

Hebrews 6:4-6

Apostasy in Practice

When Jesus was taken up to heaven He told His disciples to wait for the promised Spirit. [Luke 24.49](#) The Spirit would "endue" them with "power from on high". This is the promised gift, the heavenly gift spoken of here. This promised gift is our guide, our protector, our supply and our wisdom. He is the third person of the God-Head, sent by Jesus to empower the work of the fledgling church, and to seal, fill and abide with the chosen who make up that church. The Spirit is that which makes us unique among all organizations. And while the world cannot partake of Him, it CAN feel His power and presence when we walk in truth among them. He is often imitated and faked, He is often abused and maligned, He is often denied in word and by many words, but never effectively. For truth will always triumph. But the falsification of His person and work does lead to terrible apostasy. It is this which we will think about today.

I. THE CHURCH WAS TO BE LED BY THE SPIRIT

a. The power promised was essential, for the entire worship of God in all of its practice was to be overturned

- i. No more sacrifice
- ii. No more priest to intercede
- iii. No more being held at a distance by God
- iv. No more being subject to the law of works
- v. No more absence of the indwelling communion of the Holy Spirit
- vi. No more exclusion of the Gentiles
- vii. No more being servants, but instead we are children of the Most High

b. At every turn, the Spirit's power was needed for at every turn they were treading on unknown ground, unprecedented territory

c. The power was needed for the strength to endure for they themselves were marked for death by the old system and the established government

John 16.1-4

II. THE CHURCH MUST STILL BE LED BY THE SPIRIT

a. The church must organize and function according to the word of the Lord and not according to tradition, preference or cultural norms.

- i. Bible based
- ii. Gospel proclaiming
- iii. Truth speaking
- iv. Male Elder led
- v. Sin battling
- vi. Life affirming

b. Our entire faith, practice and life must be governed by the inerrant, inspired, perfect word of God.

c. The culture is still hostile to the truth

d. There is much pressure to just conform to the will of the world

e. Many within the church have already caved in to this pressure and are incredibly vocal and abusive of those who do not.

III. THE ROLE OF THE SPIRIT

The Spirit has a role in the life of believers and unbelievers as well.

a. Believers

i. Comfort - parakletos, comforter:

John 14:16 (NKJV)

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

ii. Wisdom for testimony

John 15:26- 16:4

Mark 13:11 (NKJV)

11 But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

iii. Power

Luke 24:49 (NKJV)

49 “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

iv. Truth reminded and applied

John 14:17 (NKJV)

17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

John 14:26 (NKJV)

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 16.13-15

v. Peace

(Jn 14.26)

b. Unbelievers –

John 16.8-11

- i. Conviction of Sin - They do not believe in Christ

- ii. Conviction of Righteousness - Jesus goes to His Father, the truth of His entire testimony. The hinge of his vindication being the resurrection. The single most inarguable fact in all of history, is also the most maligned, attacked and abused. This is a response to the conviction of the Spirit. Righteousness is unbearable to the unrighteous!
 - iii. Conviction of Judgment - The ruler of the world is judged, hence the hyper-sensitivity to all things judgmental in our culture. They know the truth of our judgment and cannot bear it.
- c. This applies to unbelievers within the church as well, while there should be none in the church who are accepted as members (and certainly not as leaders), there **MUST** be unbelievers in the church or we are not doing our jobs as evangelists.

IV. UNBELIEVERS IN THE CHURCH

- a. Taste the gift in the air around them

- i. Taste the word in its truth, but not in its power
 - ii. Taste the worship of the church in its outward order, but not in its inward beauty
 - iii. Taste the many gifts of the church but not its grace
- b. Hear the call/taste the power
- i. Will hear the general call of the gospel at least.

Acts 17.29-34

- a. Might be called in truth and power
 - b. Might respond with God given faith and be saved
 - c. Might reject the general call of the gospel and flee
- ii. Or they might make a pretense for the sake of conformity or desired gain of some sort
- 1. Escape hell
 - 2. Acceptance desired
 - 3. Status sought

c. Often Attempt to imitate the gift they taste

- i. False conversion and self-powered artificial righteousness
- ii. False teaching and imagined spiritual wisdom

Acts 8.4-24

- iii. Return to idolatry and empty ritual
- iv. Flagrant self-aggrandizing showmanship, intended to create emotional responses and promote people to superstar status
- v. False displays of spiritual gifts, proclamation of gifts, demands that others recognize and praise for these pretenses.

d. Must be dealt with

- i. Corrected and removed from all position and membership
- ii. Evangelized in love and affirmation of truth
- iii. Pursued for the purpose of salvation
- iv. Welcomed to participate in services but warned of its reality and the need for

authenticity, at the same time they are fenced from the table.

1 Corinthians 11:28–31 (NKJV)

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

- v. At all times the love of Christ constrains us to respond and deal with the issues raised in love and grace.
- e. Apostasy is the end if repentance is not sought. Those who become so inured in this false life can become so wrapped up in its power and pleasures that they are no longer deliverable.