

as Elijah was taken, in a whirlwind to heaven.

I see some systems tinctured with this principle, which disavow it, and I have felt a good measure of it in all these theories about the Holy Spirit's operations upon unconverted men.

I have contended that the Spirit of God has done something which renders unbelief and unregeneracy a sin in all men who have access to the Bible; independent of any thing to be done; and I have taught that it will do something for those, who, from what it has done, are immersed into the faith of the gospel.

What it has done, has given strength to the weak, life to the dead, and reclaimed enemies to God—what it will do, is to beget a holy spirit and temper, to fill with peace and joy, and righteousness, those who believe. I will not therefore, with the speculative philosopher, make what the spirit of God has already done of none effect, to make way for something yet to be done. Nor will I ascribe every thing to what the spirit has done, in the inditing and confirming the testimony to the exclusion of any influence upon the minds who, through faith, have been immersed for the remission of sins and this heavenly gift. Thus the scriptures encourage all to activities. The whole world with whom this Spirit of God strives in the written word now as it once did in the mouths of the prophets and apostles, have no excuse for their infidelity or unregeneracy—and those who have put on the Lord Jesus are invited to abound in all the joys, consolations, and purifying influences of this Holy Spirit. Such is the operative system of supernatural truth—the scope of the practical principles of the Bible.

Those who have contended for physical and irresistible influences, have found themselves at variance with the manifest scope and bearing of a large portion of the apostolic addresses to their auditors.—They, to prevent or to obviate the charge of making the word of God of none effect by their traditions, have invented a curious doctrine of “common operations,” contradistinguished from the special; and, like the pious Mr. Baxter, have attempted to reconcile the jarring systems by making it possible for all gospel hearers to be saved and certain for some—possible for all who did not resist the common operations; and certain for all upon whom the irresistible or special operations were employed. This is a lame expedient. Their doctrine of common operations is as unscriptural, as their special operation is subversive of all praise or blame, of all virtue and vice, of all excellency in faith, or criminality in unbelief. The Bible doctrine requires not the aid of either system.

Let no man say that in explicitly opposing both systems, we argue that men are converted without the Holy Spirit. By no means. The Spirit of God works upon the human mind as well as dwells in it. It works by the record which God has given of his Son, as the spirit works by the body of a man—clothed with this record, it enlightens, convinces, and converts men. It is never once said to work in any other way upon the minds of men since it consummated the record. Even in convincing the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, in the age of miracles, it did this in words concerning Jesus. When