

in spiritual words has not become less obligatory since the days of Paul. Has the wisdom of God been proved defective in not giving us sufficient variety, clearness, and force of language to express ourselves fully upon all the doctrines of his own Word? To deny this, indeed, would be anything but a compliment to the bible. It is, then, high time to return all traditional phrases as well as practices to the "holy Fathers," who in reality have been the *Fathers* of all the spiritual bastards we are seeking to disown.

But should all this fail in proving us heretics, more serious charges are at command. If, providentially, like Paul, we escape the sea, a viper is awaiting us with fatal sting. Already more than a hundred witnesses arise against us and exclaim, 'You deny the influence of the spirit.' Yes, a spirit that does not exist! An imaginary spirit! A spirit that lives only in certain kinds of popular fraud!! The divine influence of a deceptuous human spirit we certainly deny, and if this be heresy we are smitten with a rod more potent than the rod of Moses.

But while we frankly confess our want of faith in an *unholy* we are ready to declare our faith in the *Holy* Spirit. To deny the saving influence of the spirit of satan, no one, even the most scrupulous for spiritual power, would urge as a very weighty charge against any religious professor; and let every one therefore who fixes upon us the odium of a denial of the spirit, ascertain distinctly what is the nature, authority, quality, and operation of the spirit we deny. We think it our privilege and our obligation to rise up against the sunshine of modern darkness, and testify in favor of the Spirit of God, and avoid having any 'confidence in the flesh.'

In accusing us, it is more than probable that many sin against the very spirit we are charged with denying. We teach the spirit, desire the spirit, pray for the spirit, delight in the spirit, and ever seek to walk in the spirit and cultivate a taste to relish all its precious fruits. Why then should our condemnation be sealed because we do not "seek the living among the dead?" Again we appeal, not to *orthodoxy*, but to *bibledoxy*. We are both prepared and willing to abide the decisions of a trial, but we cannot consent to appear before any other than a divinely authorized tribunal.

No people more than the Disciples teach the necessity, operation, and power of the Holy Spirit in conversion and sanctification. Theories, and the skeletons of old antichristian systems, in reference to the manner, movement, and medium of the spirit, are often held in doubt and not unfrequently rejected; for we have learned that truth and popular belief are often at variance, and the mere recommendation of some grey headed system is not considered sufficient to direct us in the selection and reception of the articles of our faith. One of the grave charges against Luther, in days of old, was, that he denied the doctrine of purgatory; did he, because he