

The Contender

"CONTEND FOR THE FAITH WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS" JUDE 3

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The Bride's Anointing, Part 1



Rev. Raymond M. Jackson

This edition of The Contender contained Part 5 of From Azusa Street Until Now and Part 1 of The Bride's Anointing. This edition has been separated into two parts for our website.

BECAUSE OF THE VARIOUS EXPERIENCES AND

MANIFESTATIONS WE HAVE WITNESSED LATELY, I FEEL LED TO START A MESSAGE WE WILL TITLE, "THE BRIDE'S ANOINTING." WE ALL AGREE THAT THE WORLD IS AT A POINT IN TIME THAT WE MUST BE APPROACHING THE COMING OF THE LORD; BUT A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TODAY DO NOT HAVE A PICTURE OF THE KIND OF CHURCH HE IS COMING FOR. A LOT OF MY OWN PERSONAL TESTIMONY HAS TO ENTER INTO THIS MESSAGE BECAUSE OF THINGS WE ARE GOING TO BE DEALING WITH. IT WILL HAVE TO DO WITH THINGS I HAVE HAD TO EXPERIENCE MYSELF. HAVING BEEN RAISED WITH A METHODIST BACKGROUND, BEING BAPTIZED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, AND MY NAME BEING JACKSON, THERE WAS A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF STUBBORNNESS

Contents

THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER..... 3
 MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT 8
 MY DREAM 10

THE LORD HAD TO DEAL WITH: TO GET ME WHERE HE WANTED ME. THAT IS WHY THEY CALLED ANDREW JACKSON, OLD HICKORY: HE WAS STUBBORN. THAT BUNCH IN WASHINGTON DID THEIR BEST TO BEND AND BREAK HIM; BUT WHEN THEY LET UP, HE WAS RIGHT BACK IN THE SAME SPOT HE WAS IN BEFORE. THAT IS WHY THEY CALLED HIM OLD HICKORY. HICKORY IS ABOUT THE ONLY THING YOU CAN MAKE A WAGON TONGUE OUT OF AND EXPECT IT TO LAST: FOR IT IS HARD TO BEND OR BRAKE. AS I PRESENT THIS MESSAGE, I WILL BE TAKING INTO CONSIDERING EVERY PERSON WHO MAY HEAR IT OR READ IT, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND MAY HAVE BEEN, BECAUSE I KNOW THE BRIDE OF CHRIST IS NOT JUST GOING TO BE MADE UP OF A BUNCH OF PEOPLE THAT HAVE BEEN SAVED OUT OF THE WORLD, HAVING NO RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND AT ALL. MOST OF US HAVE ARRIVED WHERE WE ARE TODAY, AFTER COMING

THROUGH OTHER RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS. I THANK GOD HE SAW FIT ONE DAY TO SHOW ME HIS GRACE AND MERCY. ONE THING I HAVE ALWAYS CONFESSED, I NEVER WANTED TO BE A FANATIC. I HAD HEARD OF PEOPLE CUTTING THEIR FINGERS OFF AND VARIOUS OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR BODY, SIMPLY BECAUSE OF WHAT JESUS SAID CONCERNING THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BODY THAT WERE OFFENSIVE. YOU KNOW WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS, IF THY RIGHT HAND OFFEND THEE, CUT IT OFF. IF THINE EYE OFFEND THEE, PLUCK IT OUT AND SO FORTH. I HAVE HEARD OF PEOPLE PLUCKING THEIR EYES OUT. ALL THOSE THINGS BECAME SCARE CROWS IN MY LIFE AS A CHILD GROWING UP. I SAID, GOD FORBID THAT I SHOULD BE ONE OF THESE PEOPLE THAT GO CRAZY OVER RELIGION. IT IS ONE THING TO GO CRAZY OVER RELIGION, BUT IT IS ANOTHER THING TO LOSE YOUR MIND TO THE WORLD AND FIND YOUR MIND IN JESUS CHRIST. I LIKE THAT. THERE IS SUCH A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE NATURAL, MANY PEOPLE CANNOT TELL ONE FROM ANOTHER. IF THE DEVIL CANNOT HOLD ON TO YOU OUT IN THE WORLD OF UNBELIEF, AND KEEP YOU LIVING LIKE

THE WORLD, HIS NEXT MOVE IS TO TRY TO DRIVE YOU TO SOME FANATICAL END. WHY? BECAUSE HE KNOWS THAT IN THE END SUCH A PERSON WILL BE DESTROYED. THAT IS THE CONFLICT WE HAVE AS TRUE CHILDREN OF GOD: TO GET ALL OF THESE THINGS SORTED OUT AND BRING OUR LIVES IN LINE WITH THE TRUE REVELATION OF WHAT IS WRITTEN IN GOD'S BOOK (THE BIBLE). IT IS A BATTLE ON OUR PART MANY TIMES: TO COME THROUGH THIS AND REALLY PRESENT OURSELVES AS CHILDREN OF GOD SHOULD; BUT EVERY PREDESTINATED ONE WILL EVENTUALLY COME TO THAT PLACE.

I am going to ask you to turn with me into the book of Acts. Here is where the great commission, and the Church had its start, just as it is described in these verses. We know what Jesus said. He had told them in the writings of Luke, when they followed Him over to the Mt. of Olives and watched Him ascend into heaven, the last words Jesus spoke to them was this, Go into Jerusalem and tarry until you be endued with power from on high. They did not know one thing about what to expect. No doubt they thought, What is this power going to be like? How am I going to recognize this power when it comes? We know when they went into the upper room to wait together, they

did not know exactly what to watch for; but they did what Jesus told them to do: That was the important thing. There, is where many people fail: They will not obey the word of God until they are able to understand every little detail of it. Take for instance, Bless God, I am not going to sit up there in that place looking for something that I may not even recognize when it comes. That is not the kind of attitude God wants us to have. He wants His children to have simple faith and trust in His word without taking drastic measures like cutting off hands and plucking out eyes when they have no understanding of what He meant by that. Of course we all understand that it would be better to go to heaven without hands and eyes than to end up in hell with all of our body parts in place; but we need to realize also, that just cutting off those offensive members will not get the job done. Our determination to walk with God in a true revelation of His word is what makes the difference.

THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER

We are going to read from Chapter 2, verse 1. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (the believers, the disciples that had been told at the Mt. of Olives, Go back to

Jerusalem and wait until you receive power from on high) were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven (That was a manifestation of the presence of God.) as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, (In other words they saw a manifestation of something supernaturally sitting over the individuals.) and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." Now with this, I want us to go to the 16th chapter of St. John. We read how in the upper room the Spirit has come upon each of the believers, the disciples that had followed Christ; so what we are going to read now, is where Jesus told, before He was crucified, what this Spirit is going to do when it does come into the world. We are starting in verse 12 of the 16th chapter of St. John. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit (or however) when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: (ALL TRUTH) for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall

glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Putting these two settings together gives us a better picture of what was actually taking place. That passage I just read is the scripture that explains what has to come into our lives before we can actually be called children of God. Receiving His Spirit in the way they received it in Acts 2, is the only way on earth you as a person will ever become a child of God. What does that Spirit do, Bro. Jackson? That is the Spirit that gives us the eternal life the Bible speaks of, and seals us into the family of God, never to be lost again. This same Spirit is what first gets hold of you and begins to deal with your heart and tell you that you need to accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Remember, Jesus said, No man (or woman) can come to me except the Father draw him? This same Spirit (which is actually the great Creator in His third office work) is the very thing that begins to deal with us in life to make us conscious of the fact that we are lost, separated from God, and in need of a Savior. To some it may be when they are in their childhood. Others may not be dealt with until they come to adulthood. Some have even been halfway through life before they begin to be conscious of being dealt with in this way. When Jesus said in St. John 6, No man can come to me except the Father draw him, He was actually saying, You cannot become a Christian just any time you want to: That Spirit has to deal with you first. There are

people the world over, that have joined some religious system for one reason or another, without ever having been convicted of their sins by the wooing of the Spirit which is God. They call themselves Christian's, but are they being led into ALL TRUTH? The answer is obviously NO. They follow some traditional form of supposed-to-be service to God on one day during the week for a few minutes; and then many of them live like the devil the rest of the week. Naturally that does not apply to everyone; but there is a great trend toward some kind of religious affiliation in the world today; and much of it is without the necessary ingredients of true Christianity. Becoming a Christian is not exclusively your choice in that manner. You do not set the time, nor the date, nor the hour. It is He (the Spirit which is God) that makes the choice of when and how, and He knows exactly how to deal with you when the appointed time arrives. Yes, you may look back on your life and say, He has been dealing with me ever since a certain age. That is true many times; and one might wonder, How come you never surrendered back then? The point is this, Even though you were made conscious of your need to be saved, there has to come a time when God really gets hold of your heart in a way that draws you to Him. That is when He is going to make it so real you cannot resist any longer. God knows exactly how to touch your heart to bring you to a saving knowledge of

Jesus Christ, that when it is done you cannot say you had anything to do with it. It is He and He alone that is going to do the saving. It is He and He alone that is going to show you exactly how stubborn this human nature can sometimes be. That is my own testimony. It is one thing to be brought up in a home with Christian parents; and in an environment to know that certain Christian values are the right way of life. I thank God for those; but our salvation goes far beyond all of that. I look back on my childhood days, my mom and dad taught me basic things that are essential to a good moral life; but during all of that time growing up, many times there can be an inward pride being cultivated within that becomes part of our nature. I remember going to revivals back when I was in my teens, before I went into the army, and at times I would feel the spirit of conviction moving upon me; but in my heart I would say, I'm not a bad fellow. I don't have to go through all that praying and giving my heart to the Lord. I am going to live to be honest, love my brothers and sisters, pay my debts, never cause anyone any trouble and try to be a good citizen; but I do not need to get too serious about this thing of being a Christian. That is the sad part of it: there are so many people in the world today that forget the word of God says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. What is that sin? It means we are all born in unbelief. There is not a one of us born into this world with belief in

God. Oh, I have known the Lord ever since I have been in this world. No you haven't. You can have a mental knowledge of a lot of things but it does not add up to genuine saving faith in God. When it really affects you, it has to affect you in a way that you begin to see certain things in the word of God that is going to begin to bring a change in your life. Therefore when it says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and there is none righteous, no not one, it means exactly that. There is not a one of us that seeks after God. We usually seek our own way in life; and it is a cheap way that most of the time glorifies the devil instead of God. It is like in the natural world we live in, we are looking for cheap bargains everywhere we go. We are looking for special sales. In the plan of salvation there is no such thing as yard sales or Bargain Basements. God has no give-away programs. Our salvation is free: in that we do not have to pay anything of monetary value for it; but that is because there has already been a precious price paid for it. Our Lord Jesus Christ suffered, bleed and died on that old cross at Calvary to pay the price of our redemption; and it was paid for all who will repent and receive it. The gifts of the Spirit are all just as valuable and important to our life as the day Christianity was first born 2000 years ago. I told the story in Norway because there is a move among the people in Norway that is so beautiful. It is starting among a lot of the young people. This is the way

many times it begins to make its appearance. Old people get set in their ways, their minds are made up, because if they go through life serving the Lord in a certain trend, never seeing any turns or anything in the road, they just get adjusted to that pace of life; but if the Lord's coming is soon, then there is one thing we have to realize, There is a move of the Spirit of God in our midst and we can show it from the Bible. It is going to be a move among a people that are truly predestined to become the Bride of Jesus Christ. As they become the Bride of Jesus Christ, the religious world will say, Now wait a minute! Yes, anyone can say, Wait a minute; but for what? The last book in the Bible tells us the Bride in that day, that is the people of God that are really Christians will know in that hour that they are the Bride of Christ. Why? All because they see by the prophetic picture of things that are being fulfilled from the scriptures in the world at large. They see a picture that proclaims, JESUS IS COMING SOON! If He is coming soon, what is He coming for? He is coming to receive a people unto Himself; but it will be an element of believers that have truly prepared themselves to be acceptable as His bride. That special element of believers are not going to be a people caught up out of everything that is referred to as Christianity in the world today, uninformed, and not even knowing the time they are living in. That would be a disaster. Just think, If

the Lord came for His people right now, and no one knew a thing about it, no one was expecting anything to happen, it would be a disaster. There is one thing sure though, we have a picture in this book that shows us the Bride will be ready when He comes. You may say, Bro. Jackson, give me Bible for that. Well read the 19th chapter of Revelation. What did John see? He was taken up in the Spirit and saw the Lamb's wife. Where was she? She was in heaven. He heard all the shouting, the hallelujah's and all that was taking place; and a voice saying, The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us read those verses. (Revelation 19:7-9) "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife HATH made herself ready. (8) And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. (9) And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." It says there, His wife HATH, past tense, made herself ready. Where did she do that? Not in heaven, but right here on earth in her every day walk of life. That very scripture lets you know that we have got to expect the Spirit of God to do something in the earth among an element of people to awaken them to the time they are living in and equip them with everything essential to their preparation for the coming of the Lord.

Their lives and their cooperative working together must begin to be just like the early Church in the book of Acts. You can see some words up here on our chart: They pertain to what the Holy Spirit is doing among believers in this hour of time. In manifestations we have Shouting, dancing, shaking, trembling, drunkenness and stammering lips: all of which are Biblical expressions. There are a lot of poor people sitting in church houses today that are completely ignorant of what the Spirit of God through the ages has been doing. All they know is, they were born a Lutheran or whatever, and they have gone to Sunday School as a Lutheran, got married as a Lutheran, christened their children as Lutherans and that is all they ever intend to be, Lutheran's. I can take every denomination that came down the road and show that they are just like that. They know very little of what the Spirit of God has been doing. Where has that Spirit been for the past 1900 years? He has dealt with people in every Age of time, to convict them of sin, and show them their need of a Savior. He has caused them to realize they need to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour; but the minute most of them committed their hearts to the Lord in that initial salvation experience they just sat down in whatever system of religion they were brought up in, with a feeling of assurance: This is all that is necessary. They have been taught to think like that. I was made to think like that myself; but God knows your heart,

and He knows where you are today. If you are one of those He has foreknown from before the foundation of the earth, He knows exactly when to talk to you, to get you moving toward where you need to be.

MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT

Please follow me, as I endeavor to speak to you of the various manifestations we have listed on the chart we are using for this message. As I have said, There was a time when I was scared to death of all of this. Having married, moved to Harrison County, and being a Sunday School superintendent in the Methodist Church, and at times being ask to preach while the regular pastor went away on vacation and so forth, the gifts of the Spirit were not even on my mind. Early in March this particular year, my wife's aunt had a birthday and they were having a birthday dinner for her and we were there. A Baptist lady in the Methodist church down home, had heard a preacher on a Louisville Kentucky Radio Broadcast, preaching about manifestations of the Holy Ghost and they were offering a little book written on that subject. The book was fifty cents and she sent for it. Now just try to imagine a Baptist woman, fellowshipping with a Methodist

Church group because there was no Baptist Church around there at that time, and her being attracted to the subject of manifestations of the Spirit. (They had moved from Louisville out there.) Well, she sent for that little book just so she could give it to me. I will never forget that day. After dinner I slipped out to the car to look into that little book that was lying there on the dash in my car. As I sat there with the sun coming through the glass and enjoying that nice day in March, I started reading. I do not always read a book line for line: I just catch the thought, watch the flow and more or less scan over it. Then I came to a certain chapter titled "Manifestations of the Spirit." When I got into that, after I read some of it, this is exactly what I did, I folded the book, got it out of my hands and said, God forbid that I should ever get involved in anything like that. I meant it. Little did I know, there were heartaches up the road for me. The next year the pastor was going to leave, I knew they would be sending another student out from Wilmore. On this particular morning I had been asked to come to the Elizabeth Church and preach. When I got finished that morning, the Sunday School superintendent followed me outside and said, Bro. Jackson I would like to speak to you a minute. He said, We like your preaching; but as you know, we are going to lose our pastor; and we have all decided that we would like to have you be our pastor. Would you accept it if we speak to the district

superintendent? I said, Yes I would. I thought, Well I live here in the neighborhood and felt at that time that I wanted to preach for the Lord and do something for the kingdom of God; so naturally I said yes. That was to be in April, when they were having the district superintendent's meeting in that particular charge. All the main ones of the different churches were there. When they reached a certain point in the meeting, someone motioned that I should go outside. I was out there maybe about twenty five minutes: Then one of the men from the Elizabeth church came out and put his hand on my shoulder and said, Bro. Jackson, I am sorry to say the district superintendent says no, to you being our pastor. We cannot put any more men in as pastors unless they have had a certain amount of education and so many years of bible school or seminary training. If you had taken a knife and stuck in my heart it would not have hurt a bit worse than those words did. I went home that evening and went to the barn to milk the cows. These are the words I said, Lord I will never stop serving you; but this New Testament was not preached by men who had all gone to a seminary and earned such and such degrees in theology. They were fishermen, tax collectors, men like I associate with every day. Brothers and sisters: It is very strange that those men had a spirit in them that caused them to put a writing together that changed the course of humanity, changed the boundaries of nations, and

for two thousand years has kept societies from going berserk; and all of a sudden you have to have certain degrees in theology in order to preach it. You see what America is headed for. It is headed for chaos. If you do not believe it, look what they have been celebrating, Wood Stock. They had another gathering in Virginia: It had another name. It is a disgrace to the human race, to see a mass of teenagers naked, tattooed, rings in their ears, jewels in their tongues, sliding down mud slides and all such as that. What a world we live in! How can we as Christians not be concerned about the trend our nation is flowing in? It was not this way thirty years ago. As I told my experience leading up to this particular event in my life: Here I had said, I want nothing to do with any of that; and at that time, I meant it. (That was when I had read some of that little book) Then after this experience at the meeting I said, Lord, I will stand for your word, I will support your work, I will live for you; but Lord, I will never get in the pulpit as I have in the past. If a man has to have all that in order to pastor a congregation, I am too far up the road of life to go back and start over like that. Little did I realize the God of heaven was going to start introducing me into a realm that would be completely strange to me. That night I went to bed very disturbed. In my heart I was very disturbed. (I need to go back and try to bring all of this out together to show the chain of events.) I WILL NEVER FORGET

THE NIGHT WHEN I SURRENDERED MY HEART TO THE LORD, AND HOW HE TOOK AWAY THE CIGARETTE HABIT AND THE BURDEN OF SIN AND HOW GOOD I FELT INSIDE. You have heard me speak many times of the old Methodist statement, heaped up, pressed down, and running over. Well I was using that as I spoke to the Lord and said, Lord, I will do my best to preach your word. (This was said when the Lord saved me.) I was just throwing that in for good measure while I was feeling so good, not realizing what it would lead me to later on. That was the first real experience I ever had in that way. Keep in mind, Regardless of whether you are a Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, or what, good moral people can walk around in total ignorance concerning what God is doing. That is how I was. While I was in a state of sadness over what had happened, I saw myself in a dream.

MY DREAM

I was walking down a highway. I was approaching a city. I was aware of looking for something. As I approached the outskirts of this city I saw a large tent. I thought to myself, I have heard a lot about these evangelists in the late 50's, how they have evangelistic tent meetings. I said,

That must be one of those evangelists. Then I thought to myself, I will just go take a look. I left the highway and crossed over a field and came to the edge of this tent. The flaps were rolled up because it was summer time. As I walked in underneath the tent, I saw no one; but I heard a little tapping noise way over on the far side, back in a corner. There was a little partitioned place where I finally saw one person. I could hear that person typing on a typewriter. Here I am in this big tent looking all around; and shortly that person looked up and said Sir, may I do something for you? I said, I am just looking around. Then he came out from behind that enclosure, came walking up to me, looked straight at me and said, Sir, you have a need. I said, I do? He said yes. He then said, May I pray for you? I said, Yes. The minute he reached out to lay his hand on my forehead, the tent and everything disappeared. Then I saw Jesus coming with outstretched arms. The look in those eyes was enough to make anyone cry. As He came to me He put His arms around my head and pulled my head up to His chest. I began to weep. I cried, not because I was sad, but because I was happy. There was something like a power that began to surge through me. I thought, Wouldn't it be wonderful just to die like this? I was crying with such emotional crying it felt like I would explode from within. When it felt like I could no longer bear that feeling, all of a sudden I woke up.

END OF DREAM

When I awakened, I had my pillow in my right hand and I was ready to go over the foot of the bed. When I came to myself I was shaking. I thought, Oh Lord, what was all of that about? However I had seen Jesus and all of that despair and disappointment was gone. From that moment on I began to realize, I will have to follow God no matter what. (I had sat many times and talked to the Wilmore student pastors and gave them my testimony how the lord had dealt with me.) A few weeks after that, (the rejection and the dream) I was led into a meeting. I will never forget this either. In that meeting, when the evangelist prayed for me, there was a feeling of drunkenness, a dizziness that came over me and I fell to the floor. (You have heard this; but I want it in this message also.) While lying there on the floor I thought to myself, Just think how ridiculous you look. What are you doing down here like this? This is a shame. I thought to myself, I will just get up right now: This does not look right. I tried to get on my side; but I could not move. I was lying flat on my back. I would strain every muscle, but it felt like some kind of magnet was holding me to that floor. I could not muster up enough strength to rise up from there. Finally I just said, Lord, you must have your hand on me,

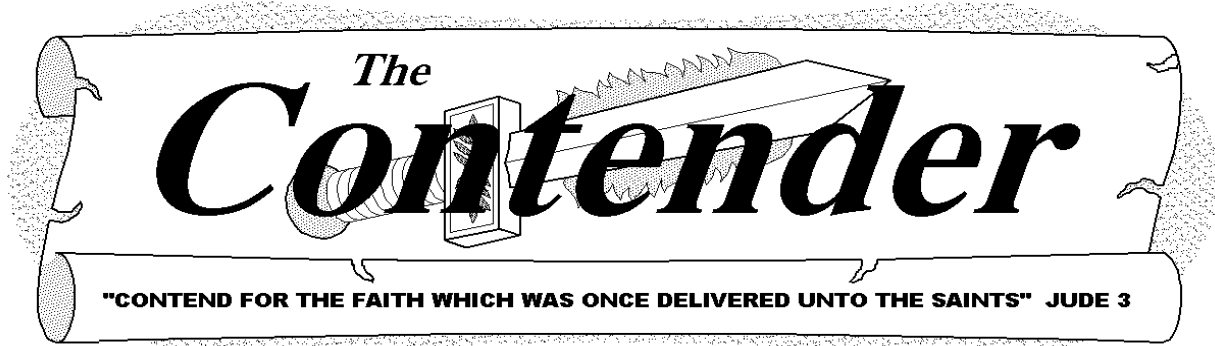
so I will just stay still; and I lay there another three or four minutes or so. After awhile I began to feel that inner feeling start to lift. When I began to make my way off the floor I realized, God is a power source; and most people are scared to death of Him. They want Him only in the knowledge of their head; but when it comes to the reality of really getting acquainted with Him in the realm of an intimate relationship, that is just too much. He is a sovereign Spirit; and you have to realize that the same Spirit that can put you under conviction, can do everything else it takes to mold us into true children of His. If He can take a hardened criminal and break him down to the point where he can no longer resist His call to him to repent of his evil ways and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, can He not do anything else it takes to mold our lives? That is why on the day of Pentecost, as we read in Acts 2, when those disciples came into the streets of Jerusalem, speaking in other dialects and there were devout Jews out of every nation in and around the Mediterranean, sixteen different nations of Jews, of the dispersed realm, standing there hearing them, they were made to understand that this was a work of the Spirit of God, or the SPIRIT WHICH IS GOD. (We say, "the Spirit of God," but in reality we are referring to the Spirit which is God, the same Spirit that Created every created thing. God the Creator, which we understand is a sovereign Spirit, is

the same Spirit we refer to as the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God. We are not talking about two different Spirits.) Well there they were, those Jews from all those mentioned regions, making their way toward the temple to keep the feast day of Pentecost. They were not forewarned that they were about to witness the fulfillment of what that feast typed. What happened in the upper room was the fulfillment of that type; and there in Jerusalem were thousands of Jews looking at, and listening to those Galilean Jews talking to them in their very own language, the language they spoke at home. Was that not enough to get them excited and the local, hard hearted Jews who did not understand them, really stirred up? When they began to say, What is this, for I hear the wonderful works of God spoken in the language wherein I was born? That home bunch, which were always the ones that thought they knew everything, began to criticize. These men are full of new wine, they said. In other words, Do not pay any attention to them: they are drunk. Well they were drunk; but as the apostle Peter said, Not as they supposed. Their response reminds me of a lot of supposed-to-be Christians of our day: "Oh yes, I can accept the fact that God moved on those disciples like that back then; but I cannot believe God is still doing that today." That is the type of response you get from Church of Christ people in our day and hour; but that is because they shut the door to

God. What they have is all head knowledge; for the Holy Ghost is not welcome in their system of religion. There is no doubt they have a very beautiful theology as far as argument is concerned, but they do not have an experience to go with their theology. They are ignorant of the fact that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He has never changed. It is just mankind that does the changing. You cannot rewrite the word of God to make it fit your ideas. It will always be the same. Those Jews did not consider that there is a prophecy in Joel that speaks of this very thing. That does not mean everyone who receives the baptism of the Holy Spirit has to act like they have been drinking natural wine and became intoxicated, but they very well may act exactly like that. When the apostle Peter took up the word to explain what was happening there in Jerusalem, he went right to the 2nd chapter of Joel, picked up the prophecy where Joel, eight hundred years before Christ, wrote that in the last days, God would do exactly what we are seeing even now. (Joel 2:28-32) "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: (29) And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. (30) And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of

smoke. (31) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." He was actually giving reference to the dispensation of Grace which started on the day of Pentecost and is going on still yet; but we are fast approaching the hour when God is getting ready to close this dispensation to Gentile people. We Gentiles have had this dispensation for almost two thousand years; but very soon now, God will return to the Jews with the good news contained in this new covenant. It started with the Jews and it will end with them. Peter began to preach that sermon, and when he was finished, three thousand Jews who were headed for the temple, had stopped to listen and were convicted, or as the scripture says, They were pricked in their heart's. They saw something take place. They walked up to Peter and the brethren and said, What must we do? Let us read it. (Acts2:37-41) "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? (38) 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.** (39) For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall

call. (40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. (41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." As I read these scriptures I came to the conclusion that those who are hungry for God are not fretting about whether they will or will not speak in tongues: They just want whatever the Lord has for them. That is how it should be. We have no right to specify what we are willing to receive and then reject all the rest. After God began to deal with me, I began to realize that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God; and that He is just as real today as He was two thousand years ago. In those early days of God's dealing in my life, there were a lot of things I was utterly ignorant of; but I said, God, whatever is in this book, I want it. Whatever is for this day, I want it. I do not care what it may cost my flesh. I do not want to be a fanatic; but I do want to be realistic. I said, If there are things in this book that will make me act like I should act, and see things differently than I ever have before, then Lord, I want everything you have for me. I will not specify any limits. I had just realized, God is still God: He has not changed one bit. A lot of times we can say things in total ignorance; but God knows our heart's and He already knows what it is going to take to work His will and purpose in each of us. That is why we should have total confidence in Him.



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