealogies, which end in nothing, but which furnish questions... rather than a dispensing of anything by God." (ditto, ASV)

So, God's purpose is nothing less than God dispensing Himself into mankind. God, who is both almighty and all-inclusive, intends to dispense not facts or information, but Himself to us. There is great depth in this truth, worthy of our meditation.

This verse points out the difference between facts and truth. All of Babylon's religions hold to their cold, dead doctrines of facts about God. But facts are expressive only of that dead letter of the Word. Facts can never make you free! Jesus never said, "You shall know the facts and the facts shall make you free," but He did say, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jn. 8:32) Truth is Spirit.

"When He the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth." (Jn. 16:13) "He is with you, and shall be in you." (14:17) You can feed into your mind any amount of information via the natural senses, but it will be just so much preaching, teaching, study, research, facts, until the Spirit life within brings it forth as an essence in your being.

Oh, brethren! It is not a matter of learning doctrines! When I was young, I went off to Bible school and studied all the doctrines, but they never ministered an ounce of reality to my spirit. Even in this end-time move of God, it is so easy to be side-tracked in this area. One may learn all the end-time teachings, master the terminology the Spirit has brought forth in the realm of revelation, understand all about the tribulation, the beast, the manifested sons, the coming of the Kingdom, and the various dispensations, but after all is said and done, there is only one dispensation which we really need – the dispensation of God Himself into our lives.

Oh, that we may partake of Him in all His glorious and eternal reality in the Spirit! Let us be filled with God Himself – not merely these dispensational doctrines. Let us not walk among men as dispensers of fables, genealogies, facts, doctrines (even good sonship doctrines), theories of some pre-Adamic

creation, nor yet of the ages to come, but rather let us be dispensers of the life of God in Christ. Learn how to contact and follow the Holy Spirit the whole day through. Let us exercise our spirits to be full of the Holy Spirit rather than just exercising our minds to memorize and understand some teaching. Yes, we need to be taught right doctrine. But let us settle it once for all in our hearts that God calls, qualifies, and empowers us, "... to dispense His new covenant – a covenant expressed not in a written document, but in a spiritual bond; for the written law condemns to death, but the Spirit gives life." (2 Cor. 3:6, NEB)

The Tree of Life and the Tree of Death

Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17; Ezk. 36:25-27; Mat. 7:20-23; 23:25-28; Lk. 17:20-21; Jn. 1:1-4; 14:16-17; 17:23; Rom. 8:5-6, 13; 2 Cor. 4:3-4, 18; Gal. 2:20; 6:8; Eph. 2:1-2; Col. 1:27; Heb. 2:14; 1 Jn. 1:1-2; 4:4, 6; Rev. 2:7

That God's eternal purpose has been to dispense Himself into us can be seen from the very beginning in the Garden of Eden. God is there seen forming man as the center of His creation for the purpose of expressing Himself. (See Gen. 1:26-29 and 2:7-25) "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree... the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ... And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden you may freely eat, But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it; for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die." (Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17)

In order to understand God's purpose, we must be thoroughly clear about these two trees and what they represent. What does the tree of life signify? Most assuredly it represents a realm of life beyond what Adam already possessed. Adam already had perfect human life, and it was not necessary for him to eat fruit from the "tree of life" in order to perpetuate that human life. The only thing that could cause the termination of his human life was eating fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God did not say to Adam, "You must eat of the tree of life so you won't die," but rather, "In the day that you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall die." Therefore, the life offered to man in the tree of life is a higher kind of life than the human life Adam possessed. It is – dare we say it? – God-life.

One thing is certain: the tree of life in Eden was not just a natural, physical tree. To Adam and Eve it may have appeared so, for in their childlike simplicity and naivety, they probably saw only the outward form. But God has always spoken in parables using physical things as symbols, that we may comprehend spiritual truths of a reality that transcends this physical realm.

One of the Scripture's exceedingly great and precious promises to the overcomer is, "To him who overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." (Rev. 2:7) This is the same tree of life to which Adam lost access in the Fall. It imparts more than the never-ending perfect human life which Adam could have retained simply by refusing to eat of the tree of death. This tree of life lifts man up from the realm of humanity and infuses him with divine life, even the life of God in Christ.

No physical tree can give this heavenly life, for that which is physical is not of divine substance, "... for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18) No natural tree can impart spiritual life, for no natural tree is spiritual in its properties. Jesus is not only our life today, but He has always, even from the beginning, been the life of God Himself made available to man.

Has God-life ever been accessible from any source other than Christ? John's answer to that question is clear, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God... In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." (Jn. 1:1-4) And again, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life; for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us." (1 Jn. 1:1-2) This tree of life in the beginning was nothing less than the life of God in Christ made available to Adam and all mankind.

When fruit is eaten, it first enters the stomach where it is digested. The nutrients are then absorbed into the bloodstream. The blood then carries the nutrients and delivers them to each cell of the body. Thus the life in the fruit is ministered to the body, and the whole body becomes literally filled with the life-giving properties of the fruit.

In this we see the picture of what God has desired for men from the beginning – that man would eat the fruit from the tree of life which is the life of God in Christ, and

thus display Christ to the rest of creation. God intends to so dispense Himself into man that man will express God as the center of the whole universe. That is the only way mankind could ever fulfill his commission to “rule over” the rest of God’s creation. (See Gen. 1:26)

But what actually happened to man? The mystery of this is revealed to us by the symbolism of the second tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This tree represents the realm of the carnal mind under the influence of Satan. The second tree brings death because it is the very source of death, just as the first tree is the source of divine life. Scripture is clear about the instrument of death, “To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace; because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. For if you live after the flesh, you shall die.” (Rom. 8:5-6, 13) Again, “He who sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. But he who sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” (Gal. 6:8) Satan is “... him who had the power of death.” (Heb. 2:14) Jesus also made this plain when He said, “The thief [Satan] comes not, but for to steal, and kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life.” (Jn. 10:10) The Scripture is clear that the power of death was in the hands of Satan, and it was his desire to rule by that power. However, death cannot be dispensed into man except through the agency of the carnal mind – knowledge. This is why the tree is “the knowledge of good and evil.” Thus, from the beginning of time, these two trees represent two sources – one, the source of life, and the other, the source of death.

As we know, Adam chose to take the second source, the tree of knowledge, into himself. This was not a matter of merely doing something wrong. No! It was much more serious than just transgressing a law or breaking a commandment. The significance of Adam eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge was that he actually took something into himself; he received the influence or “spirit” of Satan into himself. Since Satan had the power of death, the fruit of the tree of knowledge could only minister death to Adam if something of Satan was injected into it. Satan injected the poison of his own realm of death into that fruit! That the tree was under Satan’s jurisdiction is clear, for Satan introduced the tree to Eve, beguiling her. Adam and Eve ingested that poison of death from the fruit, producing death. That same poison has since been transmitted by inherited nature to all Adam’s descendants, subsequently working death in each one.

Oh, this is not a small matter! Few Christians realized the fall of Adam in such a way. Satan injected the poison of his own nature of sin and death into the fruit of that tree. This is why God warned Adam that if he ate of it he would surely die. Through the fruit, Satan entered into Adam and became a part of him. Through the activity of the carnal mind, the poison of Satan’s own dark nature became operative in man.

Since Satan and man became one through the second tree, Satan is no longer outside of man, but in man. Now you can see that the fall of man was not just a matter of man committing something against God, but of man receiving something into his body, into himself. From the time of the Fall, Satan dwells in man.

We have had the false god in us! It came as a revelation to me when I saw what I knew already of saints – that the Holy Spirit lives in us. But then I read that if the Holy Spirit is in the children of God, there is also a spirit in the children of the devil. John wrote, “We are of God, little children... because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.” (1 Jn. 4:4) Then two verses later, John clearly identifies these two spirits which are in the saints and sinners, “We are of God; he who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. Hereby we know the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error.” (1 Jn. 4:6) So the satanic spirit, the spirit of error (deception), the spirit of “the lie,” dwells in unredeemed mankind.

This was new light to me – a whole new orientation. Most of us think of ourselves as unredeemed “selves” until Christ comes in and takes over. But Paul says this, “And you were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked according ... to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.” (Eph. 2:1-2) Satan had so concealed and disguised himself in mankind that we think of ourselves as autonomous independent selves. But the truth is that all humans are containers – containers of spirit.

We are vessels. The crucial distinction is, which god is in the vessel? Paul says of unbelievers, “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them who are lost, in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not.” (2 Cor. 4:3-4) Because the body is the container of the spirit, and because we humans have become containers of that false, unclean spirit of error (Satan), Jesus said of human-kind, “That which

comes out of the man, that defiles the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts and fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within...” (Mk. 7:20-23)

This greatly simplifies salvation, for it is first and foremost a change of gods, not a change of vessels which contain Him. And not a change of gods over us, but a change of gods within. Now we can see why God is so interested in dispensing Himself into us!

As this truth sinks deep within our being, how much clearer is our entire vision of that which God is working within. Through the prophet Ezekiel, the Lord said, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from your idols. A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh... and I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes.” (Ezk. 36:25-27)

Throughout Scripture, we find that God is not so concerned about the external, but with the internal. The Pharisees are a prime example. Jesus said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, pretenders – hypocrites! for you clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within you are full of extortion – prey, spoil, plunder – and grasping self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the plate, so that the outside may be clean also... You are like tombs that have been white-washed, which look beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything impure. Just so, you also outwardly seem to

people to be just and upright, but inside you are full of pretense and lawlessness and iniquity.” (Mat. 23:25-28, AMP)

Of the new-creation man, the Word asserts, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2:20) “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27) “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 sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him; for He dwells with you [in Jesus], and shall be in you.” (Jn. 14:16-17) “The Kingdom of God comes not with observation; for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.” (Lk. 17:20-21) “I in them, and You in Me... that the world may know... that You have loved them, as You have loved Me.” (Jn. 17:23) This is the tree of life – God in Christ in us!

Three Steps in God’s Dispensation

2 Cor. 13:14

The process in this communication of God to man has three aspects: “the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” (2 Cor. 13:14) Here we have the love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit. What are these? Who are the Father, the Son, and the Spirit? Are these three different Gods? Let me ask, are love, grace and communion three different items? Not at all. Love, grace and communion are one element with three steps (aspects): love is the source, grace is love expressed, and communion (fellowship) is love realized and received through grace.

Likewise, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are all one God expressed in three progressive manifestations of Himself: God as the Father is the source, Christ is God expressed, and the Holy Spirit is God in Christ transmitted into man. Thus, the Holy Spirit is God revealed and received by man. These three aspects of God become three successive steps in the process of dispensing God into man that man may express God through his person. Without these three stages, God’s essence could never be dispensed into man. The dispensation of God is developed from the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit.

From the Father

Jn. 1:18; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; Col. 1:15;
1 Tim. 6:16; James 1:17

God the Father is the universal source of all things. Paul tells us, “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of [from] whom are all things.” (1 Cor. 8:6) In the Hebrew and Greek language, “father” is used in various senses: as the begetter or progenitor of an individual (Prov. 23:22; Zech. 13:3; Lk. 1:67), as the head of a household or ancestral family (Gen. 24:40; Ex. 6:14), as an ancestor (Gen. 28:13; Jn. 8:53), as a founder of a nation (Mat. 3:9) or founder of a class or profession (Gen. 4:20-21), as a protector (Job 29:16; Ps. 68:5), as the source of something (Eph. 1:17), and as a term of respect (2 Kings 5:13; Acts 7:2). God, as Father, is thus the source and head of all things. Scripture says there is “one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in all.” (Eph. 4:6) Further, everything from His hand is good. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights.” (James 1:17)

But God the Father is both invisible and unapproachable. “Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen, nor can see; to Him be all honor and eternal dominion.” (1 Tim. 6:16) John said of Him, “No man has seen God at any time...” (Jn. 1:18) Jesus is “the [visible] image of the invisible God.” (Col. 1:15) How can we possibly know such an invisible and unapproachable Father? How can we see the Invisible? How can we have a relationship with the Unapproachable?

Through the Son

Isa. 9:6; Jn. 1:1; 5:30; 8:28; 10:30; 14:6-10;
Col. 1:19; 2:9; Heb. 10:5

The second step in the dispensation of God to man is found in the manifestation of God as the Son. Formerly, it was impossible for man to know the Father, for from the time when Adam and Eve were driven forth from His presence, mankind was shut out from any vital relationship with Him. He was exclusively God and His nature was exclusively divine. There was no bridging of the gap between God and man, not because of a deficiency on God’s part, but due to the deficiency on man’s part.

For natural minds to comprehend things spiritual is equally as impossible as for worms of the earth to comprehend things human. Humans are of a different order from worms. Worms may see men and may observe their movements, yet there is no common ground of knowledge. The worm has no comprehension of what it sees. It can discern only things pertaining to its own realm. It has positively no understanding of the ways of man or of the meaning of his movements, words, or habits.

Likewise, God is of a higher order than fallen mortals. There is no common ground of knowledge. Humans are totally incapable of comprehending that which pertains to that higher order. So, until God, through His own infinite ability, manifests Himself on a level in which He can communicate with man, it is impossible for man to have any real understanding, either of God, or of His wisdom or ways. So in His redemptive process, God sovereignly acted to make Himself available to man. Love did this!

An individual becomes significant only by differentiation from another. A universal becomes comprehensible by its particular forms. For example, what is electricity? I don’t know. But I know light, and heat, and power. They are “manifested electricity.” So the invisible, unapproachable God, of whom Paul said, “No man has seen nor can see,” has become manifested to us as redemptive love. He came into visible form. So the first manifestation of God is His “only begotten Son.” Through His divine arrangement, the Father put Himself into the Son, in order to make Himself known unto man. Thus we find that all the fullness of the Father dwells in the Son (Col. 1:19; 2:9) and is expressed through the Son. (Jn. 1:18) The Father, as the inexhaustible source of everything, is embodied in the Son. The incomprehensible God is now expressed in Christ, the Word of God (Jn. 1:1); the invisible God is revealed in Christ, the very image of God (Col. 1:15), and the Son is even called the Father. (Isa. 9:6)

Our space-time realm is very limiting, at least compared to God’s dwelling place in eternity. But God limited Himself to fit here. Jesus Christ is the fullest possible expression of the Father into our space-time realm.

It is for this reason that only through the Son we can know God as the Father. The Son, the particular One, manifests the universal One to us as the living Father. “No man comes unto the Father but by Me.” (Jn. 14:6) Those who seek a way to God apart from the Son, cannot know Him personally. He remains impersonal to them, as in such religions as Buddhism and Hinduism. This is the key when talking of God to those of other faiths or no faith. To them He is just a theory or at best an impersonal entity. To us, through our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ His manifested Son, God has become our personal Father, the Father of the Son, our Father in the Son. Experience is the best answer to theory. “He who has seen Me, has seen the Father,” Jesus said.

Jesus is the full expression of God. He is God, expressed. “No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” (Jn. 1:18) The Amplified Bible renders this verse, “No man has ever seen God at any time; the only unique Son... who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him – He has revealed Him, brought Him out where He can be seen; ... He has made Him known.” The marginal rendering in the Scofield Bible expresses the true meaning from the Greek, “The only begotten Son has led Him forth, that is, into full revelation.”

God the Father put Himself into His Son Jesus in order to make Himself visible, comprehensible, and available to man.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given... His name shall be called... Mighty God, Everlasting Father...” (Isa. 9:6) It does not say “mighty man,” but Mighty God. A little child is called the Mighty God!

All Christians agree with the prophecy of this verse. The child mentioned here refers to the child born in the stable in Bethlehem who is not only named Jesus, but also the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father. As a child born to us, He is called the Mighty God; as a Son given to us, He is called the Everlasting Father (the Father who dwells in eternity, or the Father of all the ages).

This is very strange, is it not? When the child is called the Mighty God, is He the child or God? And, when the Son is called the Everlasting Father, is He the Son or the Father? If you try to figure it out, you cannot do it. You must take it as a fact, unless, of course, you do not believe the Scriptures. If you believe the authority of the Scriptures, you must accept the truth that the child is the Mighty God; and the Son is the Father.

Then, how many Gods do we have? We have only one God, because the child Jesus is the Mighty God and the Son is the Everlasting Father. Truly, He is the Father in the majesty of His power and in the holiness of His nature, expressed in our realm. He is all that God is, on display in human form.

When Jesus came, He came to take the place of Adam – to fulfill the eternal purpose of God for man to become the expression of God to the whole universe. As man, His first emphasis or principle was, “I will be a man fulfilling the divine plan, living my life wholly unto God.” His first consideration was not evangelistic – that is, toward man. His first consideration was towards God. “I will live unto God; I will live by God the Father; I will draw upon His life; I will be a vessel filled with God; I will manifest Him, reveal Him. I will not do anything on my own; I will not initiate anything. I will not

show how much I can do, how much I know, how much power I have. I will not display My own attributes. Though I am a human vessel, a human personality, yet God the Father will be in Me, living out His life, His nature, His will in Me.” That is sonship!

Jesus said, “A body have you prepared Me.” (Heb. 10:5) He was thus saying, “I have a means of expressing God in, through, and to humanity.” A body is for expression. If I never moved my hands, or my mouth, or my eyes, you never would know what I was thinking. But having a body, I am able to express what I am through these features.

Normally, a being can only express itself to its own kind. But Jesus had a choice, as He is both God and man. He could have expressed Himself. But at the beginning of His ministry, He chose the more noble way. He said, “I will not express what I am; I’ll express what God is.” That is sonship!

Jesus said on another occasion, “I do nothing of Myself.” (Jn. 5:30) That is contrary to what we have thought. We have thought, “Jesus could do anything!” Yet He insisted, “I can of my own self do nothing; as I hear I judge...” (Jn. 8:28) In essence He was saying, “My judgments are just, because I judge no one. My Father judges, and My Father never makes a mistake. He knows what’s going on. I just listen for His judgment and as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, for it is not Mine, but My Father’s judgment.”

Again Jesus said, “Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwells in me, He does the works.” (Jn. 14:10) You could ask the Lord Jesus, “Where are you going?” He would answer, “I’ll go

wherever My Father goes. My Father is at work here, and I work His work. I don’t stop and consider before I take a journey. ‘Now I’m going to Capernaum, and then I’ll go to Galilee, and later across the river.’ No, no. I never anticipate anything. I just walk as My Father walks. He guides Me this way then that way, and I gladly follow His lead, for it is not I but My Father who lives in Me.”

This is the way He was living His life, moment by moment. He had no desire to do anything – except the Father’s will. He had no desire to perpetuate anything. He had no personal ambitions. He was neither trying to build His own kingdom, nor tear down the established government of the day. When the Father changed directions, He changed directions. When the Father was finished with something, He was finished with it. When the Father passed something by, He passed it by. When it looked as if the people were about to set Him up as their king, He said, “My hour has not yet come. I can’t anticipate anything. I can’t jump ahead of schedule.” So He walked away from them.

Here is another thing Jesus said when He came into the world: “I delight to do Your will, O God.” (Ps. 40:8) Jesus never stopped to consider if He was going to be understood or misunderstood. He never stopped to worry if He was going to suffer. He never stopped to fret about whether He was going to die. He knew that as long as He walked in the will of His Father, nobody could take His life from Him prematurely because it was the Father’s life. Whatever His Father willed moment by moment, that was all He could will. “I come to do Your will, oh God.” (Heb. 10:7, 9)

This is sonship!

By the Spirit

1 Sam. 10:10; 16:14; Jn. 1:32-34; 3:34; 4:24; 7:37-39;
14:16-18; 16:7; Acts 1:4-5, 8; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 15:45;
2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6; Heb. 1:5

However, as marvelous as it is to behold the Father in the Son, God cannot come into us through the Son. We still need a further stage, a third and final step, for God to dispense Himself into man. We see what God is like by looking at Christ Jesus, but that doesn't put God in Christ into us. Let's be more specific. Now that we know God's purpose is to dispense Himself into man, we must discern what God is in order to know what He is dispensing. What is His substance? Of course we know the answer, but how fundamentally important it is!

Jesus uttered that profound three-word statement, "God is Spirit." (Jn. 4:24) The very essence of the almighty, all-inclusive God is simply Spirit. All that is in the Father is in the Son, and all that is in the Father and the Son is the eternal Spirit – the Holy Spirit.

"Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. 3:17) According to our understanding, who is the Lord? We all agree that the Lord is Jesus Christ. But it says the Lord is that Spirit. Who is the Spirit? We have to admit that the Spirit must be the Holy Spirit of God. Therefore, the Son is called the Father, and the Son – our Lord Jesus Christ – is also the Holy Spirit. This means the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one.

To further illustrate how this is so, I borrow the following illustration from another brother (who prefers anonymity). When I came across it, my spirit leaped within me as the Holy Spirit bore witness to my spirit of the wonderful truth of it.

I quote, "If you buy a watermelon, your intention is to eat and digest this melon. In other words, your intention is to work this melon into you. How can this be done? Firstly, you buy the whole melon; secondly, you cut it into slices; and then, thirdly, before this melon enters your stomach, you chew it until it becomes juice. The sequence is: melon, slices, and finally juice. Are these three different things or just one?"

"I believe this is a good illustration of the three aspects of God. Most melons are larger than your stomach. How can you swallow a large melon when your mouth is so small and your throat is so slender? Before it can become the proper size for you to eat, it must be cut into slices. Then, as it is eaten, it becomes juice. Are the slices not the melon? And is the juice not the melon? If we say they are not, we must be ignorant.

"The Father is illustrated by the whole melon; the Son by the slices; and finally, the Spirit by the juice. Now you see the point. The Father is not only the Father, but also the Son. And the Son is not only the Son, but is also the Spirit."

Thus the melon is also the slices to eat and the juice flowing down our throats. The melon disappears after it is eaten. Originally, the melon was on the table, all contained within itself, as all of God was originally contained in the eternal Father. Then the slices revealed what was inside the melon even as Christ revealed the fullness of the Father. Finally, the juice enters into us as we eat it, so that all that is in the melon, though now invisible, is in us, to become life to us, just as God enters into us through His Spirit, bringing all that God in Christ is, into us.

Now our spirits can breathe deeply of the sublimity of the truth revealed by Jesus when He said, "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... you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." (Jn. 14:16-18) Surely Paul spoke of the fulfillment of that promise of Christ to return as the Holy Spirit when he wrote to the Corinthians, "And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening [life-giving] Spirit." (1 Cor. 15:45) This is why the Holy Spirit is spoken of this way: "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father.'" (Gal. 4:6) And again, "But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." (Rom. 8:9)

God has always been Spirit. But formerly, God contained His Spirit within Himself. He did not share it. Angels do not have God's Spirit although they are spirit beings. Their spirit is of a different order than the Spirit of God, for, "Unto which of the angels said He at any time, you are My Son, this day have I begotten you?" (Heb. 1:5) Angels are not born of God's Spirit and therefore are not of the same substance as God. They are created spirits, but they have an entirely different kind of spirit life. God had not shared the uniqueness of His own Spirit with any other being until Jesus.

In the Old Testament, the anointings of God's Spirit came and went, fell and lifted. The Spirit was never completely "given" to

any man – prophet, priest, or king. This is why we read such statements as these, "And when they came to the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him [Saul, before becoming the king], and he prophesied among them." (1 Sam. 10:10) But later, "... the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul." (1 Sam. 16:14)

When God initiated His great plan to dispense His Spirit fully into man, Jesus was the first to so receive, and during His earthly ministry, the dispensation of God's Spirit was limited to Him alone.

John recognized this when he baptized Jesus in the Jordan. "John bore witness, saying, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him. And I did not recognize Him; but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.'" (Jn. 1:32-34) Jesus said, "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure unto Him." (Jn. 3:34)

Jesus pointed forward to a day when the Spirit which was upon Him would be poured forth into His whole body, the church. He told His disciples that it was necessary for Him to go away before this could happen. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is better for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." (Jn. 16:7) After His ascension, He commanded the eleven to wait in Jerusalem for this promise of the Father, the power of the Spirit, which would literally fill them.

This truth is worthy of deep meditation and prayer. Jesus was telling these distraught men that His going away would mean the coming of the Spirit. He told them plainly that it was actually better for them that the Spirit should come to them, than that He Himself should remain with them. How deeply this needs to impress us! Blessed and marvelous beyond description was His own presence and ministry among them; yet far more blessed would be the ministry and presence of the Spirit within them. Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us. But what unspeakable glory to experience the coming of the Spirit, which is God in us!

This does not depreciate Jesus in any sense, for He is the Spirit. He assured His disciples, "And He [the Father] shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him; for He dwells with you [as Jesus], and shall be in you." (Jn. 14:16-17)

Wonderful as was the presence of Christ in the world, that physical presence cannot be compared to the magnificent glory of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in the heart of man. No outward manifestation of power or glory can take the place of His indwelling presence! It is from within and not from without that the work of transformation is to be carried forward from glory to glory until we shine in that same image of Christ. Though Christ had walked and talked with His disciples, eating with them, praying with them, teaching them, demonstrating the mighty works of God among them and even giving them power to heal the sick and cast out devils in His name, yet at the time of His

departure, there was but little sign of any real work of transformation within them. All was by grace. Peter was still capable of cursing like a sailor and lying like the devil! Judas was still capable of stealing, fraud, and becoming a traitor. In the face of a little pressure, they were all capable of forsaking Him and running away in fear and despair. They were still very natural, carnal men, as almost all Old Testament saints had been. God in Christ had indeed dwelt among them, but up to that point, He was definitely not dwelling in them.

Transformation does not take place from without. It must come from within. All the evil in the world today, even as Jesus said, comes from within the evil heart of man. Therefore, since all evil begins within and not without, transformation must begin within and not without. A man who makes his New Year's resolutions to change and reform his habits may have an outward change, usually only temporary, while his heart remains unchanged. But the man who ceases his sinfulness and carnality because his heart is changed, is changed from within and is indeed a new-creation man.

Herein then lies the first and greatest blessing of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had been with them, but now He would be in them, changing, transforming, and renewing them from within. Jesus would become the dispensation of God into man by the Spirit. How wonderful it must have been to walk the hills of Judea and the sandy shores of the Sea of Galilee with Jesus by their side! How much more wonderful it is that Christ by the Holy Spirit now dwells within us, bringing forth that same image of Christ and glory of the Father in our lives!

The All-Sufficiency of the Spirit

Rom. 8:1-2; Gal. 5:16; Eph. 5:18; 1 Jn. 1:7

If you truly desire to be an overcomer in this hour, here is a most wonderful key. "... If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 Jn. 1:7) There is a way for the Lord's people to be freed from all sin! "If we walk in the light." How? "As He is in the light." To walk in the light as He is in the light, means to expose ourselves to the Spirit even as He exposes Himself to the Father. There is a vital principle here.

Here is one way to express it: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:1-2) What makes me free from the law of sin and death? The law of the Spirit of Life sets me free. Life swallows up death! Light dispels darkness!

But haven't we always had it turned around in our thinking? Haven't we always been struggling to "die" so we can live? How often have we said, "If somehow I can get rid of my 'old man,' if I can just conquer this habit, this nature, this temper, this lust, this... this... this... then I shall be able to have the life of Christ manifested in me." We have been trying to get rid of sin so we can have righteousness. We have tried to get rid of death so we can have life. We have worked at eradicating from our lives all the darkness so we can walk in the light. But friend, we have been putting the cart before the horse. That is like saying, "I will stand in this dark room and rebuke the darkness, and

when I finally manage to get all the darkness out, I will have some light." You can rebuke the darkness until you fall dead on the floor, but it will never leave until you turn on the light. There is no vacuum machine that can suck up darkness, no chemical that can wash it away, no force that can move it.

The problem is not to get rid of the darkness, but to produce the light. The law of light is that it always dispels darkness. It never fails! So if you have been trying to get rid of the darkness in you, the carnality in you, by rebuking it, fighting it, struggling with it, trying to reform it, praying to be delivered from it, having hands laid on you for it... forget it! None of those things can remove the darkness in us. Only the light can do that. Brother, sister, let the light shine in your life, expose yourself to the mighty presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. You can't take death out of a corpse to make it live, but put life in it, and it will live! In exactly the same way, the law of the Spirit of Life working in you will make you free from the other law of sin and death.

The light is turned on as we yield to the Spirit. The way to learn to yield to the Spirit is first of all to be filled with the Spirit. I am not speaking of merely receiving an initial experience of the baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues. I speak of being constantly in that state of being full of the Spirit. Paul says, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5:18) The Amplified Bible reads, "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but ever be filled and stimulated with the Holy Spirit." This is true to the Greek; this verb tense requires that you be constantly and continuously filled.

I have had that experience of facing the pressures of everyday living until the vital presence of God has been crowded out of my life. This has usually happened when I failed to give myself daily to prayer and praise, to the Word of God, and fellowship with the body of Christ. When we spend all our spare time visiting with friends on the carnal plane, reading the newspaper, watching television, tinkering with hobbies, and any number of other activities which may not be wrong in themselves, we crowd the Spirit out of our lives, and our lives are filled with earthly things. Once in a while, we spend a few minutes in prayer, or in God's Word, or in fellowship with some brother or sister, or in some dead meeting, and then we wonder why we have no power in our lives and why we are not overcomers.

There is a law of life that must be at work in us. But you don't really need to be concerned about the law of life, you just need the life. The law works naturally. When the life is there – the law will work. When the law of life is working in us, death and darkness are swallowed up or put out of commission in us.

Seek life! If the glorious presence of God – the Spirit – can keep me in a spiritual state of overcoming life for ten minutes, or for two hours, or for three days, then that same anointing of His life within can keep me in that state of victory for as long as I maintain the flow of His life.

It's a bit like a fine musical instrument. As long as it remains in perfect tune, it sounds glorious, but trust me, the musician is always alert to the sound. If it gets the slightest bit out of tune, it will sound awful! A good musician never lets that happen.

In the same way, the saint is ever aware of the indwelling Spirit – ever eager to keep his life “in tune” with whatever the Holy Spirit is saying. He senses it immediately if the Holy Spirit wants to change direction, knowing that awareness of the Spirit is his life! The saint's joy is to do whatever pleases God, knowing that God's plan for my life is far better than any personal pleasures I may seek. In such an attitude of awareness of the Spirit's presence and leading, there is no room for grieving the Spirit.

This is the unfailing key to victory and overcoming. Maintain the flow of the fullness of His presence, and you will have little trouble with the flesh. This is the law of the Spirit. It works! As Paul said, “This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the works of the flesh.” (Gal. 5:16) It's just that simple. In plain English, this means stay full of the Holy Spirit.

How? How does a baby learn to walk? He doesn't focus on the falls; he remembers those short successes and works to repeat them. You can't tell him how; he just needs to do it. It is the same here. I can't tell you how to walk with God. Just do it.

Well, perhaps I can give you a few helps along the way, such as:

- Daily and continually giving yourself to prayer and praise (preferably alone).
- Immersion in the Word of God (not superficial reading, but diligent study).
- Fellowship with God's saints in the deeper things of God.
- Conforming the word of your own testimony to harmonize with the promises of Scripture. (“I am not a sinner any more. I am a redeemed, forgiven, saved, justified, sanctified son of God.”)

- Constant awareness of the presence of the living Christ within you, and of His life-blood continually cleansing, feeding, and empowering you. “Practice His presence.”

- “Reckoning” your flesh nature dead and buried with Christ, so that the life you live is no longer your own, but Christ living in you. In Christ you are a saint! Confess it!

- Eating to please the Holy Spirit, and taking care of His temple that is your body.

- Obeying the command to rejoice in all things, especially in tribulation.

All this will help to insure that constant flow of His presence and life. But in reality, it is not what you are trying to do; for it is actually what He is doing in you. “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling – for it is God who is at work in you.” (Phil. 2:13)

You will see the law of life at work. The old carnality, the old ways, the old desires, the old frustrations, will begin to fade away and become dimmer and dimmer in your life. Life will swallow up death. Light will dispel the darkness. Yielding to the Spirit is simply “giving yourself” to His presence and working in your life.

Don’t try any longer to “get rid of,” or “quit doing,” or “kill,” or “die,” or “change” anything. Seek life. Love what God loves. Give your whole being to Him; expose your whole life to the light. You will begin to live by the life of God’s dear Son.

In the beginning Adam and Eve were never flesh conscious – until they ceased to walk in the Spirit! As long as they were totally caught up in God and in all that He was doing for, in, and through them, they weren’t even aware of the flesh. When they rebelled against God and died to the Spirit, they immediately became aware of the flesh. Then they saw that they were naked and tried to try to cover their shame. As long as they walked in God’s presence, there was no shame, for the notions of sin were simply not in them. The measure of the rising up of His life within will, in that same measure, check the appetites of the carnal mind.

God is seeking the fully developed life of His Son in us in order to manifest Himself through us as the central manifestation of Himself to the whole creation. His purpose is God in Christ in the Holy Spirit in us.