

1. The Advent of the Spirit

According to our thesis, the second phase of the Creative Process began with the institution of the Reign of Grace. John 1:17—"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:21—"that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Eph. 2:8—"By grace have ye been saved through faith." Rom. 6:14—"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace."

The Scriptures assert that God did not give the Holy Spirit unto His Son *by measure*. John 3:34—"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for he giveth not the Spirit by measure," *i.e.*, "unto him." The prophets and holy men of old spoke the words of God, as communicated to them by the Spirit, only on certain occasions; they received the Spirit only partially and intermittently. But Jesus spoke the words of God at all times because He possessed the Holy Spirit fully and uninterruptedly. In His intercessory prayer on behalf of the Apostles, He said: "Now they know that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are from thee: for the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them" (John 17:7-8)

Hence, because Jesus did at all times speak the words of God, "he that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but *he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life*, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). The order of life that is enjoyed in the Kingdom of Grace is *spiritual* life, as distinguished from "natural" or "physical" life: it is the Life of the Spirit, the life mediated by Christ and realized in the human soul through the agency of the Holy Spirit. *The natural moral life is the life lived by the man who uses his reason to keep his animal appetites and passions in proper subjection and thus to direct his will. The spiritual life is that life in which human reason itself is brought under the direction of the Mind of Christ as revealed and applied by the Spirit. The Logos Himself is the principle of spiritual life superimposed upon human reason.*

[John 6:6 Jesus says]: The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life. [Col. 3:16]: Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. [Phil. 2:5]: Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. [Col. 1:27]: Christ in you, the hope of glory. [Rom. 8:10]: And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. [Gal. 4:19]: My little children, of whom I am again in travail *until Christ be formed in you*. [Eph. 3:14-17]: For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father . . . that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye

may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith*, etc. [2 Cor. 3:17]: Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. [Cf. John 8:31-32, the words of Jesus again]: If ye abide in my word, then ye are truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Now it follows that if Jesus, the Only Begotten Eon of God, possessed the Spirit (*i.e.*, His powers and influences) *without measure*, then the different human instrumentalities whom God used in the execution and revelation Plan of Redemption must have possessed the Holy Spirit *by measure*; that is, different measures of Spirit-power were conferred upon different individuals and classes for specific, yet different, Divine ends. These measures of the Spirit varied, even as their corresponding gifts or bestowals varied. "For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit: to another faith, in the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discernings of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will. (1 Cor. 12:8-11). What is true of the *charismata* ("gifts") of the Spirit, is equally true of the measures of Spirit-power from which the gifts emanated. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all" (1 Cor. 12:4-6). There are diversities of "gracious gifts" as described in Scripture, but they all proceeded from the power of the one and the same Spirit, And there is mention of different ministrations (services), but, though varying in kind and in degree, they were all conferred by the same Lord, the Son of God. Likewise there are diversities of workings mentioned, but they all originated in the Will of the same God our Father, who worked by His Son through the agency of the Spirit. Thus the Father worked "by divers portions and in divers manners" (Heb. 1:1) by His Son, through His Spirit, in revealing and attesting the message of the Gospel.

We shall investigate, at this point, the greatest measure of Spirit-power that was ever conferred upon a human in-

strumentality, namely, the *baptismal or overwhelming measure* of the Spirit. It is designated Holy Spirit baptism in the New Testament. Every one knows that the Greek word *baptizō* has three primary meanings in the New Testament, namely, "to dip," "to plunge," or, metonymically, "to overwhelm." (The verb *baptizō* is an intensive or iterative form of the verb *baptō*, both of which mean, uniformly, "to dip" or "to plunge." *Baptō* is used with this meaning from Homer onward, in classical Greek. Cf. Plato's use of *bebaptismenoi* to describe those "soaked in wine" (*Symposium*, 176b), and of *baptizomenon* as describing a young man's "getting into deep water" (*Euthydemus*, 277d): that is, in either case, an *overwhelming*). Now obviously it would be impossible to *dip* or *plunge* one person into another—and the Holy Spirit is a Person. Hence, Holy Spirit baptism simply has to mean an *overwhelming* by the Holy Spirit; Holy Spirit baptism may be correctly termed, therefore, the *overwhelming measure of the Spirit*, that is, of Spirit-power.

Concerning the Advent of the Spirit, and what He was to do at His coming, we have learned the following: 1. That there was a time when the Holy Spirit was not yet given, that is, to believers generally; this was before Jesus had been glorified. 2. That Jesus promised to send the Paraclete upon His Apostles after His return to the Father or after He had been glorified. 3. That the Holy Spirit was, according to Promise, to come upon the Apostles, to be their Advocate, Instructor, and Guide: to guide them into all the truth: to quicken their minds to recall the things Jesus had taught them while in the flesh, and to declare unto them the things that were to come. 4. That, just before His Ascension, Jesus breathed on them (an act prophetic of their subsequent reception of the Spirit), and at the same time commissioned them to preach the Gospel and to state the terms of pardon under the New Covenant. 5. That He commanded them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were clothed with this power from on high. 6. That He said to them explicitly: "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). 7. That this coming of the Spirit upon the Apostles, in the form of a baptism or overwhelming, was to inaugurate the preaching of repentance and remission of sins in the name of (by the authority of) Christ unto all the nations, beginning

from Jerusalem. 8. That their enduement with the Spirit in baptismal measure was to make them authoritative and infallible witnesses of Him in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. 9. That this overwhelming measure of the Spirit was to be administered directly from Heaven, by our Lord Himself, in fulfilment of the "promise of the Spirit." 10. That this conferring of Holy Spirit baptism upon the Apostles would mark the beginning of the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy of a general outpouring of the Spirit upon people of all nations, removing forever the middle wall of partition which had hitherto existed between Jews and Gentiles. 11. That, in brief, the promise of Holy Spirit baptism pertained solely to the relationship that was to be sustained between the Holy Spirit and the specially chosen and qualified Apostles of Christ ("the apostles whom He had chosen," Acts 1:2), and that there is no indication whatever that such a promise was made with reference to the future relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Church of Christ, or between the Holy Spirit and mankind in general. It will thus be seen that in the study of Holy Spirit baptism we are still in the realm of *inspiration, revelation and demonstration*. In fact, we shall continue to be in these provinces of the Spirit's activity until we shall have seen the Church incorporated and established and the Word of Truth—the New Testament Scriptures—fully revealed and indited. Having thus learned that the Holy Spirit was to come upon the Apostles in the form of an overwhelming, we are now ready to inquire *when and where this Promise of the Spirit was fulfilled*.

The latter portion of the first chapter of Acts is devoted to an account of the selection of Matthias to fill the place made vacant by the fall of Judas from the Apostolate. In Acts 1:26, we read: "And they gave lots . . . and the lot fell upon Matthias: and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (That this selection was divinely ratified is evident from the fact that the number of the apostles is again recognized as *twelve* in Acts 6:2.) Continuing, as if there were no division of the record into chapters and verses, we read the following: "And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place," Acts 2:1. What could be plainer than the fact that the antecedent of "they," as used in Acts 2:1, is the word "apostles," as used in Acts 1:26? To go back to

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acts 1:15, to find the antecedent of "they" in the "hundred and twenty" brethren is to violate every rule of grammatical construction. When we stop to consider that the original manuscripts of the New Testament were not divided into chapters and verses, that these divisions have been made by men, we can be positive that it was "the eleven apostles," and the eleven Apostles only, who were "all together in one place" on this memorable occasion. This distinction is exceedingly important, and harmonizes with all that we have previously learned regarding the promise of Holy Spirit baptism.

What was the time? Pentecost, A.D. 30, fifty days after the sabbath of the Passover week. It was also the first day of the week, the Lord's Day. *What was the place?* Jerusalem—the City of the Great King. Isa. 2:3—"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." Luke 24:49—"Tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." Acts 1:4, 5—"And, being assembled together with them [the Apostles], he [Jesus] charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence." The proper time and the proper place for the fulfilment of the Promise.

In Luke's "former treatise" (see Acts 1:1) we learn that the Apostles, after the Lord's Ascension, were "continually in the temple, blessing God" (Luke 24:33). We conclude, therefore, that on this Day of Pentecost, they—the Apostles—were "all together" probably in some apartment of the Temple. The "upper chamber" was their place of lodging (Acts 1:13), but the Temple was their place of worship (cf. Acts 3:1). Here they were, then,—in some apartment of the Temple—waiting. Waiting—for what? For the Promise of the Father, for the fulfilment of the Promise of the Holy Spirit. Nor did they have to wait longer. For—"suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4). *This was Holy Spirit baptism.*

THE ETERNAL SPIRIT — HIS WORD AND WORKS

"When the apostles," writes McGarvey, "were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance, the promise of a baptism in the Holy Spirit and of power from on high was fulfilled. The power took effect on their minds, and its presence was manifested outwardly by their speaking in languages which they had never learned. The inner and mental miracle was demonstrated by the outward and physical. The promise, 'It shall not be ye that speak, but the Spirit of my Father that speaketh in you' [cf. Matt. 10:20], was fulfilled in its most literal sense; for the very words which they uttered were supplied to them immediately by the Spirit. They were not anxious how or what they should say, neither did they premeditate. It was literally given them in that hour what they should speak. Such power had never before been bestowed on men. It was the baptism in the Holy Spirit; not of their bodies, like John's baptism in water, but of their spirits. It was not a literal baptism, for this act cannot be affirmed of the connection between spirit and spirit; but the word baptism is used metaphorically. As the body, when baptized in water, is sunk beneath its surface and completely overwhelmed, so their spirits were completely under the control of the Holy Spirit, their very words being His and not theirs. The metaphor is justified by the absolute power which the divine Spirit exerted upon their spirits. Such is not the case with the ordinary influences of the Spirit, consequently these are not styled baptisms in the Spirit."¹

Nothing could be clearer than the fact that it was the *Apostles*, and the *Apostles* only, who received Holy Spirit baptism on this Day of Pentecost. To whom had the promise of the Spirit been made? The *Apostles*. Who were to be guided into all the truth as a result of the Spirit's coming upon them? The *Apostles*. Upon whom had Jesus breathed, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit"? The *Apostles*. To whom had Jesus said, "Who soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained"? The *Apostles*. Who had been commanded to tarry in Jerusalem until clothed with power from on high? The *Apostles*. To whom had Jesus said, "Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence"? The *Apostles*. Who were to be witnesses of Christ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth? The *Apostles*. Who were gathered together in one place when the Day of Pentecost was come? The *Apostles*. Who spoke with other tongues, on that Day, as the Spirit gave them utterance? The *Apostles*. *How could language be more explicit?*

What was the nature of Holy Spirit baptism on the Day of Pentecost? 1. It was *not* an ordinary spiritual (or psychological) experience for the purpose of converting those who received it.

1. J. W. McGarvey, *Commentary on Acts*, 23-24.

The Apostles were disciples of the Lord Jesus long before the Spirit came upon them on Pentecost. They did not need to be converted. 2. It was an outward manifestation, a special miracle for a special Divine purpose. (1) It was something that could be "seen." "And there *appeared* unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire." Not actual fire—but having the appearance of fire: symbols of the audible tones in which the Apostles began to speak, and of the Word which they delivered. (2) It was something that could be "heard," "There came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." What filled the house? The sound. The impact must have been greater than that of a tornado, for we read that "when this sound was heard, the multitude came together." It must have been heard throughout the entire city of Jerusalem. But the sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind and the tongues parting asunder like as of fire, were symbolic: the former of the presence of the Spirit, the latter of the presence of the Word. God's Spirit and His Word go together in effecting the Divine purposes on earth. That it was an outward manifestation is evident from the words of Peter in Acts 2:33: "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, *he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.*" Note, too, that the sound came "from heaven" (Acts 2:2): Holy Spirit baptism was administered by the Head of the Church Himself, from His position on the Throne of the Universe. There are many religionists today who claim to have received Holy Spirit baptism, who undoubtedly would be frightened beyond measure if they were actually to be made recipient of this amazing miracle!

What were the immediate effects of Holy Spirit baptism, on this occasion, upon those who received it? The effects were two: 1. They spoke with other tongues, that is, with foreign tongues, with tongues which they had never acquired themselves. 2. They spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance," that is, they spoke the words which the Spirit Himself put upon their lips. What is implied here by their speaking with tongues?

[Precisely what is stated: they spoke with *other* tongues—tongues other than their native Galilean dialect.] [Acts 2:5ff.]: Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every

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nation under heaven. [The sacred city at that particular season was filled with Jewish pilgrims from all parts of the then known world. This was the great Homecoming of the Jewish people, and these pilgrims had poured into the city in great numbers in the days preceding the Passover and had remained there from the Passover to Pentecost.] And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born? Parthians and Modes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God. [This account makes it too obvious for misinterpretation that it was the Apostles, and the Apostles only, who spoke with tongues on this occasion, and that they spoke with other tongues, that is, in the various native languages of their hearers. No need for anyone to say that these pilgrims all spoke one language. Luke makes it clear that *they did not*, that many different natives languages were represented in that audience; and that the Apostles were speaking in those foreign languages, so that their hearers said]: *Are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born, and we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God.* [If language means anything at all, this means that the Apostles on Pentecost spoke not unintelligible jargon, but spoke intelligibly in the various native languages represented by their hearers. It should be pointed out, too, that *there is not the slightest intimation that the three thousand who were converted on that occasion spoke with tongues. The reason is obvious: Those Pentecost converts did not receive Holy Spirit baptism; that special measure of Spirit-power was, according to Promise, for the Apostles only.*]

Again, the Apostles, we are told, spoke with other tongues, *as the Spirit gave them utterance.* They were so completely under the power of the Spirit, their spirits so completely overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit, that they were only giving utterance to the words which He placed upon their tongues. That they themselves did not comprehend the scope of their utterances is evident from one statement alone, Acts 2:39. Here Peter said: "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him." To what *promise* did the Apostle refer? Evidently to the Abrahamic Promise which in essence was the Promise of the Messiah, and hence the promise of the facts, commands and blessings of the Gospel of Christ (Gal. 3:16). This Promise, of course, included subordinate promises, namely, those of salvation from sin, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life. This Promise,

affirmed Peter, had reference to all who were present in his audience, to all their children, and to all that were afar off, even as many as the Lord should call unto Him. Now it is clear to us living today that this Promise included the Gentiles, in accordance with the Great Commission which Jesus had previously given to the Apostles (Matt. 28:18-20). And it is equally clear that the Apostle Peter, when he uttered these words, had not the faintest conception of this fact. Indeed for several years after Pentecost, none of the Apostles ever preached the Gospel to a single Gentile; as a matter of fact, it required a series of Divine interventions, in later years, to convince them that the Gospel was intended for Gentiles as well as Jews. (*Vide* Acts 10, 11:1-18, 15:6-11.) Thus we can readily see that the Apostles, like the prophets of old (1 Pet. 1:10-12), did not themselves comprehend the meaning and scope of the utterances which the Spirit was putting upon their lips, on the Day of Pentecost. Those who reject *verbal inspiration* of the Scriptures as a whole, certainly cannot deny it in the case of Peter's sermon on that day.

Again, what was the design of Holy Spirit baptism as conferred upon the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost? One thing is sure: It was not for the purpose of converting them to Christ or that of purifying their souls. Nor was it for the purpose of converting or saving *anyone*, on that occasion. In Acts 2:14-36, we have the account of the sermon which Peter preached on that day. It was the first Gospel sermon in the history of the world,—the first time the facts of the Gospel were announced to mankind *as facts*. The Apostle proclaimed three fundamental facts: 1. *That Jesus lived*. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know" (v. 22). 2. *That Jesus died*. "Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay" (v. 23). 3. *That Jesus was raised up from the dead*. "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (v. 24). "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses" (v. 32). These are the facts of the message of the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-5). The Apostle concluded by declaring: "Let all the house

of Israel therefore know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified" (v. 36). We continue to read: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart [*i.e.*, convicted of their sins], and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37-38). (Note that Peter did not command them to believe; obviously they were already believers, else they would not have asked what they must do to be saved.) Here were two specific commands: they were to *repent* and they were to be *baptized*: "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 16:19). [Note Acts 2:38 carefully. Here Peter spoke as the Spirit "gave him utterance" (v. 4). What they were to repent for, they were to be baptized for; or what they were baptized for, they were to repent for; and so, as an oldtime preacher put it, what the Holy Spirit has joined together, let no theologian put asunder.] This baptism, moreover, was a *command to be obeyed*, not a *promise to be fulfilled* from Heaven, like Holy Spirit baptism, and for the fulfilment of which men were to wait. Hence, we read in v. 41, that "they then that received his word were baptized: and there were *added*" (the "unto them" which follows here in our common versions was supplied by the translators; the Greek verb used here, *prostithēmi*, means, literally, to "put together," to "associate") "in that day about three thousand souls." And in the last verse of the chapter, v. 47, we read: "And the Lord *added* (*prostithēmi*, again) to them day by day those that were being saved" How were these first converts "saved"? On what conditions did they receive remission of sins? Certainly not on condition of Holy Spirit baptism, because there is no indication that they received Holy Spirit baptism. True, they were promised "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (*i.e.*, the Holy Spirit as a Gift) on the conditions of their repentance and baptism, but it is quite evident that this particular "gifts" was not Holy Spirit baptism. As we shall see later, this surely was another measure of the Spirit,—the indwelling of the Spirit—the measure of Spirit-power imparted to all obedient believers. These first converts, then, were "saved," that is, adopted into God's family, made Christians and members of the New

Covenant, on conditions of their acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Christ, their repentance from sin, and their baptism into Christ. Holy Spirit baptism was not connected with their salvation in any way, except indirectly through revelation of the message which was preached to them by the Apostles.

Herein is revealed the fundamental distinction between the baptism authorized by the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) and Holy Spirit baptism, namely, the former was a *command* to be obeyed, whereas the latter was a *promise to be fulfilled* directly from Heaven. The former was to be administered by any evangelist; the latter was administered by the Head of the Church Himself, at His own Will, and for His own Divine purposes. The baptism of the Commission was a command to be obeyed by all believers for the remission of their sins. That this was a baptism in water is evident from the various cases of conversion described in the book of Acts (Acts 8:12, 2:36-39, 9:18, 10:44-48, 16:15, 16:33, 18:8, etc.). Holy Spirit baptism was a special miracle for a special Divine purpose; Christian baptism is the baptism of the penitent believer in water, "in the name of Jesus Christ" or *by the authority* of Christ, "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," *unto* or *for* the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, Matt. 28:19). Moreover, Paul states explicitly that, with reference to the permanent faith and practice of the Church, there is "one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*" (Eph. 4:5); hence, if this "one baptism" is baptism in water—the baptism of the Commission—it simply cannot be Holy Spirit baptism, else the Spirit is made to contradict Himself. *A study of the book of Acts should convince anyone that the baptism of the Commission was—and is—baptism in water.*

Holy Spirit baptism on the Day of Pentecost was a special miracle for a twofold Divine purpose: 1. It was to clothe the Apostles with Divine authority, power and infallibility, that they might properly reveal and attest the Gospel message for all time. Hence Jude speaks of the revelation communicated by the Spirit through them as "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints (v. 3). 2. It was for the Divine purpose of incorporating the Jews as such into the Body of Christ.

The Source of authority in Christianity is God. We are the works of His hands, the products of His Divine Intelligence. We are His, because He created us in His image,

and because He is our Preserver, Benefactor, and Savior. However, it seems that God has seldom seen fit to govern His creatures by the direct exercise of His primary authority, but has chosen instead to rule and govern them through specially-commissioned human instrumentalities. Now the first transfer of Divine authority was made when the Father delegated His authority to His Son. Heb. 1:1-2: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days portions unto us in his Son," etc. Jesus Himself said, John 5:43—"I am come in my Father's name," that is, with the Father's *authority*. Again, John 8:42—"I come forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me." John 14:6—"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me." Cf. Matt. 28:18, the words of Jesus after His Resurrection: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." But when Jesus, having accomplished His work on earth, returned to the Father and was made Head over all things to the Church, it became necessary for Him to confer His Divine authority upon human instrumentalities who should act as executors of His Last Will and Testament. Hence the second transfer of Divine authority occurred when the Son, as Lord and Christ, delegated His authority "unto the apostles whom he had chosen." In the Lord intercessory prayer, as given in the seventeenth chapter of John, we learn that God gave His Son certain men out of the world (v. 6) to whom He—the Son—had revealed the words of God. "For the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them" (v. 8). Again: "Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. As *thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world*" (vv. 17-18). The reference here is to the Apostles exclusively, of course; this entire prayer was uttered by our Lord on their behalf. Cf. the words of Jesus to the Eleven, just before His Ascension, John 20:21—"As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." In a word: just as the Father had delegated His Divine authority, in the first place, to the Son, so the Son in turn delegated this authority to the Apostles.

Now in the transfer of Divine authority from the Father to the Son, there was no danger of error or perversion, because the Son was as Divine as the Father. He was the

effulgence of the Father's glory and the very image of the Father's substance (Heb. 1:3). But the Apostles were men, subject to all the frailties of the flesh and the imperfections of the human intellect; hence, there was grave danger that they might misuse the authority conferred upon them or misapprehend or pervert the truth of God. It was necessary, therefore, to invest them with the proper Divine power to preserve their minds from error and to guide them into all the truth. It was for this purpose, primarily, that the Holy Spirit came upon them in baptismal measure. Jesus had said to them, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth. . . . He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you" (John 16:13-14). When he had first called them, at the beginning of His ministry, He had said to them: "But when they [your enemies] deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matt. 10:19-20). Hence following His Resurrection, as we have learned, He breathed on them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit"; and then foretold their investiture with the authority to open the door of the Church and state the terms of admission to the New Covenant. From the time that the Spirit descended upon them in baptismal measure, on the Day of Pentecost, they were clothed with the authority of Christ; they were the ambassadors of Christ to mankind. The presence and power of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, leading them, guiding them, giving them moral and physical strength, and the power to perform miracles as well, guaranteed the authority and infallibility of their revelation of the Gospel. Moreover, when that revelation was completed through them, and embodied in permanent form in Scripture, it became the Perfect Law of Liberty (Jas. 1:25), to which nothing rightfully can be added and from which nothing rightfully can be taken away. And there was no longer any necessity for special inspiration or illumination. Hence, we find no evidence in the New Testament that the Apostles ever conferred their authority upon any other man or group of men. *They had no successors.* They are still exercising their

authority today in and through the Christian Scriptures, the Church's all-sufficient Book of Discipline and Rule of Faith and Practice (Rom. 10:6-15).

2. The Ministry of the Apostles

A word or two is in order, at this point, regarding the character of the apostolic ministry.

In the first place, the Apostles were *ambassadors* of Christ to the world and to all ages; they were Ministers Extraordinary with Divine portfolio. *Their office was a special office which was fulfilled in them and never duplicated thereafter.* 2 Cor. 5:18-20: "But all things are of God, who reconciled us unto himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us. we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." Eph. 6:19-20: "The mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains."

In the second place, the Apostles were *witnesses* of Christ, that is to say, they were witnesses—eye-witnesses, if you please—of the facts that He had died on the Cross, that He had been buried, and that He had been raised from the dead. *The Apostles were men who could testify to what they had seen with their own eyes: they had seen Jesus die on the Cross, and especially they had seen Him and conversed with Him after His resurrection.*

[No fact is emphasized more than this, in the New Testament; it is stated again and again. Hear the testimony of Jesus Himself, John 15:27]: ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. [Luke 24:45-48]: Then opened he their mind, that they might understand the scriptures; and he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. *Ye are witnesses of these things.* [Acts 1:8]: But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: *and ye shall be my witnesses* both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. [Acts 2:32—here Peter said, to his Pentecost audience]: This Jesus did God raise up, *whereof we all are witnesses.* [Luke says, Acts 4:33]: *And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of*