

and Silas, it is of little importance to any man, personally considered, whether the Scribes and Elders of the day agree with these views or despise them as heterodox.

Candid reader—open the Christian oracles, especially the Acts of Apostles wherein we have a record of the discourses and directions of the apostles and evangelists in order to the conversion of men.—Examine these inspired pages, and ask yourself this query—*Can I find any apostle, evangelist, or gospel herald, giving directions to a sinner to pray for the Spirit to be sent from heaven to convert him to God?* Or, with the New Testament open, make the enquiry, *Did any Apostle, Christian Prophet, or inspired teacher, under any circumstances, ask God to send his Spirit to convert the unconverted?*—Or can a single instance be found where a primitive preacher taught poor sinners to look for a spiritual agent directly from the courts of bliss to arrest their souls and turn them heavenward? In the name of the great King, then, if we find not sinners directed by apostolic authority to pray for the Spirit—find not the apostles themselves thus praying—and find not any authorized servant of Jesus teaching any such thing—why should we hesitate to disown the sentiment and treat it as we treat all traditions of men which dishonor and make void the commandments of the living God? “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

There are indeed two theories concerning the Spirit, embraced and advocated by those who reject abstract spiritual influence, which we do not love and cannot recommend. So far as we have learned, they are both unscriptural. The first argues that there is no Holy Spirit other than the temper of the gospel as a system coming from a benevolent and great Teacher, and that both at conversion and subsequently the temper of good teaching is all the spiritual legacy to be received. The second contends that the gospel and the Spirit operate separately, and that the gospel (without spirit) converts, and after conversion the Spirit is given. The apostles did not thus speculate or theorize. They preached the gospel of God, full of the love of God and the Spirit of God; and when men were born again, they were born not only of “water” but of “the Spirit”; and being thus made alive to God, they had the promise of the Spirit to dwell in them richly and abundantly.

It is the peculiar privilege of saints to “be filled with the spirit”—to be “strengthened with all might by the spirit in the inward man,” to have “the Spirit” bearing witness with their spirit—to participate in “the spirit of adoption”—to be assisted by “the spirit which helps