

The Spirit's Work in Conversion

To be specific: What is the Holy Spirit's work in the sinner, leading to, and at the point of, his conversion? And then: What is the Holy Spirit's immediate work in the newly-converted believer?¹

The Holy Spirit's work in the unbeliever leading to conversion

Conversion. What does the Bible mean by it? We must not take this for granted. Since poor – not to say, false – teaching can and does damage believers over this matter of assurance,² we must be clear what we are talking about when we speak of conversion. The truth is, inadequate handling of the souls of men *at the point of conversion* leads to serious residual trouble for the believer. Going wrong here is akin to the kind of serious damage that can be caused by defective care at a natural birth.

Consider Ephesians 1:13-14. What can we learn about conversion from these two verses?

You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory.

First of all,³ we have to hear the word of truth, the gospel of salvation. Let me underline this. It has to be the gospel that we hear, and we have to hear it. It must, therefore, be the *gospel* –

¹ For this article, I have lightly edited my *Assurance in The New Covenant* pp33-44.

² See 1 John, for instance.

³ I would not be misunderstood. Although, in trying to be a useful teacher (simple, but not simplistic), I spell out the Spirit's work in some kind of sequence, the Spirit is sovereign, and his works are beyond human explanation and tabulation (John 3:8). I do not, therefore, want to give the impression that I am able to tie down the un-tie-down-able, or encapsulate the ineffable.

not law – that has to be preached. When I say ‘preached’, it could be standing in a pulpit, but it could be in a multitude of other ways: a mother talking to a child on her lap or by her knee, a father witnessing to his son, a neighbour talking to a friend, a college student talking to a fellow-student, a conversation at the bus stop, in a supermarket, and so on. We must overcome the insidious persistence of institutional Christendom, with its subversion and ruination of new-covenant principles and practices. We must not allow it to rob us of them.

But, speaking more particularly of what is commonly thought of as ‘pulpit work’, how little gospel preaching there is today! Not only do we too often hear something other than the gospel, but too often we are fed on lectures and not preaching. We have historical lectures, lectures on doctrine, lectures on theology, lectures on creeds, lectures on Confessions, lectures on personal relationships and self-fulfilment, lectures on social matters... and I don’t know what else! We must follow the apostle and preach the gospel. And what is it to preach the gospel? It is to preach Christ:

I resolved to know nothing... except Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2).

When I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! (1 Cor. 9:16).

By setting forth the truth plainly... our gospel... the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ... We... preach... Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor. 4:2-5).

This – the preaching of the gospel – is what converted sinners at Ephesus, Corinth and Rome. It wasn’t preaching the law! It wasn’t a talk on personal relationships, it wasn’t a talk on self-fulfilment, it wasn’t a historical lecture. It was the preaching of Christ to them as sinners. That was what brought them to Christ. And, as we know, ‘Christ is all’ (Col. 3:11).

If we do not preach the gospel, and preach it properly, we can damage sinners as they come to faith, *and that damage can afflict them for the rest of their pilgrimage*. This fact alone is sufficient to show that we must avoid the common misconception that teaching for the saints is difficult, but preaching to sinners is a

doddle. Not only do I abhor the notion that we should not preach the gospel to saints – we should always preach the gospel (Acts 20:20-21,24-27; Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:17; 2:2; 9:16; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 1:1, and so on) – bringing sinners to Christ needs sensitive care. Much damage can be caused by poor handling at this most sensitive point.

Returning to Ephesians: Paul went on: ‘You heard the word of truth’. You *heard* it. What does that mean? Does it mean we have to hear with the ear? Well, that’s the first thing we have to do – we have to hear it. Yet even here we need to be clear. A man might be deaf, and yet he can still hear the gospel preached. Is that possible? Yes! He can read the text. In some way or another the word can reach him. Even if, as occasion may demand, it is without being spoken! Oh, yes! See 1 Peter 3:1-2. Even so, see 1 Peter 3:15-17. In short, by whatever means, the word must reach the sinner.

But that’s just the start. When Paul said ‘hear’, he was going much further than physical hearing. The sound must go deeper than the ear. I’m afraid that many, when they listen to preaching, hear it only physically. Their minds are miles away: they’re thinking about the golf match, the bowling tournament, their holiday, what they can have for lunch, what they’re doing tomorrow, what’s on the television, or whatever. The truth has reached the ear, and that’s all. When Paul says: ‘You heard the word of truth’, he means that it penetrated their ear and got into their mind.

Yet even this is not enough. I’m afraid that many stop there. They think that it’s enough for the truth to reach the mind, and that’s all there is to it.⁴ *But this is not saving.* A man may assent to the truth, and not be saved. The truth must reach the heart, the

⁴ A Sandemanian thinks saving faith is nothing more than mental assent. If a sinner accepts the facts of the gospel, he is saved. To talk about the heart, or feelings, is to introduce works, and ruin the grace of God in salvation. Sandemanianism was developed by the Scotsmen, John Glas (1695-1773) and his son-in-law, Robert Sandeman (1718-1771), more especially the latter. It is not a mere historical aberration. Rather, it is, forgiving the oxymoron, very much alive, and wreaking massive damage. I hope soon to publish my work on the subject.

will, the emotions, the very centre of the man. The truth must reach the soul.

And it must be appropriated. The sinner has to believe, to trust Christ. Saving trust in Christ is essential.⁵ As Paul put it: 'The Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal. 2:20). 'I have heard the truth', he says. 'I knew it was right. But, above all, I believed, I knew, I felt, it was for me. I trusted Christ. And now I know that Christ is mine'. The sinner has to hear about Christ, and believe the gospel record, yes, but saving faith is more than 'believing the record'. The sinner has to call upon Christ, to trust Christ: 'believing', 'hearing', 'receiving', 'welcoming', 'trusting' Christ – it's all the same. And 'trust' lies at the heart of conversion.

As Joseph Hart said, true belief is more than notion:

*Let us ask th'important question,
(Brethren, be not too secure),
What it is to be a Christian?
How we may our hearts assure!
Vain is all our best devotion,
If on false foundations built:
True religion's more than notion,
Something must be known and felt.*

Yes, indeed! The sinner has to know the truth, *and feel it*. And this is precisely what the Spirit brings about. The Spirit enables the sinner to trust Christ.

Now, at the very moment the sinner believes, in the act of believing, something remarkable takes place, something secret, but nevertheless real: he is included in Christ (Eph. 1:13). What is this being 'in Christ', a phrase written large across the New Testament? The GNB translates the phrase excellently as 'union with Christ'. 'In Christ' is union with Christ. This is the great theme of the new covenant. Believers are in Christ, united to Christ.

What does that mean? It means that as God views his Son, so he views the believer. Just let that sink in! As God sees his Son,

⁵ More is involved: conviction, repentance and so on, but Eph. 1:13-14 concentrates on 'faith'.

he sees the believer. But Christ is perfect! That's how God sees the believer! There is no condemnation to any man who is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). He has passed from death to life (1 John 3:14). He is out of Adam and in Christ (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:22,45). He has been transferred out of Satan's realm into the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13). As Christ is to the Father – loved, perfect, sinless – so is the believer: he is without spot or wrinkle or stain or any such thing in his sight (Eph. 5:27; Heb. 10:14). The believer is completely free of sin before God. All the sinner's sin has been laid on Christ (Isa. 53:6; Gal. 3:13), and all Christ's righteousness has been accounted to the believer (Rom. 3:22; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21). This is what Paul means by telling believers they are 'included in Christ'. Other passages speak of Christ being in the believer. Just so! The believer is united to Christ, one with Christ. And having begun a good work in the believer, God will go on perfecting it, even to the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). This is the gospel. And the gospel has to be taught and preached in order to bring sinners to Christ. As Paul told the Corinthians:

Christ... [sent] me... to preach the gospel... For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God... God [is] pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe (1 Cor. 1:17-18,21).

What role does the Spirit play in all this? An absolutely vital role! Paul made this the acid test: 'If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ' (Rom. 8:9). He explained: 'No one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says: "Jesus be cursed", and no one can say: "Jesus is Lord", except by the Holy Spirit' (1 Cor. 12:3). The gift and work of the Spirit are essential.

But all is well: Christ promised to give his Spirit for this very work: 'I will pour out my Spirit', he said, Peter declaring the same on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2:17-18). As the apostle went on to tell his enquirers during that same discourse:

Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for

all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:38-39).⁶

Christ's promised Holy Spirit comes to the sinner in order to regenerate him – that's how the sinner believes. No sinner can believe until the Spirit gives him life and the will to believe (John 6:44-45). The sinner, being dead, will never come to me, said Christ, and all men are dead in sins by nature (Eph. 2:1-3). Sinners have to be regenerated, born again before they can believe. The dead can't believe, the deaf can't hear, and the blind can't see, but Christ can do the impossible! As he physically raised the dead man, made the blind man see, opened the ears of the deaf, and enabled the man to stretch out his withered arm, so spiritually: by his Spirit, Christ makes the spiritually dead live, the spiritually blind see, the spiritually deaf hear, the spiritually lame leap (Isa. 35:5-6). He regenerates them by his Spirit. As Jesus told Nicodemus:

I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again... I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying: 'You must be born again'. The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit (John 3:3-8).

As Paul reminded Titus, speaking of all believers:

[God] saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour (Tit. 3:5-6).

That's just the start. In regenerating the sinner, the Spirit works yet more grace in him; he convicts him of his sin, and the glories of Christ and his work:

When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to

⁶ That there is more in this promise than I speak of here, I freely admit. See my *Baptist Sacramentalism: A Warning to Baptists*.

the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgement, because the prince of this world now stands condemned (John 16:8-11).

Christ, having regenerated the sinner, and convicted him of his sin by his Spirit, gives him the grace to believe:

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast (Eph. 2:8-9).⁷

Thus the Spirit comes to the unregenerate sinner, regenerates, convicts him, and brings him to Christ, to trust in Christ.

This, then, is the Spirit's work in conversion. William Matson:

*Lord, I was blind: I could not see
In thy marred visage any grace;
But now the beauty of thy face
In radiant vision dawns on me.*

*Lord, I was deaf: I could not hear
The thrilling music of thy voice;
But now I hear thee and rejoice,
And all thine uttered words are dear.*

*Lord, I was dumb: I could not speak
The grace and glory of thy name;
But now, as touched with living flame,
My lips thine eager praises wake.*

*Lord, I was dead: I could not stir
My lifeless soul to come to thee;
But now, since thou hast quickened me,
I rise from sin's dark sepulchre.*

*Lord, thou hast made the blind to see,
The deaf to hear, the dumb to speak,
The dead to live; and lo, I break
The chains of my captivity.*

So much for the Spirit's work in the unbeliever leading him to conversion.

⁷ Christ gives grace to believe *and to repent* (Acts 5:31). Repentance is essential (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38).

In thinking of the believer's assurance, this work of the Spirit in the unbeliever must not be skipped. No sinner can have biblical comfort and assurance until he has first been regenerated, come under conviction of sin, and been converted to Christ: conviction of sin before conversion, and conversion before comfort.

All this would seem self-evident. But today it is not! Contemporary Sandemanians⁸ are in danger – to put it no stronger – of claiming assurance without conviction and conversion. *Mental assent to certain facts (even gospel facts) is not saving.* So I say again: conviction of sin before conversion, and conversion before comfort. I go further. The Spirit who convicts and converts the unbeliever, is the same Spirit who assures the believer: *conviction and conversion by the Spirit will lead to comfort by the Spirit.*

Now for the work of the Spirit in the newly-converted believer, leading him to assurance.

The Holy Spirit's work in the believer leading to, and producing, assurance

The Spirit's work does not stop with regeneration, conviction, faith and conversion. As the sinner believes, something else happens to him. *And this is the material point.* As he believes, the believer is joined to Christ, included in Christ: 'You also were included in Christ... having believed' (Eph. 1:13). As I have explained, through his union with Christ, the believer stands as Christ in the sight of God. All that Christ is, all that Christ has done, all that Christ has, is made over and accounted to the believer. And this transaction, of course, is carried out by the Spirit.

But even this does not exhaust the Spirit's work in the believer at conversion. As the sinner believes, he is not only included in Christ, but he is marked in Christ, sealed in Christ, sealed with the Spirit, anointed by the Spirit, the Spirit bearing witness to him and with him that he is indeed a child of God. In fact, the Spirit himself is the seal, the guarantee, the deposit and

⁸ See earlier note.

foretaste of the eternal glory which is eternally prepared for him as a child of God. The believer, therefore, having the Spirit, must have the work of the Spirit, *including the witness of the Spirit*, within himself: if any man is not regenerate, does not trust Christ, does not have the seal, does not have the Spirit of Christ, he doesn't belong to him (Rom. 8:9).

But, of course, the believer has it all because he has Christ through the Spirit, and 'Christ is all' (Col. 3:11). To complete the picture: all this is in Christ, for 'Christ is all, and is in all' (Col. 3:11). In *himself*, the believer is a sinner, but in *Christ* he is perfect in the sight of God, and marked as a child of God, and has the witness of the Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is indeed in Christ, a child of God. Christ has taken away his sin, and the Spirit takes away his fear: the sinner is free from sin, law, death and fear – and the Spirit tells him so.

Let me trace this out a little more fully. The question is: How does the Spirit assure the believer? Jesus told us what the Spirit would do in and to the believer. I say 'would do'; now it is 'will do', even 'does'! Every believer has the Spirit (John 7:39; 14:17; Acts 10:47; Rom. 8:9-17; 1 Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Gal. 3:2,14; 4:4-7; 5:5,16-26; 6:8; Eph. 1:13-14,17; 2:22; 4:30; 1 Thess. 4:8; 1 John 2:20,27; 4:13; 5:6-11), but this cannot be in order to regenerate him, since he is a believer already, and so must be regenerate.

So what does the Spirit do in every believer? Christ made it clear that it is the Father's will that all men (believers now – and all men in the day of judgement – Philippians 2:10-11) must glorify Christ, that they should 'honour the Son just as they honour the Father' (John 5:23). And it is precisely at this point that the Spirit works in the believer, bearing witness in and to him. Paul could say: 'The Son of God... loved me and gave himself for me' (Gal. 2:20). Where did he get such assurance? Can there be any doubt? The Spirit bore witness with his spirit, giving him his sense of sonship and adoption.

Christ promised the Spirit to every believer:

'Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him'. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the

Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:38-39).

As Christ went on to say:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you... the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you (John 14:16-17,26).

And Christ was explicit as to the Spirit's mission with regard to the believer:

When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me... When he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you (John 15:26; 16:13-15).

And the Spirit's witness with our spirit that we are one of God's children is a vital part of this.⁹ Let me re-quote the relevant scriptures:

⁹ Modern-day Sandemanians, taking faith as assent, argue that the Spirit does not witness *to the believer*, but joins the believer in witnessing *to God* that the believer is indeed a son of God: 'The Holy Spirit bears witness along with our human spirit that we are children of God. But to whom does he bear witness?... Our witness is to God the Father. If the Spirit is bearing witness *with* our human spirits, then he, too, must bear witness to God the Father... God the Father is the one to whom our human spirits, and the Holy Spirit, bear witness' (Bob Wilkin: 'Assurance by Inner Witness? Romans 8:16', downloaded from faithalone.org, emphasis his). Why the Father 'needs' this witness, I fail to see. *The believer* needs it! Sandemanians give the impression, at least, that they are determined to avoid any suggestion of heart-feeling, warmth or delight in the believer. What an arid experience! Sadly, because of incipient Sandemanianism, too often 'arid experience' seems

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry: ‘Abba, Father’. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:14-17).

Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our [your] hearts, the Spirit who calls out: ‘Abba, Father’. So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir (Gal. 4:6-7).

You have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth... As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit – just as it has taught you, remain in him (1 John 2:20-27).

It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth... We accept man’s testimony, but God’s testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 John 5:6,9-11).

How does the Spirit do this? How does he bear witness to us? What did Paul mean when, on another issue, he said: ‘My conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit’, ‘my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit’ (NASB) (Rom. 9:4)? According to John Gill, Paul was saying:

Either that his conscience was influenced and directed by the Holy Ghost in what he was about to say, or [that] it bore witness in and with the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost with [it]. So that here are three witnesses called in: Christ, conscience, and the Holy Ghost. And by three such witnesses, his words must be thought to be well established.

to be the norm! Coupled with an emphasis upon law (again, often incipient) things could hardly be worse.

I ask again: How does the Spirit bear witness to us and with us? The answer takes us to the very heart of the new covenant. Let me begin at the beginning – with the original, great promise of the new covenant:

All your sons will be taught by the LORD (Isa. 54:13).

‘The time is coming’, declares the LORD, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them’, declares the LORD... ‘I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying: “Know the LORD”, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest’, declares the LORD. ‘For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more’ (Jer. 31:31-34).

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness (Ezek. 36:25-29; see also Ezek. 37:1-28; 39:21-29).

As Christ explained:

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day... No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets: ‘They will all be taught by God’. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me (John 6:37-45).

As the writer to the Hebrews told us:

The ministry Jesus has received is as superior to [that of the priests of the old covenant] as the covenant of which he is Mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises. For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said: 'The time is coming', declares the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying: "Know the Lord", because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more'. By calling this covenant 'new', he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and ageing will soon disappear (Heb. 8:6-13).

When this priest [Jesus] had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. The Holy Spirit also testifies to us about this. First he says: 'This is the covenant I will make with them after that time', says the Lord. 'I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds'. Then he adds: 'Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more'. And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin (Heb. 10:12-18).

And this work and witness of the Spirit in the believer can only lead to joy for the child of God. After all, we know that Christ had the Spirit, and joy through the Spirit. Luke recorded that 'Jesus [was] full of joy through the Holy Spirit' (Luke 10:21), that he 'rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit' (NASB). And this, surely, is the experience granted to believers: 'God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us' (Rom. 5:5). This is how 'the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 13:52). Can the believer not join with Mary: 'My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour' (Luke 1:47)? Paul, reminding the Thessalonians of their conversion, could say that

they had ‘welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit’ (1 Thess. 1:6).

And while I do not endorse everything about the way C.H.Spurgeon put it,¹⁰ nevertheless he made a valid point:

Brothers and sisters, let us learn our need of a personal revelation! Let us seek it if we have not yet received it! With a childlike spirit let us seek it in Christ, for only he can reveal the Father to us! And when we have it, let it be our joy that we see him revealing it to others and let this be our prayer, that the God of Jacob would yet bring others unto Christ who shall rejoice in the light of God that has made glad our eyes! The Lord be with you. Amen.¹¹

Naturally, this witness of the Spirit, this sealing of the Spirit, this anointing of the Spirit, must exceed our comprehension, but we are told enough for us to come to an understanding of what we are talking about. It must be so! Believers have it! So let us look into it a little more...

And, in my *Assurance in The New Covenant*, that is precisely what I went on to do. If, reader, you wish to pursue my thoughts on this vital matter, that would be the best place to start.

¹⁰ For a start, the believer does not need to *seek* the witness of the Spirit: the Spirit sovereignly witnesses to every newly-converted sinner at the point of conversion. Rather, the believer should *listen to* the Spirit instead of legal teachers.

¹¹ Sermon number 1571.