

As the history of the Acts of the Apostles is almost entirely a history of evangelization of new fields, the records of these subsequent experiences of the revealing of the Holy Ghost are not so numerous. But that they were the common experience of the Apostolic Church seems to us evident from such passages in the Epistles as Rom. i. 11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift;" or Rom. xv. 29, "And I know that when I come unto you I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ." Especially after Paul has passed through his days of affliction and of imprisonment do we see in his writings the influence of repeated and higher and richer manifestations of the Spirit of God. We need but to refer you to such passages as Eph. i. 17; iii. 14-21; Phil. i. 9-11, 19; iv. 7; Col. i. 9; 1 Thess. 23, 24; 2 Thess. iii. 5. As appears from the Epistles to the Corinthians even the extraordinary and miraculous accompaniments of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit were so repeatedly given as to characterize their public assemblies, and even give rise to some noise and confusion.

But the question still remains, Is there anything in the New Testament to warrant us in seeking a second grand manifestation of God's love to us as a definite blessing of perfect love. We have seen that the New Testament makes the conscious apprehension of God's love to me personally very distinct and definite as the gift of the Holy Ghost or being filled with the Holy Ghost, and that a few days later this term is repeated of a wonderful blessing received on the occasion of their first persecution. But are we authorized in any way to connect this with the perfection so frequently mentioned in Paul's writings, or with the perfect love spoken of by St. John?

Before we can answer this question, we must consider the relation of this gift of the Spirit to Christian character and life. By character, I here intend not reputation or habits of life, but rather the dispositions and motives which lie back of action. Now Paul puts in the very forefront the apprehension of God's love which we have identified with the gift or witness of the Holy Spirit as the cause of all holy disposition. The classic text on this subject is, of course, Gal. v. 22: "But the