

preaching on this very subject a short time ago, complaining of what appears to him to be the almost criminal carelessness of some of his brethren in examining persons on this point as to whether they had received the Holy Ghost, before admitting them to baptism. But Paul baptized these people knowing that they had not received the Holy Ghost. Evidently he did not expect them to receive the Holy Ghost until after baptism. The gift of the Holy Ghost is nowhere in the New Testament offered to sinners outside of the Church, but invariably this offer is made to believers inside of it. It was on the Church in the upper room, not upon the multitude in the street, upon which the spirit was poured out and on whose heads the tongues of flame sat on the day of Pentecost. The only instance in which the baptism of the Holy Ghost preceded the baptism of water was that of Cornelius and his household, and this being the opening of the Gospel dispensation to the Gentiles, was clearly an exception to what may be generally regarded as the Divine order.

The history of Pentecost is instructive. It was the first instance in which what our Lord calls "the promise of the Father" was fulfilled. Whatever may be said of Judas, perhaps no Christian will be disposed to call in question the genuine discipleship of the other eleven who were associated with him in the apostolate. There can be as little doubt in respect to the character of those devoted women who were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre. Probably not one of the one hundred and twenty who composed the infant Church which our Lord Himself had gathered, would have any difficulty in passing the scrutiny of the strictest examining committee that ever guarded the way into the Church of God. Nay, even before they became the disciples of Christ in the New Testament sense, the probability is that the bulk of them were such as would be recognized in any community as good people. Deplorably low as the Israelitish nation had fallen into unspirituality and formalism, the light had not altogether gone out nor the glory utterly departed. The nation that still had its Simeons and its Annas, its Zacharias and Elizabeths, and its Josephs and Marys, was not without its saints, though they had indeed, unhappily, become a minished few.

And it must be remembered that those whom our Lord gathered around Him during His own personal ministry were the spiritually *elite* of the nation. The promptness, too, with which some of them, as soon as they saw and heard Him, left all and followed Him, shows that even in the comparative darkness of Judaism they had believed in Him whom they had not seen, that they were patiently waiting for His coming, and that they had such a