

Perspectives on the Holy Spirit

The Greater Heritage | thegreaterheritage.com

Does the Holy Spirit work in the same way today as He did after Jesus's ascension and at Pentecost? Are tongues, healing, prophecy, exorcisms, etc. normative for today? We believe they are not, and that such gifts were temporary manifestations of God's power meant for a specific time of transition in God's history as mankind entered the Church Age, and when the revelation of Jesus had to be conveyed and confirmed across the globe by God's power for the spread of the Gospel. (Acts 2:22, 14:3, 2 Cor. 12:12, Heb. 2:3-4)

First, there is no recurring pattern in the NT on the exercising of such gifts. For instance, there is no reference to Apostolic spiritual gifts in the Pastoral Letters. Second, such acts are referenced later in the NT as being done in past tense terms. (Rom. 15:19, 1 Cor. 2:4, 1 Thess. 1:5) Third, throughout the Bible God worked in special ways within single generations. (Heb. 1:1)

Lastly, what is done today in Pentecostal, Holiness, Charismatic, and other Spirit-affirming denominations, does not line up with what is seen in the Bible. Tongues for example were real languages, not unintelligible ones, and God's Word is final; no more prophecies are to be added to it. (Acts 2:11, Jude 3) Moreover, a 2nd baptism of the Spirit is not required for proof that one is born again nor do 2nd baptisms exist today. (1 Cor. 12:12-13)

Disagreement also exists about how the Holy Spirit worked during the time of the Apostles (Samaritan converts, Cornelius and his family, Disciples at Ephesus, etc.) Yet, all instances of apparent contradictions were turning points in God's mission to build his church. For instance, bringing Gentiles and non-Jews into the church. (Acts 1:8)

All these things aside, we do affirm that the Holy Spirit plays an active role in the Church, and in the life of the Christian, and that all believers receive the Holy Spirit upon salvation.