

HOLY BIBLE

FIRM FOUNDATION

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The Gift of the Holy Spirit

By GUY N. WOODS



Our inquiry in recent articles touching the force of the preposition "for," and the relation which baptism sustains to the remission of sins in that oft-discussed portion of Peter's speech on Pentecost (Acts 2:38) has elicited the query, What is the gift of the Holy Ghost? One candid correspondent pointed out that the passage cannot be "thoroughly examined," until a satisfactory answer has been made to this question. The writer confesses to the justness of this observation and shrinks from any suspicion of conceit in presuming to enter upon an examination of that which has engaged the attention and occasioned the wonder of the greatest among us. In a literature singularly lucid and complete in the analysis and exposition of the Scriptures, and particularly so in that inestimable portion of the Word of God we style "Acts of Apostles," the observant reader will nevertheless discover that our Commentators have elected, for the most part, to pass with but little comment at question which at some time must have challenged the curiosity and perplexed the mind of every disciple. Disavowing, meanwhile, any intention of attempting to supply this deficiency, it is yet the purpose of this paper to set forth the grounds upon which this writer's mind has been set at rest on the subject; and if the observations offered seem to the reader insufficient to support the conclusion drawn, the effort will not be in vain if it shall serve to fix attention on, and lead to a careful scrutiny of, all the premises which, to this writer at least, seem logically to establish the conclusion herein offered.

"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 Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Contemplated with reference to man's duty and God's promises, the passage readily yields itself to the following analysis: Man's duty, (1) Believe (Though not mentioned, belief is definitely implied in the context); (2) Repent; (3) Be baptized. God's promises: (1) Remission of sins; (2) The gift of the Holy Spirit.

We have now to inquire, What relation does man's duty sustain to God's promises? In what sense are remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit dependent on faith, repentance and baptism? That some such dependence exists, is clear; this passage definitely establishes an intimate and inseparable connection between baptism and the remission of sins. Is this the relation of cause and effect? We are familiar with the operation of this law in every walk of life. A child comes into contact with a hot stove and is burned; a man takes poison into his system and dies; in these and in hundreds of other examples the relation of cause and effect will readily suggest itself to the mind. Can this be the relation repentance and baptism sustain to the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit in the passage under consideration? Obviously not, for in earlier dispensations baptism sustained no such relation to remission as in the present. Until the voice of the Baptist was heard along the banks of the Jordan calling Israel to repentance, and commanding the people to be baptized for remission of sins (Luke 3:3), the rite was unheard of. It is therefore clear that it bears no such relation to forgiveness as in logic may be described as the operation of the law of cause and effect. But if not this, what?

The only possible answer is, A Condition. The correctness of this analysis will be the more apparent when we shall have exhibited the dif-

ference between a "Cause," and a "Condition." The connection between a cause and its effect is a necessary one; it exists in the very nature of things, and is governed by laws as immutable and unchangeable as the laws governing the universe; its operation is the same in all ages and dispensations, under all conditions and among all people; when once the cause is set in motion, the effect dependent thereon is inevitable. A child in contact with a hot stove will suffer burns and a man who takes poison in sufficient quantity will die, it matters not the age or the dispensation. A condition however, sustains no such relation to the result dependent thereon as can be described as necessary; on the contrary, it is arbitrary, depending solely on the will, and by the appointment of him who prescribes the conditions. Conditions therefore, have no power to produce, or merit to procure, that which is dependent on them. Thus it is clear that baptism is simply a condition of pardon, without merit to procure remission of itself, deriving its efficacy solely from the fact that it is an expression of the will of the Lord touching on the question of salvation. This is sufficient to refute the oft-repeated calumny that

Christians regard the water of baptism as possessing miraculous powers capable of removing sin. Only the Lord has power to forgive sin. But he will do this only on certain named conditions set forth in the New Testament. These conditions are, belief, repentance, and baptism. It is idle therefore, to expect forgiveness short of having complied with these conditions.

The foregoing logically and very definitely establishes the fact that the blessings of salvation promised to the obedient are conditional in their nature, and therefore dependent on the will and by the appointment of him who bestows them. We have also seen that the connection which obtains between a condition and its result, is by no means a necessary one; this premised, the fact that remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit were promised in the apostolic age, argues not that these may likewise be expected today. Nothing in the passage before us, or its context, establishes the scope or the duration of the promises set forth therein. For the solution of this problem we must look elsewhere. Let us inquire: How long may the human family reasonably expect forgiveness of sins through Christ?

Without hesitation and out of a confidence born of an induction of countless passages of Holy Writ, we answer, Until time shall be no more. Even to attempt the proof of this proposition would be a work of supererogation. But let us also inquire, How long was the gift of the Holy Spirit promised? Here we must pause, while the mind searches in vain for a passage even remotely hinting at the question. With diffidence we advance to its contemplation; no such confidence characterizes our inquiry as in the former question. But if the Scriptures do not speak directly to the point, will they aid us by necessary inference and implication? Happily, the answer is, Yes; to this method then, must we resort for the solution desired.

The eighth chapter of Acts exhibits a clear-cut case of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The dispersion of the disciples which arose about the persecution and death of Stephen gave a mighty impetus to the spread of the gospel. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Philip, a preacher of power, went to Samaria and began to preach faith and baptism and the things concerning the kingdom of God. His preaching was attended by immediate results. Great numbers of the Samaritans were induced to bow to the mandates of the crucified one and to accept his overtures of mercy. When news of this reached Jerusalem, the apostles, Peter and John, were dispatched to Samaria, who, "when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

(Concluded on page 2)

Things to Consider

By W. M. DAVIS

Seeking The Lost

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus said this to encourage Zaccheus; he also intended it to be a criticism of Pharisees who found fault with him for being the guest of a sinner. The right kind of recognition often helps a discouraged man to do his best. When Jesus told Zaccheus he was going to be his guest, the little rich man came down out of the sycamore tree and received the Lord joyfully. And when Jesus said, "Today is salvation come to this house," Zaccheus said, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." This man was a backslidden son of Abraham who found a new hope in the words of Christ.

Jesus frequently made use of the statement, "I am come to seek and save that which was lost." In Christ's own day on earth, it was like it is now, many had lost their money, their business, their friends, and their health. Some had lost one thing and some another, but the one thing that all had lost was the hope of heaven. Jesus did not come to earth to restore lost fortunes or lost estates; he came to restore lost souls to the favor of God. Out of thirty-six miracles that Jesus performed, twenty-seven of them were to restore health or life. But men still get sick and die. At the present

time there are no miracles of healing and we have no power to raise the dead. The only power that Jesus left in the world is the power of the gospel which saves from sin.

Jesus made use of three striking parables to teach us the importance of saving the lost. They are re-recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Luke. The first one is the parable of the lost sheep. In this parable a man is represented as leaving ninety and nine, and going in quest of one that had strayed from the fold. In the next parable a woman lighted a candle, and swept the house in order to find one lost coin. The third is the parable of the prodigal son.

All of these parables show one thing, and that is that anything is lost when it is out of place. A man is lost when he is out of the place where God wants him to be. One is in place only when he is in the church, doing his duty. The church is the fold for the lost sheep, the purse for the lost coin, the home for the prodigal son.

Are You Saved Or Lost?

Just because you were saved once is no reason why you may not be lost now. What is your present standing with the Lord? The question is not how did you stand last year, but how do you stand now? The money you had last year does you no good now, if you have lost it. Jesus said, "He that believeth

and is baptized shall be saved." Do you still have what you got when you believed and were baptized? Or has it happened unto you according to the true proverb, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire"?

Paul says, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5). The man who is concerned about his health weighs often. He does not weigh one hundred and eighty pounds this year just because he did last year. Every man must examine himself. He has no business trying to examine somebody else. He has no instrument to do this with. He can examine himself, inside and outside, with the word of God. But he has no means of reading another man's heart. A doctor can examine your body and tell you whether you have the promise of life or death, but he cannot examine your soul and tell you whether or not you are prepared to meet God.

Then Paul says, "Prove your own selves." In the fourteenth chapter of Luke we read of a man who had bought five yoke of oxen and must go and prove them. Will they all work well, or will one or two of them be unruly in the yoke? Two or three of them may bow their necks, and pull back, and hinder all the others from moving the load. If you are a Christian, you are in the yoke of Christ. How do you work? Are you unruly at times, and do you often pull back? It is in the yoke that a man proves himself. How do you act when you are persecuted? Do you behave well when you are tempted? Can you keep from acting the fool in prosperity? No man has an opportunity to prove himself when everything goes smoothly. But when reverses come, men will watch you, and so will the Lord, to see how you behave.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Concluded from page 1)

(for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:15-17).

From this inspired record of that interesting incident, the following considerations seem fairly deducible: (1) The Samaritans believed and were baptized (v. 12); Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16); Therefore, the Samaritans were saved. But they had not received the Holy Ghost, "For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (v. 16). Thus they were saved, yet at this point had not received the Holy Spirit. Moreover, they stood in exactly the same relation to the gospel as we stand today. They had believed it and obeyed it; so have we; yet they do not possess the Holy Spirit; neither do we. Let us now inquire, How did they receive the Spirit? "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (v. 17). The conclusion is simply irresistible that the presence of the apostles was essential to their reception of the Spirit. It is scarcely necessary to note that such an impartation is impossible today. So also is the reception of the Spirit today.

If the foregoing considerations do not strike

the mind with all the force of a demonstration, consider carefully the import of the following words of Paul to the church in Rome. "I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. 1:12). It will be recalled that the church in Rome was not planted by an apostle. Sojourners from Rome, present on the ever-memorable Pentecost, doubtless bore the glad tidings of salvation to the Imperial City. If the Roman Christians were already in possession of the Spirit why was Paul so anxious to visit them and impart unto them that which already they had? Many able teachers were among them; why did not these supply their need? Clearly, for the same reason that Phillip did not impart the Spirit to the Samaritans. Though a preacher of much power, the Spirit was not his to bestow; this was a prerogative of the apostles only.

To exhibit the matter even more clearly if possible, let it be granted, for the moment, that the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was intended to be equal in its duration with the promise of remission of sins; in this event it may be expected today. All those, therefore, who have obeyed the gospel, have, in addition to the remission of their sins, the Holy Spirit in constant possession. But here a situation, singular indeed, arises. Why so much controversy regarding the Spirit if all Christians enjoy it co-extensively with the forgive-

ness of sins? Can it be that, having it in constant possession since the day of our salvation, we nevertheless can give no tangible evidence thereof; that its presence and working is as much a mystery to those of us who have it as to those who are yet in their sins; though numbered among those promises described as "exceeding great and precious," we are nevertheless dependent on the Scriptures for all the information we have regarding it? These are strange things, truly. Other questions clamor for answers. Did we know the moment the gift came, and were we conscious of its reception? Who will dare say, Yes? Who can honestly and intelligently confess to a consciousness of its abiding presence? It will not suffice to say that those who are not conscious of its presence simply do not have it; it was promised on Pentecost to all those who would repent and be baptized. This writer has repented and has been baptized; yet he frankly confesses that if he has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, he is wholly unconscious of it. But if one can have it and never know it, of what use is it? Who will dare assert the existence of such meaningless gestures in the Sacred Writings?

Summarizing, we have shown that the blessings of salvation are conditional in their nature; dependent on the will of him who bestows them. A failure in a condition must result in the failure of the blessing dependent thereon; since the death of the last apostle,

there has therefore been no impartation of the Spirit. To this end Paul wrote, clearly setting forth the temporary nature of these gifts: "Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:8-10). By reference to 1 Cor. 12 it will be seen these gifts are included among those denominated "spiritual gifts." Only remains now to be determined when that which "is perfect came," since spiritual gifts were to end therewith. "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25). This was the "perfect way" anticipated by Paul; and the spiritual gifts, though widely and liberally bestowed, were but scaffolding which had to be removed when the building became complete.

Finally, it should be observed that the New Testament presents the Holy Spirit as a distinct personality, referring to him as "He," a person in the masculine gender. Sectarianism has so long set him forth as a ghost-like wrath-like substance that floats around in the air, that it is difficult to rid the mind of such erroneous theories in contemplation of him. He is a person as much as is God the Father, the Christ the Son. It is therefore no more absurd to speak of Christ actually and bodily taking up his abode in us as it is to speak thus of the Spirit. Certain it is that the Spirit abides in us today, after the same fashion that Christ is in us. This indwelling, however, is a far cry from the miraculous presence of the apostolic age.

Wellington, Texas.

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SWORD STROKES

By Will M. Thompson

Recently I visited a protracted meeting where one of our leading evangelists was preaching. I saw a member of the Christian church come forward and she was received into fellowship of the church of Christ at this particular place without any confession of sins or errors. Brethren, is that the way they should come into the fellowship of the church of Christ? Are the Christian church people in error? If yes, then should they not confess their error? If you say no, then I answer: You treat them with more respect than you do a member of the church of Christ that has committed a public sin. Are we drifting? Let us stop and think.

* * *

"A gospel preacher" (?) not long since was preaching at a certain place, and in one of his discourses he said: I believe in baptism, or we believe in baptism. Many of the denominational preachers and members believe in baptism. Of course they don't believe it to be "for" remission of sins, but we do. In short this preacher was wanting to soft pedal a little. To my way of thinking he left the impression that for the remission is not so essential—just so you believe in baptism. Brother, my faith is in Christ, and believing in Christ I must believe what he says, and do what he commands for the purpose he commands it. This is true with reference to baptism or any other command. Much depends on "for remission" if I read my Bible correctly. We are either right or wrong when we teach that "for remission" in Acts 2:38 and in Matthew 26:28 means in order to. If right then let us preach it, and practice it. If wrong in our contention let us apologize to the acts. For my part I have preached baptism for (into, or in order to) remission of past sins all my preacher life which is better than 26 years. I shall not by my practice in one instance contradict that which I have preached all my life. I believe and preach that baptism is necessary to salvation from past sins, and shall continue this course because I am sure it is the truth.

* * *

Reconciliation unto God is in the "one body" (Eph. 2:16). The body is the church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:19-23).

No one can be reconciled unto God outside the body—the church. This church is the church of Christ. Hence one must be a member of the church of Christ in order to be reconciled unto God.

* * *

But we are all baptized into the one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Hence the one that has not been baptized is out of the body—the church, and being outside the body—the church, such person is without reconciliation unto God. This is one reason we preach and teach that baptism is necessary to salvation. Brother Preacher, do you preach it this way? If not, you had better read Galatians 1.

Hobart, Oklahoma.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Number Two)

By Guy N. Woods

Some weeks ago we wrote at length on the subject, "The Gift of the Holy Spirit." Come now our good friend, Luther G. Roberts, excepting to some of the strictures therein offered, and challenging some of the conclusions made. We were prepared for this. Lately there has been a growing tendency among us toward loose and illogical thinking along several fundamental lines that is exceedingly painful, and particularly so with reference to the work of the Holy Spirit. The suspicion is not groundless cumcism which believed were astonished, as by lifted, has begun to settle, with a consequent retrogression from those things "most surely believed among us." One opepel (7) preacher was heard to say recently that he believes the Holy Spirit actually and bodily dwells in the child of God in a manner "better felt than told"; Brother Roberts avows the belief that the Holy Spirit actually dwells in us; he neglected to say whether he thinks the sensation of this "indwelling" is more susceptible to the feelings than to the intelligence. We are constrained to believe that if the Holy Spirit actually and bodily dwells in us, as is insisted, it must be in a rather meaningless and empty manner if the possessor thereof is wholly unconscious of it. It is inadmissible to urge that it is comparable to the reception of forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness of sins occurs in the mind of God, not in the heart of the individual. Forgiveness is an objective matter which we can know only through testimony.

Brother Roberts will please tell us, First, What blessing does he possess which he attributes to the active presence of the Holy Spirit, not brought to him through the Word? Secondly, Does the Spirit dwell in the heart through the Word? If yes, since one must have the Word in his heart before he is saved, does he not have "The gift of the Holy Spirit" before he is saved? It will be remembered that the gift of the Spirit in Acts 2:38 was promised after conversion, not before. Tell us, please, what blessing is promised us through the Spirit which cannot be obtained through the Word?

The issue turns on the question, Was the gift of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Acts 2:38 the miraculous gift of the Apostolic Age, or was it intended to be equal in duration with the promise of remission of sins, and therefore to be equal in duration with the promise of remission of sins, and therefore to be expected today? Brother Roberts affirms that the promise continues until this day; we deny it. Moreover, we charge that his position is suspiciously Baptist; in fact, that it differs only in time, but not in degree, from the orthodox Baptist position. The only difference between Brother Roberts and the Baptists is, that the Baptists believe in the direct operation of the Spirit on the heart of the sinner, while Brother Roberts believes in a direct operation of the Spirit on the heart of the Christian. From this conclusion there is no escape. If he does not believe that the Spirit dwells in us in a personal way today, he was certainly unfortunate in the selection of terms and his article was to no purpose; if he does believe this, the conclusion we have drawn above is inescapable. He contends stoutly that the "gift of the Spirit," means simply, The Spirit as a gift; that this gift is to be expected today. It will not suffice to say that it was promised through the Word; the word must be received before conversion. Let it be remembered that Brother Roberts is on record in declaring for an actual, bodily, reception of the Holy Spirit, as a gift, today. Remains now to be determined whether he thinks this "indwelling" is in a manner "better felt than told."

At this point we would call attention to his use of the word "indwelling." Though freely used to advance his theory, Brother Roberts doubtless knows that it is foreign to the nomenclature of the Scriptures. Suspicion must surely attach to a position, the very announcement of which, must call for terms, not to be found in the Bible. Inasmuch as "words are the signs of ideas," if the words are not there, the suspicion is strong that the ideas they represent are not there either. True, the Scriptures teach that the Spirit dwells in us. "... by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8:11). Christ dwells in the heart of the child of God also. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (Eph. 3:17). More, God dwells in us. "... as God hath said, I will dwell in them" (2 Cor. 6:16). How absurd it would be to urge in view of these passages that Christ actually and bodily takes up his abode in us, or that God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth is personally in our hearts. This would be rather difficult; unless, indeed, God is a being "without body or parts," as the creeds declare. But is this any more absurd than the theory which would place the third member of the Godhead actually and personally in us, today? It will not avail to say that "the Spirit is in the Word." We have shown that if this be true, one receives the gift of the Spirit before conversion, since he must receive the word before conversion. This certainly

proves too much for theory. Brother Roberts' position will admit of no less than a straightforward avowal of an actual, bodily, presence of the Spirit in Christians today. This, we most vigorously deny.

We shall now submit some facts on the question which we think will strike the mind of the reader with all the force of a demonstration. First, let us inquire, What is the meaning of the phrase, "The gift of the Holy Spirit?" This phrase occurs in the New Testament twice; in the Old Testament, not at all. Our induction, then, must be confined to the New Testament, and to its two occurrences therein, Acts 2:38; 10:45. Obviously, appeal cannot be made to Acts 2:38; this is the passage in issue. Recourse must be had to its usage in Acts 10:45. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcism which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit." Let it be observed that the words, "gift of the Holy Spirit," occurring in this passage are identical with those in Acts 2:38; the same both in the English and in the Greek. More, it was Peter who promised the Pentecostans the "gift of the Holy Spirit" on that day; it is Peter who is the speaker now. Luke

doreaun, 'the same gift.' Although, as has been said, this is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, it is also represented as the Holy Spirit himself. See Acts 8:15, 17, 19, from which it is very evident that, in the judgment of Peter, John and Simon, this gift was regarded as the Holy Spirit himself; and is also called the 'gift of God.' From all which the conclusion is inevitable, that the phrase, 'the gift of the Holy Spirit,' means the Holy Spirit himself given, as foretold by Joel, and vouchsafed to Jews and Gentiles at the erection of the kingdom of the Messiah, and on their admission into it. . . . From all which, may it not be inferred that a person in the apostolic age, professing to have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit himself, without a manifestation of it; or who was unable to display it by some unequivocal exhibition of it, would have been considered either a knave or a simpleton? Surely the foregoing fixes beyond doubt the position of that eminent scholar on the question. These quotations appear in one of a series of essays written by Mr. Campbell on "The Gift of the Holy Spirit," in the Millennial Harbinger for 1834. This, too, is the position of some of the ablest defenders of the truth today. On the appearance of our former article on this subject, that prince of debaters, Joe S. Warlick, wrote: "Have just read your

dead" (Phil. 3:11). Also in third verse of that chapter he wrote: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Moreover, Christ also laid down the basis of their hope, expectation and desire concerning the resurrection of the dead in the following language: "The children of this world marry and are given in marriage. But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (Luke 20:34-36).

The word "home," fills a place in the consideration of this subject and is of equal importance with the words "baptized" and "the dead" (bodies), as it carries with it the idea of the dearest spot to mankind: "Home, Sweet Home." That expression is generally used with respect to the gathering and abiding place of the members of a peaceful and happy family here on earth, but it has a most sacred and profound meaning when it applies to the home spoken of in 2 Cor. 5:6: "at home in the body." In the first verse of this chapter, Paul refers to it as "our earthly house of this tabernacle" and Job calls our bodies "houses of clay" (Job 4:19).

God formed these "homes," our bodies, from the dust of the earth, and then placed within these bodies in each several body or home, an entity or a spirit to which he has given all the attributes ascribed to it in the Scriptures. "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding" (Job 32:8).

Now, these "houses of clay," fleshy bodies, return to the dust, where there is "no work, nor device, knowledge nor wisdom in the grave where they go" (Ecc. 9:10). But for all of that, they constitute a home from which man is loathe to leave and he will sacrifice every other kind of an earth-home in order to save his fleshy home, or to prevent his being compelled to depart this life and leave his body to be consigned to the dust. While dwelling in his body, he may have the finest, most costly mansion on earth and yet if it burns, he will escape with his fleshy home if possible because that is the most sacred and dearest home to him of all others. Satan the "liar and father of lies," spake the truth when he said: "Ye, all that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job 2:4). The "home in the body" was the desire above all other homes on the part of those Corinthian brethren, and the promise that they should dwell in that home forever after it had been raised from the dead was the source of their faith and hope. But their faith in that promise was overthrown by false teachers such as Hymeneus and Philetus who denied the faith and taught that the resurrection was already past. The Holy Spirit through Paul gave them the promise that their bodies would be raised to everlasting life, and with that promise and that they would receive the remission of their past sins, they gladly accepted baptism. But, on account of false teachers, they repudiated the idea of the resurrection of the dead, and that prompted Paul to ask: "Then why are they baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not?" They had a twofold purpose in being baptized, first, that their sins might be forgiven, second, that their bodies might be raised unto eternal life. Had those Corinthians repudiated the idea of baptism for the remission of sins, then Paul would have asked them why they were baptized for the remission of their sins if baptism is not for that purpose? But that fact concerning baptism for the remission of sins, they did not deny, but they did deny that as one great reward for being baptized, the dead would be raised. That is all that I can see in Paul's question. May the Lord bless and keep the faithful unto the end.

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was the inspired penman who recorded the former address; Luke, it is, who tells us that the "gift of the Holy Spirit," is poured out here. Who could seriously believe that the historian has used exactly the same words and phrase to convey a meaning differing so greatly as Brother Roberts would attach? Brother Roberts believes that the "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 10, was the Holy Spirit as a gift, and that it was a miraculous outpouring. Further, he believes that "the gift of the Holy Spirit," in Acts 2:38, is the Holy Spirit as a gift, but a non-miraculous outpouring. Frankly, we have never seen a more unwarrantable assumption. We ask, if the same words in Holy writ may convey a meaning so greatly different, what assurance have we that in any given instance the plain, simple import of the words and context may be followed? If it be true (and who would deny it) that the Bible is its own best interpreter, we have here an inspired commentary on the meaning of the phrase, "the gift of the Holy Spirit." Peter immediately recognized it as a miraculous gift, and said, "For we heard them speak with tongues and magnify God."

This position is in harmony with that held and propagated by the ablest writers of the Restoration Movement. Said Alexander Campbell: "We have in this phrase, 'The gift of the Holy Spirit,' as has been said, but twice, in all the apostolic writings (Acts 2:38 and 10:45), both of which denote all that is comprehended in the promise of Joel, the Holy Spirit in all his miraculous powers (Italics mine, G.N.W.) It is, indeed (Acts 8:20), called the gift (dorea) of God," and that gift, mentioned Acts 10:45, compared with that mentioned Acts 2:38, is called by Peter (Acts 11:17) 'ten isen

article in the Firm Foundation on 'The Gift of the Holy Spirit.' God bless you, it is the first truth I have seen in print since I wrote on it years ago. You are right, exactly correct; stay by your guns, teach the preachers who do not think for themselves to have some sense about it."

BAPTIZED FOR THE DEAD

By W. P. Gray

This article has been tucked away in my desk for nearly two months giving the writer plenty of time for meditation and decision, and that decision is to place the contents before the readers of the Firm Foundation and await the results. Friendly criticism is welcomed.

The words "baptized" and "the dead" are closely associated and may form the basis for a correct understanding of Paul's rather dark question: "Why are they then baptized for the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:29).

Christ and his apostles taught the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead as clearly and as forcibly as they taught any other part of the plan of man's redemption, and Paul's question leads us to the belief that when converts were baptized, they rejoiced not only because their sins had been forgiven, but also in the promise that their bodies would be raised from the dead, immortalized and made a habitation for them from which they never would again be separated. That was Paul's chief expectation and desire as expressed to the Philippians: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the