

by the Spirit, that Jesus is in truth the Christ, the Son of the living God.

[The summarization of the design of the Fourth Gospel applies equally to the entire Bible, and to the New Testament in particular]: Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name (John 20:30-31). [Finally, in the Last Judgment, all men will be judged individually according to their fidelity to the light provided by the Word under which they shall have lived]: And books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works (Rev. 20:12). [As Jesus himself says]: For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels (Mark 8:38). For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12). [Paul summarizes the whole matter as follows]: For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law: and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law. . . . (For when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are the law unto themselves: in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them); in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ (Rom. 2:12-16).

In view of all these truths, we must admit that no man is led by the Spirit to reject or to neglect the teaching of the Word. And it becomes equally clear that no man who disregards or disobeys the teaching of the Word can truthfully claim to be led by the Spirit. No man was ever led by the Spirit to act contrary to the Word. God's Spirit and His Word go together, act together, and together effectuate the Divine purposes in every realm of the Totality of Being.

### 3. Operations of the Godhead in General

In the nomenclature of the Spirit, Divine operations are ascribed sometimes to God absolutely, and sometimes to each Person of the Godhead distinctly.

All Divine operations, whether in the Kingdom of Nature or in the Kingdom of Grace, are usually ascribed to God absolutely. As John Owen has written:

All divine operations, whether in nature or in grace, are usually ascribed to God absolutely; because the several persons are undivided

## THE ETERNAL SPIRIT — HIS PERSON AND POWERS

in their operations; acting by the same will, the same wisdom, the same power. Each person therefore is the author of every work of God, because each person is God; and the divine nature is the same undivided principle of all divine operations.<sup>1</sup>

However, even though the Divine Persons are one in essence, yet in their manner of subsistence they are Three, and among the Three there is distinction, relation, and order. Hence, in Scripture, every Divine work is assigned *distinctly* to each Person, but at the same time *eminently* to one.

[The work of Creation, for example, is distinctly ascribed to the Father, and again to the Son, and still again to the Holy Spirit.] Acts 4:24—And they . . . lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, O Lord, thou that didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is, etc. Acts 17:24-25: The God that made the world and all things therein, he . . . giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. Heb. 12:9—the Father of spirits. John 1:1-3, 14—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, etc. Col. 1:13, 16—the Son of his love . . . in him were all things created, etc. Psa. 104:30—Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created. Job 33:4—The Spirit of God hath made me, And the breath of the Almighty giveth me life.

[However, the work of Creation is ascribed by way of eminence to the Father; and absolutely to God, who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.] Acts 14:15—that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is. Acts 17:24—The God that made the world and all things therein, etc. Gen. 1:1-3: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was brooding upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light; and there was light. Psa. 33:6, 9—By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Again, Divine works are ascribed eminently to one of the three Persons in particular, when the distinguishing attribute of that Person is especially impressed upon the work itself. For example, Creation is ascribed eminently to the Father, because His authority and power especially are impressed upon the old or physical Creation.

Psa. 19:1-2: The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, And night unto night showeth knowledge. Psa. 89:5—And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Jehovah. Psa. 8:3-4: When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Rom. 1:20—For the invisible things of him [God] since the creation of the world

1. Owen, *A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit*, abridged by George Burder, 54, 55.

## THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity.

In like manner, because the grace and wisdom of the Son, and the love of the Spirit, are especially impressed upon the new or spiritual Creation, *redemption* is ascribed eminently to the former, and *regeneration* and *sanctification* to the latter.

Eph. 1:6-7: the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. Col. 1:13-14: the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. Heb. 9:11-12: But Christ . . . through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. 1 Pet. 1:18-19: knowing that ye were redeemed . . . with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.

John 3:5-7: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew. Titus 3:5—according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 5:5—the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. Rom. 15:30—Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me. Rom. 15:16—that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 2 Thess. 2:13—for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 1 Pet. 1:2—according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. Rom. 14:17—for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Again, a Divine work is eminently ascribed to one of the three Persons of the Godhead when the performance of that work involves the peculiar condescension of that Person, and to the doing of which the other Persons give their approval and consent. For example again, redemption is eminently ascribed to the Son because it involved His condescension to assume our human nature, in order to make Atonement for our sins and to qualify Himself to act as our Mediator and High Priest.

Phil. 2:5-8: Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Heb. 2:14-15: Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

## THE ETERNAL SPIRIT — HIS PERSON AND POWERS

[It was a part of the mission of the Son to redeem His people from the bondage of both sin and death.] Heb. 2:17-18: Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. Heb. 4:15-16: For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need.

Similarly, sanctification is ascribed eminently to the Holy Spirit, because it involves His condescension to His particular office and work in the Body of Christ. The fact must not be overlooked that the Spirit's coming to earth to incorporate and to indwell the Church, to suffer inevitably vexings and grievings at the hands of weak-willed saints and nominal professors of religion, to say nothing of the insults heaped upon Him by reprobate sinners, involved a condescension on the Spirit's part comparable to that involved in the Incarnation and human life and death of the eternal Word, the Son, the Messiah.

Finally, the order of operation among the three Persons of the Godhead seems to depend upon the order of their subsistence in the totality of the Divine Being.

1. *Thus the beginning of Divine operations is assigned, in Scripture, to the Father.*

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, etc. Rom. 11:33-36: O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen. Job 11:7—Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? Matt. 24:36—But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only. Acts 1:7—It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. Eph. 1:3-4: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, etc. Eph. 3:8-11: Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. *But whereas the beginning of Divine operations is ascribed*

## THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD

*in Scripture to the Father, the establishing and upholding of all things is ascribed to the Son.*

Psa. 33:6, 9—By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast. Psa. 148:5-6: Let them [all created things] praise the name of Jehovah; For he commanded, and they were created. He hath also established them for ever and ever: He hath made a decree which shall not pass away. [*Decreeing, or edicting, is in a special sense the work of the Logos or Son: to the Father we are indebted primarily for faith, to the Son for doctrine, and to the Spirit for evidence or proof.*] John 1:3—All things were made through him [the Logos]; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. Col. 1:16-17: For in him were all things created. . . . all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist. Heb. 1:1-3: God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets . . . hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, *through whom also he made the worlds*; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and *upholding all things by the word of his power*, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. 1 Cor. 15:24-28: Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him. And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.

3. *Finally, the consummation or realization of all these Divine works is ascribed to the Spirit:*

[Hence the works of the Spirit are, *eminently: Inspiration and revelation; demonstration or miracles; regeneration; sanctification; and immortalization.*] 1 Pet. 1:21—For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit. 2 Sam. 23:1-2: David the son of Jesus saith . . . The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, And his word was upon my tongue. 1 Pet. 1:10-11: Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. 1 Cor. 2:9-13: Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love him, Unto us God revealed them through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 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. But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. Matt. 12:28—But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you, Luke 24:49—but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high. Acts 1:8—But ye

shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, etc. 1 Cor. 2:4—in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, Heb. 2:4—God bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will. [Thus it will be seen that *evidence* provided by the Spirit, of the workings of the Godhead in the old or physical Creation, has taken the two-fold form (1) of recorded *revelation* or Scripture, which is God-breathed literature, and (2) of *demonstration* or miracles designed to attest the revelation.]

[As for the works of regeneration, sanctification, and immortalization, cf. John 3:5 again]: Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Tit. 3:5—according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 15:30—by the love of the Spirit. Rom. 15:16—that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 2 Thess. 2:13—for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit, etc. 1 Pet. 1:2—in sanctification of the Spirit. Gal. 5:25—If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk. Gal. 5:16—Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. Rom. 8:11—But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

To sum up: The Father is said to be the *originating* Cause of the Plan of the Universe (cf. again Isa. 46:9-11: "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. . . . yea, I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed, I will also do it"), and of all Divine operations pursuant thereto; The Word or Son is said to be the *executing* Cause; and the Holy Spirit the *realizing* or *consummating* Cause; the ultimate end being a holy universe, a universe in which mortality itself shall have been swallowed up of life (2 Cor. 5:4). Hence, whereas the Patriarchal Dispensation was essentially the age of the Father, and the Jewish Dispensation the age of the Son, the present or Christian Dispensation is the age of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost to abide with the Church throughout "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). When, however, the time shall come for the Gospel Dispensation to be terminated, the Spirit will then return to the Father, even as the Son ascended to the Father at the end of the Jewish Dispensation (Acts 1:9-11), having accomplished the work which the Father had given had given Him to do (John 17:4). But the Spirit will not return to the Father unaccompanied. He will take with Him the Bride of Christ, who shall have been purified and made whole by His presence and power, and He will present her as a chaste virgin unto the Bridegroom, that

the two—the Bridegroom and the Bride—may dwell together in sweet converse, in heavenly glory, for ever and ever. (1 Thess. 4:13-18, 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 21:1-4, 22:17).

#### 4. The First Principle of All Things

In the ancient Pythagorean metaphysic, The One or the Monad, conceived as quasi-material yet essentially dynamic, was regarded as the efficient cause of the cosmogonical process, as the First Principle, the Principle of Unity and Generation, of all things. As such the Monad was thought of as being represented or symbolized, in the numerical process, by the unit or 1. The Monad, moreover, was regarded as embodying within its own nature the elements of Limit and Unlimited, or what were later designated Form and Matter respectively; and by the agency of these elements as diffusing itself throughout, and exhibiting itself in, the number-atoms which were considered to be the ultimate stuff of the whole Cosmos. To quote Alexander Polyhistor again, as describing the Pythagorean theory:

The first principle of all things is the One. From the One came an Indefinite Two, as matter for the One, which is cause. From the One and the Indefinite Two came numbers; and from numbers, points; from points, lines; from lines, plane figures; from plane figures, solid figures; from solid figures, sensible bodies. The elements of these are four: fire, water, earth, air; these change and are wholly transformed, and out of them comes to be a *cosmos*, animate, intelligent, spherical, embracing the central earth, which is itself spherical and inhabited round about.<sup>1</sup>

Now, as far as we are able to ascertain from ancient sources, this concept of The One as the First Principle of all things originated with the Pythagoreans and in all probability with Pythagoras himself. The concept underwent many developments and ramifications, however, in the thinking of later philosophers. By Plato and his school, who were greatly influenced by Pythagorean concepts, it was developed into the concept of the Form or Idea of the Good, and given a distinctly ethical connotation. Indeed the germ of the notion lingered in Aristotle's Self-thinking Thought, which seems to have been conceived by him as essentially immaterial, like Plato's Form of the Good. But the original concept appears to have been taken over directly by Plotinus and his successors, and amplified into the Neoplatonic One, likewise conceived as the First Principle of all things, and

1. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, VIII, 25. Translation by F. M. Cornford, in his *Plato and Parmenides*, 3.