

declension, the Spirit was still in the Church and made it indestructible. And in a time of great trial, Peter declared that "The Spirit of God and of Glory rested on the people." The Lord's promise that He would send the Spirit to be his substitute, and to abide in the Church is most explicit, and must not be restricted to the Apostles, for by the Spirit the world was to be convinced or convicted.

As these promises of the Spirit are most general and indefinite, we are not warranted to suppose that they include inspiration and miraculous powers which the Apostles possessed, and which were "the signs of an Apostle." To understand what is included in the general promise of the Spirit, we must examine the specific statements of what the Spirit was to do continually. These combined, indicate what the Church is encouraged to expect.

We are not to suppose that the Spirit exerts His power only occasionally, or to recognize His working only at special times like those of Moses, Elijah or Pentecost, or in what are considered great religious movements. This would be very well if the Spirit were to visit the world only occasionally. But we are told that when Christ sent Him, He came to abide forever. We know that the Spirit is always active. He is likened to the wind and the fire. So we must believe that the Spirit's great and invisible work is constantly going on, and is to be constantly expected by the Church everywhere. For example, there must be a great spiritual work going on in the Church to keep it up even to its present standard, or to perpetuate it. Great multitudes are constantly removing to the upper sanctuary, and yet the Church is not diminished on this account. This must imply a work of the Spirit constantly going on over the length and breadth of the Church, even where no remarkable religious movement is at all visible. It will not do to say that the number of the saints is kept up by special works of grace in favored localities, for this would imply that the Church in other places must almost or altogether disappear. But to keep the Church up to its present standard, there must be a constant work of the Spirit over the whole extent of it. But this, although a very great work, is a small amount of what the Spirit is doing. The Church is steadily increasing everywhere, and it is constantly extending its sphere, penetrating into heathen lands; and this