

But thirdly, This interpretation of the circular, is not more at variance with what is plainly revealed respecting faith, as “coming by hearing the word of God”—than it is inconsistent with the facts and statements of the New Testament, respecting the Holy Spirit, as a *special gift*, being promised only to, and being given only in believers, “through faith;”

This is no question of opinion, of what thinkest thou, but of fact, what readest thou. It is the New Testament which teaches that “without faith it is impossible to please God,” that to ask aright, we must previously “believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them, who diligently seek him.”—It is our Saviour who encourages any, as children, with the promise that their *Heavenly Father* gives the Holy Spirit, to them who ask.

It is the Apostle Paul, who declares, that “we are all children of God” (how?—he does not say, by special and supernatural influences, or by a decree of fatal necessity, before the world began, but) “by faith in Christ Jesus,”—and that “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son, into your hearts, crying abba Father.” Gal. 3.—It is also an apostle who says, “we are Christ’s witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” (Acts v. 32. see also John vii. 30.) It is Paul who again teaches the same doctrine when he says “Christ hath redeemed us” “that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit *through faith*” and who consistently with this, says to the Ephesians, “In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, *after that ye believed*, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. (Eph. i. 13. and see Acts xix. 2.)

Altogether in harmony with this teaching of the Apostles, and quite as inconsistent with the circular’s; are all the facts and statements of the New Testament, which exhibit the order, and design of the gospel truths. An unprejudiced attention (with no previous gloss on our minds), simply to what is revealed, respecting the promise of the Holy Spirit in John xvi. and its fulfilment, in Acts ii. will suffice to confirm and illustrate this remark. We learn from these passages that the spirit was only promised to the disciples—that when thus come (in them) into the world—the Spirit was to testify of Christ,—that He accordingly did so, by revealing, and explaining what David and the other prophets wrote respecting the Messiah—and proving their accomplishment in Jesus of Nazareth, necessarily convinced\* of sin, those who had rejected his claims and had not believed in him. That the spirit testified, that Jesus was exalted, and had received of the Father, and had shed forth this, which they now saw and heard. (Acts ii. 33.)—and that therefore,

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\*See John viii. 8—46. Acts xviii. 28 for the meaning, in English, Greek, and the Bible, of the word “convince.”