

of *Paul to the Laodiceans*." There is nothing new in it as compared with Paul's writings, and it could be accepted as canonical without compromising Paul or any one else. It is a short, unimportant letter.

"*The Epistles of Paul and Seneca*" comprise several short, friendly, unimportant letters, purporting to have passed between them. Of no value, if genuine, further than in their relation to this celebrated philosopher. The letters, although very ancient, are not sufficiently well authenticated to be accepted as genuine.

The next is, "*The Acts of Paul and Thecla*," a history of the conversion, life, and death of Thecla, a convert of Paul; a curious relict of these early times; possibly had its foundation in some facts, but evidently so burdened down with traditions that the whole is worthless as containing any reliable history.

"*The General Epistle of Barnabas*," we place next, although in the list we have been quoting from, the Epistles of Clement come next. We do so because it is the last of those which make direct claims to apostolic origin.

The composition and sentiment of this epistle are more in its favor as establishing its genuineness than those of any of the others. It would not scandalize the New Testament had it been accepted as canonical. However, we do not impeach the wisdom of those who concluded to exclude it from the canon.

He writes in the spirit of John, not assuming authority to teach ultimate truth, but as one amongst his equals writing for mutual profit. This characteristic is brought out plainly in the following quotation: "I therefore, not as a teacher, but as one of you, will endeavor to lay before you a few things by which you may, on many accounts, become more joyful."

In this epistle also we have the only passage in all these apocryphal writings having any bearing on the work of the Holy Spirit as taught in the New Testament. Here is the extract entire:

"But how does He dwell in us? The word of His faith, the calling of His promise, the wisdom of His righteous

judgment, the commands of His doctrine; He, Himself, prophesies within us; He, Himself, dwelleth in us, and openeth to us, who were in bondage of death, the gate of our temple, that is, the mouth of wisdom, having given repentance unto us, and by this means has brought us to be an incorruptible temple. He, therefore, that desires to be saved looketh not unto the man, but unto Him that dwelleth in Him and speaketh by Him; being struck with wonder, forasmuch as he never either heard Him speaking such words out of His mouth, nor even desired to hear them. This is that spiritual temple that is built unto the Lord."

The whole passage is somewhat involved and yet there struggles out from its indistinctness the general idea of the work of the Spirit as indweller and guide. Indeed, it seems at one point to refer to the gift of tongues.

This evident allusion to the distinctive work of the Spirit, to our mind, is the strongest internal proof of its early date; indeed, is strong presumptive evidence that, if not written by the apostle Barnabas, it was at least written by a contemporary, for in the writings of the immediate disciples of the first apostles, we look in vain for this distinctive work of the Holy Spirit.

It is true that in this epistle also the tendency to exalt the letter above the Spirit is evinced, seeing that there is much more space given to the enforcement of obedience to the letter of the law than to the work of the Spirit.

In one part of the epistle he gives a long list of commands to be obeyed, all heralded by the orthodox "Thou shalt," or "Thou shalt not." Amongst many that are familiar and Scriptural, are some that are very minute and even, in some instances, exceeding the usual ideas of what are Scriptural, as, for example, the following:

"Thou shalt not entertain any doubt whether it shall be or not be."

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor *above* thyself."

"Whatsoever events shall happen unto thee thou shalt receive them as good."

"Thou shalt communicate to thy neighbor of all thou hast; thou shalt not call anything thy own."