

he is ever present with his word. Remember, we do not say in his word: but he ever presides over it. When it is read or proclaimed, God speaks. If the Lord Jesus were here in person he would do no more than speak to sinners to show them what they are and should be—we say, he *would* do no more; he did no more when in the flesh. So far from using any compulsory power, he wept over Jerusalem, and said, “How often *would* I have gathered thy children, [inhabitants] but ye *would not*.” And on another occasion it is said, that in a certain place he could do no mighty works “because of their unbelief.” Thus did the Redeemer conduct and influence men in the days of his flesh. Mark distinctly, then, reader, that as the Lord was about leaving the disciples, he promised them the Holy Spirit. When he was with them they needed not such a teacher, but when he went away they needed another comforter or advocate. Will any rational man, from these considerations, imagine that the Holy Spirit was to produce an influence over and above, or different from that exerted by the Lord Jesus Christ himself? We have already seen that he sought only to move men by his word; may we not, therefore, come to the conclusion, without hesitation, that this is also the way, and the *only way* in which the holy spirit influences the hearts of men? Now reader, is this “denying the spirit?” We hope the readers of the Christian will examine this subject closely. Hundreds pass sentence on the faith of others, particularly on this point, who never seriously read the scriptures one hour to see what they said on this subject. Reader, have you read your New Testament with sufficient care to distinguish the difference between the *ordinary* and *extraordinary* influences of the spirit? Did you ever consider the difference between receiving the spirit of the Lord and the *gifts* of the spirit? Before you come to conclusions on the subject, take this piece of advice—commence reading your New Testament; when you find any thing said about the spirit of the Lord, or the word of God, write it down, or mark the place for future reference; thus go through the book, and then you will be able to judge for yourselves whether the sentiments above set forth are true or not: “Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.” The writer of this wrote down nearly every sentence in the New Testament where the word spirit is found—he then compared them before he ventured to make assertions. The above are some of his conclusions.

But now to the sentiments which we oppose: Calvinists and Arminians admit with us that the spirit influences the sinner by the word; they are not, however, satisfied to stop here; but we understand them to contend that the Holy Spirit, *directly, immediately, and abstractly*, from the word disposes the sinner to love and serve the Lord before he will, or can believe and obey it!

Lest some should think that we desire to throw our own sentiments in the most *favorable*, and our opposers' in the most *unfavorable* light possible; we shall further define the sentiments which we oppose, by endeavoring to exhibit to the reader how far we go together, and then the place of separation.