

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

Considering this consensus of indictment, whereby the tongue is accused of this predominant sin of deceitfulness, it is reasonable to expect to find the same indictment conveyed by *ὁ κόσμος* in this passage—the adorning (see 1 Tim. ii. 9, R.V.) that is the fair-seeming screen or cloke of iniquity, the embellishment of unrighteousness.

An objection raised against this rendering of *κόσμος*, cited by Alford from Huther, seems hardly worthy of consideration. *Κόσμος*, he says, “never signifies that which actively adorns, but that wherewith a thing or person is adorned.” The distinction is certainly not obvious, and the proposed interpretation is not without good authority. Mayor quotes Gesner, Wetstein, Semler, Storr, Ewald, and others as giving it their support. It is paraphrased in Cramer’s catena as: *ἐγκαλλώπισμα* [δοκεῖ] *τῆς ἀδικίας*. Compare with this *ἐπικάλυμμα τῆς κακίας* (or cloke of maliciousness) (1 Pet. ii. 16).

“Thus interpreted the sentence might have been written *ἡ γλῶσσα . . . κοσμοῦσα τὴν ἀδικίαν καὶ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα*. The tongue adorning and embellishing iniquity, and yet defiling and staining the whole body and personality of a man.”<sup>1</sup>

ARTHUR CARR.

## STUDIES IN THE PAULINE THEOLOGY.

### X. THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

(1) THE purpose of God is fulfilled in the individual believer by the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. This conception is not new in the Christian revelation, still less new in the teaching of Paul; although the filial relation between God and Man constituted in Christ gives to this

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from the present writer’s notes on St. James, *Cambridge Greek Testament*.

immanent activity of God a fresh content, and Paul sharing the common Christian tradition in regard to this doctrine gives it a fresh interpretation. In the Old Testament the Spirit represents God's manifold activity in nature and in man. Any special endowment of strength, skill, wisdom or insight is attributed to the work of the Spirit in man. While generally the emphasis is laid on what are conceived to be supernatural endowments, yet the working of the Spirit of God in the moral and religious life is recognized. The psalmist prays for inward renewal—

Create in me a clean heart, O God ;  
 And renew a right spirit within me.  
 Cast me not away from thy presence ;  
 And take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

(Psalm li. 10, 11.)

The prophet complains of Israel that "they rebelled and grieved his holy spirit" (Isa. lxiii. 10). The more characteristic Old Testament doctrine is found, however, in Joel ii. 28, "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." The prophet rather than the saint is the man filled with the Spirit.

(2) In the Book of Acts the doctrine of the Holy Spirit receives great prominence. While we may detect Luke's personal peculiarity in the representation given, yet there can be little doubt that in this respect he was in close sympathy with the primitive Church, and its distinctive experience was congenial to him. The passage just quoted from Joel, to which Peter refers in his defence on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 14-36), strikes the keynote of this experience. It is the extraordinary, miraculous, supernatural which receives almost exclusive attention. The *speaking with other tongues* is the characteristic evidence of the Spirit's operation at

Pentecost (ver. 4). By the "laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given" to the converts in Samaria, and Simon thought that the gift to endow with such supernatural power could be bought (viii. 18, 19). "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more" (viii. 39). The disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus not only had not in believing been conscious of this supernatural endowment, but were even ignorant of its bestowal. But, when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied" (xix. 1-7). Generally the work of the Spirit is connected with the *charismata*, such as speaking with tongues, and prophesying. A guidance of the Church by the Spirit, however, is asserted in the separation of Paul and Barnabas for missionary work (xiii. 2). Paul and his companions are represented as controlled in their movements by the Holy Ghost, called also "the Spirit of Jesus" (xvi. 6, 7). The psychological study of religious revivals makes intelligible and credible some of the phenomena. Dr. Bartlett in his *Commentary on Acts* has suggested that, when the term Holy Spirit is used without the article, it is intended to describe the human condition and not the divine agency, and that the human condition might be fitly expressed by the term "holy enthusiasm." The certainty of the Risen Lord and of the salvation assured in Him filled the primitive community with such abounding religious vitality as is often witnessed in a religious revival. There was an intense emotional disturbance; and this was then, as it has often been since, accompanied by unusual phenomena, such as ecstatic utterances, impassioned prayer and praise, visions. The extraordinary features are not, there is good reason to hold, of an essentially supernatural or miraculous character, although they must appear so to all who have no

investigated the abnormal psychological conditions on which these depend. What is supernatural is the reality of the contact of the human spirit with the divine Spirit, which gives to the religious revival its value and efficacy in changing human lives. That the Holy Spirit of God was present and potent in the primitive Christian community, as He has again and again been in the history of the Christian Church, is a fact which need not be doubted or denied. The apostolic Church laid emphasis on those features which seem to us now less significant ; and Luke, who was a man of his own time, has in his record possibly even exaggerated this emphasis.

(3) Paul too shared the common belief of the time and place. For him too speaking with tongues, prophesyings, visions were the distinctive gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 9-10). Although he is reluctant to make the claim, yet he knew himself to be *πνευματικός* (1 Cor. ii. 15 ; Gal. vi. 1), a Spirit-filled man in this respect also. He had "visions and revelations of the Lord" (2 Cor. xii. 1). He knew "such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not ; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (vers. 3 and 4). He thanks God that he can speak with tongues more than all the Corinthian converts, who were so proud of their endowment (1 Cor. xiv. 18). Among the things Christ wrought through him he reckons what was done "in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xv. 19). Great as Paul was, he did not so transcend his environment as to be unaffected by it. He not only shared the "holy enthusiasm" of the primitive community, as he shared the common faith in the Crucified and Risen Christ, which was its source ; but he too caught the contagion of the abnormal psychical conditions which were its accom-

paniments. This does not show any such mental instability in him as justifies any suspicion or distrust of his general mental sanity. We need not assume any disease or defect in him to explain this religious sensibility. Nor need it surprise us that he did not reach the modern scientific view of these phenomena.

(4) He does display an exceptional, moral and religious insight, however, in the estimate he formed of the value of these *charismata*. It is to our great advantage that the condition of the Church in Corinth led him to discuss this question fully (1 Cor. xii.-xiv.). First of all he insists that it is in the confession, and not the denial of Jesus as Lord, that the Spirit is manifested (xii. 3). Secondly, he recognizes the diversities of gifts of the same Spirit, and reckons among these wisdom, knowledge, faith, as well as gifts of healing, workings of miracles, prophecy, divers kinds of tongues, etc. (vers. 4-11). He thus at the outset corrects the overestimation of the one class of gifts current in Corinth. Thirdly, he shows by the analogy of the body with its many members and their varied functions, the mutual dependence of all believers in the Christian Church, whatever their gifts may be, and their duty of reciprocal service (vers. 12-31). Fourthly, he offers "a still more excellent way" than even the use of the gifts for the common good. This is *love*, without which no service has any value, which alone is capable of meeting every demand that can be made upon it, which is not imperfect, and so temporary as many of these gifts are, and which with faith and hope alone abides, while it is greatest of the three (xiii.). To this general principle that love is better than any gifts, and alone gives worth to their use, Paul gives a special application, due probably to the local circumstances (xiv.). He compares speaking with tongues, or ecstatic utterances, with prophecy, or impassioned speech for illumination, edification, correction of the

hearers. As the first, unless interpreted, is not generally intelligible, and so edifies only the speakers, it is always to be subordinated to the second, which brings advantage to all. There is to be such self-restraint in the use of the gifts as will secure in the common worship the greatest usefulness for all. "Let all things be done decently, and in order" (ver. 40). While in the popular opinion within the Church, probably not in Corinth alone, the value of a spiritual gift depended on its unusual character, on the wonder it excited, the test Paul applied was the purpose served; that is best which does most good to all. It is further to be observed that even when Paul is driven by the depreciation to which he was exposed by his enemies to assert his abundant possession of these gifts, he is apologetic in his tone, "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient" (2 Cor. xii. 1). He recognizes that there is a danger of pride in the possession, that he might have been exalted overmuch, had God not taken a means of keeping him humble (ver. 7). He does not base his apostolic authority on any of these endowments; he does not derive his message from any of these visions and revelations; he seems expressly to distinguish the appearance of Jesus to him on the way to Damascus, which called him to and fitted him for his ministry, from these subsequent experiences; he appeals in his teaching to the words of the Lord Jesus, or to his own possession of the Spirit of the Lord. His spiritual discernment saved him from any perilous over-valuation of the *charismata*.

(5) This is, however, only the negative aspect of his doctrine of the Spirit; the positive has still greater value. It is in sanctification (*ἁγιασμός*) that the characteristic work of the Holy Spirit (*πνεῦμα ἅγιον*) is to be found. Believers are chosen of God "unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thess. ii. 13). In the *Sixth Study on The Sanctification of Man* it was necessary to give a brief summary of

Paul's teaching on this subject ; but here his doctrine may be somewhat more fully expounded. No man is a Christian who does not possess the Spirit. " If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his " (Rom. viii. 9). As the Spirit is described as of Christ as well as of God, not only are the functions of the living Christ and of the indwelling Spirit not always clearly distinguished, but even in one passage Christ and the Spirit appear to be identified. Christian theology has with great subtlety defined the order of salvation, and assigned to each person in the Godhead His share in the work, but Paul shows no such care. He mentions sanctification before justification, and joins Christ and the Spirit as fellow-workers in both. " But ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God " (1 Cor. vi. 11). The operation of the Spirit in the inward transformation of man is so inseparable from, follows so inevitably on, the contemplation of Christ with the eye of faith, that Christ may be said to possess the Spirit, even to be the Spirit. " Now the Lord is the Spirit ; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit " (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18). There is no formal identification here of Christ and the Spirit, as Paul elsewhere clearly distinguishes the one from the other ; but what is asserted is the invariable sequence of faith in Christ and renewal by the Spirit.

(6) As closely as the Spirit is connected with Christ, so clearly is His activity in man distinguished from the flesh. This opposition is fully described in Galatians v. 16-26. To walk by the Spirit is not to " fulfil the lust of the flesh " (ver. 16) ; to be of Christ Jesus is to " have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof " (ver. 24).



“ For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; for these are contrary the one to the other ” (ver. 17). This is not, however, a metaphysical dualism of the spiritual and the material ; for on the one hand the works of the flesh are not merely sensual sins, but include “ enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings ” (vers. 20, 21), and on the other the fruit of the Spirit embraces *temperance*, or self-control in respect of the animal appetites. We need not here consider the works of the flesh ; but in the fruit of the Spirit we may see Paul’s sketch of the ideal Christian character, “ love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance ” (vers. 22, 23). If we fill the first word “ love ” with the content Paul gives to it in 1 Corinthians xiii., we shall realize how large an ideal this is. The spiritual man has insight into the mind of Christ. “ He that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man ” (1 Cor. ii. 15). His is the highest wisdom. The spiritual man has sympathy for, and gives succour to the weak. “ Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted ” (Gal. vi. 1). He fulfils the law of Christ in bearing the burden of others (ver. 2). As he will also bear his own burden (ver. 5), surely to his temperance and wisdom he adds justice of the most exacting character. The courage of the spiritual man is in a sublime form expressed in Paul’s confident confession in Romans viii. 37–39. To these virtues of pagan ethics are joined the three Christian graces, all of which and not love only Paul reckoned as fruit of the Spirit. As a metaphysical dualism has been ascribed to Paul, it is necessary to lay special emphasis on what he has to say about the sanctification of the body. To the sensuality of heathenism, from which even Christian believers

found it hard to gain deliverance, Paul opposes the consecration of the body to Christ. "The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord" (1 Cor. vi. 13). He asks the Corinthians with one cannot but feel some warmth of feeling, "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God?" (ver. 19). As the temple of God by His Spirit, "the body is holy" (iii. 17). Sanctification by the Spirit embraces the whole personality.

(7) It is by the operation of the same Spirit that the sanctified personality is placed in a social environment appropriate to its nature. In 1 Corinthians xii. we have already the conception of the Church as a body, endowed with a diversity of gifts for the common good by the one Spirit. This idea is more fully developed in Ephesians. In Christ Jesus the ancient enmity of Jew and Gentile is removed; their reconciliation to God is also their reconciliation to one another. "We both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father" (ii. 18). "Upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" in "Christ Jesus" as "the chief corner-stone," "each several building, fully framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom also ye are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (vers. 20-22). Such a reconciliation of men in God may be fully regarded as the crown of the Spirit's work in the sanctification of individual men. By the Spirit the sanctified personality will at the Resurrection be endowed with its proper body. The present operation of the Spirit in the moral and religious change in man is the promise and the pledge of this change of the natural to the spiritual body. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11). That this

transformation of "the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" is elsewhere ascribed to the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. iii. 21) is but another instance of the close connexion in Paul's thought between the work of Christ and of the Spirit.

(8) Turning from the operation of the Spirit in the moral character, the social environment, and even the physical organism of man, we must fix our attention on what was for Paul possibly of primary importance, the religious consciousness. The characteristic of the Christian religious consciousness is that of sonship; the Spirit of God is connected with this filial consciousness not as the cause of the relation, but as the evidence and assurance of the fact in consciousness. What constitutes a man a son of God is faith in Jesus Christ. "Ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26). An immediate consequence of the relationship is the consciousness of it through the Spirit. "Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (iv. 6). A certain evidence of the relationship is the guidance of the Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). The Spirit so guiding is, amid all fears, doubts and questions of the soul, a constant assurance of sonship. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (ver. 16). This life of sonship is exercised and maintained by prayer; and even in this most intimate communion of man with God, the Spirit's help is experienced. "In like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity; for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (vers. 26, 27). The Christian

himself cannot clearly understand, cannot fully express the yearnings and strivings of this new life in God ; but God's Spirit does understand, and can express in His immediate relation to, and intimate communion with God all that baffles human powers. God satisfies the aspirations He by His own Spirit inspires. How constant is the presence and varied the activity of the Spirit in the believer may be proved by considering the terms applied. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (ver. 2). Christians "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (ver. 4). "The Spirit of God *dwelleth* in you" (ver. 9). The sons of God "are led by the Spirit of God" (ver. 14). "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit" (ver. 16). The spiritual man speaks "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth" (1 Cor. ii. 13). All the varied gifts in the Church "worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will" (xii. 11). This Spirit in its manifold present workings is the promise of the fulfilment of the Christian's hope ; we "have the firstfruits of the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 23). It is evident that the whole "inner life" of the believer is embraced by "the communion of the Holy Ghost," through which is realized in each man "the love of God" which has been revealed to mankind in "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

(9) There are three questions regarding the Holy Spirit to which we must seek an answer, the nature of the Spirit, the relation of the Spirit to Christ, and the distinction of the Spirit from the spiritual life of man. Paul conceives man as body, soul, and spirit ; but soul and spirit are not as distinct as body and soul. Man is soul in his individuality, he is spirit as dependent on God. There is one passage in which Paul appears to think of the Holy Spirit as being in God what spirit is in man, "For who among men knoweth

the things of a man save the spirit of the man, which is in him ? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God " (1 Cor. ii. 11). At first sight the words seem to describe the Spirit as God's self-consciousness ; but the context shows that it is no such speculative question about which Paul is concerned. What the wisdom of the world could not discover, " the deep things of God," the Spirit reveals to believers, for as a man knows himself better than any other can know him, so the Spirit of God knows God better than any human sages can. Speculative constructions of the Trinity can find no apostolic support in this passage.

(10) It must be admitted that the word spirit is used sometimes in a vague sense. When Christ is described as *πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν* (1 Cor. xv. 45) He is not identified with the Holy Spirit ; but is thought of as the spiritual in contrast with Adam the natural or the psychical man. So also when the covenant of the spirit is contrasted with the covenant of the letter (*γράμμα*, 2 Cor. iii. 6) it is not the Holy Spirit that is directly referred to ; but rather a covenant inward in the higher life of man as opposed to a covenant outward controlling only his acts. In the closing verses of this passage (17 and 18) this vaguer sense of the term is abandoned, and the Holy Spirit is referred to as the power of the new life in man, but is not, as has been already shown in the previous discussion, actually identified with Christ. But the passage does raise the question, Is the Spirit's operation anything else than the working of the risen Christ Himself, for so closely are the gifts and fruits of the Spirit connected with faith in His grace ? It is impossible for us to distinguish in our experience the workings of the Spirit and of the living Christ ; and it seems irreverent for us to attempt to go beyond what experience testifies to speculate about the differences of the persons in the Godhead ;

but the language used by Paul about the manifold workings of the Spirit forbids the assumption that he thought of the Spirit as merely the subjective influence and impression of the truth and grace of Christ. It is God Himself, in this activity distinguished both from the Father revealed and the Son revealing, who enters with fulness of power into the innermost life of all who receive this revelation, so that the intimate communion of the soul with Christ becomes an immediate habitation and operation of God Himself in man. The fellowship of the Spirit makes the love of God through the grace of Christ the very life of God Himself in man.

(11) As it is impossible to separate the work of the Spirit and of Christ, so we cannot distinguish the Spirit's action from the spiritual activities of man. Those who think they do honour to the Spirit by attempting to conceive the personality of the Spirit seem essentially to misconceive the Spirit's work. By the Spirit God's life becomes man's, and man's life is in God; and the attempt consciously to objectify the Spirit is to exclude Him from His habitation in the soul of man. But on the other hand we must avoid the still greater error of supposing that in the Christian life there is no Spirit's action—only man's spiritual activity. At its truest, tenderest, holiest the soul is most conscious of its insufficiency, and that its sufficiency is only in God. It is surely to misconceive God as well as man to doubt or deny His personal immanence in His Spirit in the higher life of man. Wherever truth is thought, or love cherished, or holiness willed, there God is and works. This does not mean quietism, human inaction that God may act. As Ritschl has properly taught, there is no spiritual good without spiritual desire and effort; God's best gifts do not fall into folded hands. Paul, who often speaks as if God by His Spirit did all, in his own example displayed a spiritual

energy which most Christian men can admire rather than imitate.

(12) Because Paul describes the Spirit as power from God working in man, we are not warranted in holding, as some expositors do, that he conceived the Spirit as a physical energy, or even a material substance of the same kind, though in operation opposed to the flesh. For Paul God is personal, and man is personal, and God's working in man cannot be conceived as less than personal. As has already been indicated the Spirit is so related both to God and man that it is impossible to emphasize distinct personality. Mistaken, however, is the view that the Spirit can be simply identified with the common consciousness of the Christian community, or the motives which result from that consciousness. For Paul the Spirit is an objective divine reality, however intimately related to the Christian's subjective human experience. Once more, as has been fully shown, while Paul shared the common belief regarding the supernatural gifts of the Spirit, this is not the distinctive feature in his teaching. The Spirit as the Spirit of God is supernatural, but He works not only or mainly in extraordinary phenomena, but in the inward renewal of the soul. That Paul held explicitly the doctrine of the Spirit formulated in the oecumenical creeds we have no warrant to maintain. That he was dependent both on the teaching of the Old Testament and the belief of the primitive community may be freely conceded. What must not be overlooked, and needs to be emphasized is that so intense and original an experience as his was gave him an insight which has enabled him to contribute something fresh, and true and worthy as it is fresh, to Christian thought on this theme.

ALFRED E. GARVIE.