

# Catechetical Lecture XVII

*Cyril of Jerusalem*

Early Church (pre-Nicene) · Nicene & Post-Nicene · Catechesis

STROMATA 53

---

*Downloaded from The Stromata (thestromata.com). Free for personal, educational, and ministry use.*

---

## INTRODUCTION

Delivered to catechumens in Jerusalem around 350, likely in the Constantinian basilica at Golgotha itself, this lecture continues Cyril's instruction on the Holy Spirit as drawn entirely from Scripture, a deliberate refusal of speculative method at a moment when pneumatology was becoming the central battleground of fourth-century theology. Cyril, who would later be exiled three times in the Arian controversies, here trains baptismal candidates to recognize the one Spirit beneath His many scriptural titles, anticipating the formulations the Council of Constantinople would adopt in 381. The Catechetical Lectures stand at the headwaters of mystagogical catechesis, the tradition of leading the newly baptized into the mysteries through Scripture and rite. Expect the cadence of a teacher speaking aloud to a gathered congregation, patient, accumulative, pastoral rather than disputative.

---

### **Continuation of the Discourse on the Holy Ghost.**

1 Corinthians 12:8

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, etc.

In the preceding Lecture, according to our ability we set before you, our beloved hearers, some small portion of the testimonies concerning the Holy Ghost; and on the present occasion, we will, if it be God's pleasure, proceed to treat, as far as may be, of those which remain out of the New Testament: and as then to keep within due limit of your attention we restrained our eagerness (for there is no satiety in discoursing concerning the Holy Ghost), so now again we must say but a small part of what remains. For now, as well as then, we candidly own that our weakness is overwhelmed by the multitude of things written. Neither today will we use the subtleties of men, for that is unprofitable; but merely call to mind what comes from the divine Scriptures; for this is the safest course, according to the blessed Apostle Paul, who says, *Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Ghost teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. 1 Corinthians 2:13 Thus we act like travellers or voyagers, who having one goal to a very long journey, though hastening on with eagerness, yet by reason of human weakness are wont to touch in their way at various cities or harbours.

Therefore though our discourses concerning the Holy Ghost are divided, yet He Himself is undivided, being one and the same. For as in speaking concerning the Father, at one time we taught how He is the

one only Cause ; and at another, how He is called Father , or Almighty ; and at another, how He is the Creator of the universe; and yet the division of the Lectures made no division of the Faith, in that He, the Object of devotion, both was and is One — and again, as in discoursing concerning the Only-begotten Son of God we taught at one time concerning His Godhead , and at another concerning His Manhood , dividing into many discourses the doctrines concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, yet preaching undivided faith towards Him — so now also though the Lectures concerning the Holy Spirit are divided, yet we preach faith undivided towards Him. For it is one and the Self-same Spirit who divides His gifts to every man severally as He will 1 Corinthians 12:11, Himself the while remaining undivided. For the Comforter is not different from the Holy Ghost, but one and the self-same, called by various names; who lives and subsists, and speaks, and works; and of all rational natures made by God through Christ, both of Angels and of men, He is the Sanctifier.

But lest any from lack of learning, should suppose from the different titles of the Holy Ghost that these are various spirits, and not one and the self-same, which alone there is, therefore the Catholic Church guarding you beforehand has delivered to you in the profession of the faith, that you believe in one Holy Ghost the Comforter, who spoke by the Prophets; that you might know, that though His names be many, the Holy Spirit is but one — of which names, we will now rehearse to you a few out of many.

He is called the Spirit, according to the Scripture just now read, For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom. 1 Corinthians 12:8 He is called the Spirit of Truth, as the Saviour says, When He, the Spirit of Truth, has come. John 16:13 He is called also the Comforter, as He said, For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But that He is one and the same, though called by different titles, is shown plainly from the following. For that the Holy Spirit and the Comforter are the same, is declared in those words, But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost John 14:26; and that the Comforter is the same as the Spirit of Truth, is declared, when it is said, And I will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth ; and again, But when the Comforter has come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth. And He is called the Spirit of God, according as it is written, And I saw the Spirit of God descending John 1:32; and again, For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Romans 8:14 He is called also the Spirit of the Father, as the Saviour says, For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaks in you Matthew 10:20; and again Paul says, For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, and the rest;... that He would grant you to be strengthened by His Spirit. Ephesians 3:14-16 He is also called the Spirit of the Lord, according to that which Peter spoke, Why is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord Acts 5:9? He is called also the Spirit of God and Christ, as Paul writes, But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. But if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. Romans 8:9 He is called also the Spirit of the Son of God, as it is said, And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son. Galatians 4:6 He is called also the Spirit of Christ, as it is written, Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify ; and again, Through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ Philippians 1:19 .

You will find many other titles of the Holy Ghost besides. Thus He is called the Spirit of Holiness, as it is written, According to the Spirit of Holiness. Romans 1:4 He is also called the Spirit of adoption,

as Paul says, \_For you received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father\_. He is also called the Spirit of revelation, as it is written, \_May give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him\_. Ephesians 1:17 He is also called the Spirit of promise, as the same Paul says, \_In whom you also after that you believed, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise\_. He is also called the Spirit of grace, as when he says again, \_And has done despite to the Spirit of grace\_. Hebrews 10:29 And by many other such-like titles is He named. And you heard plainly in the foregoing Lecture, that in the Psalms He is called at one time \_the good Spirit\_ , and at another the \_princely Spirit\_ ; and in Esaias He was styled \_the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel, and might, of knowledge, and of godliness, and of the fear of God\_ Isaiah 11:2. By all which Scriptures both those before and those now alleged, it is established, that though the titles of the Holy Ghost be different, He is one and the same; living and subsisting, and always present together with the Father and the Son ; not uttered or breathed from the mouth and lips of the Father or the Son, nor dispersed into the air, but having a real substance , Himself speaking, and working, and dispensing, and sanctifying; even as the Economy of salvation which is to usward from the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, is inseparable and harmonious and one, as we have also said before. For I wish you to keep in mind those things which were lately spoken, and to know clearly that there is not one Spirit in the Law and the Prophets, and another in the Gospels and Apostles; but that it is One and the Self-same Holy Spirit, which both in the Old and in the New Testament, spoke the divine Scriptures.

This is the Holy Ghost, who came upon the Holy Virgin Mary; for since He who was conceived was Christ the Only-begotten, the \_power of the Highest overshadowed her\_, and the \_Holy Ghost came upon her\_ Luke 1:35, and sanctified her, that she might be able to receive Him, \_by whom all things were made\_. John 1:3 But I have no need of many words to teach you that generation was without defilement or taint, for you have learned it. It is Gabriel who says to her, I am the herald of what shall be done, but have no part in the work. Though an Archangel, I know my place; and though I joyfully bid you All hail, yet how you shall bring forth, is not of any grace of mine. \_The Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God\_ Luke 1:35 .

This Holy Spirit wrought in Elisabeth; for He recognises not virgins only, but matrons also, so that their marriage be lawful. \_And\_ \_Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost\_ Luke 1:41, and prophesied; and that noble hand-maiden says of her own Lord, \_And whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me\_ ? For Elisabeth counted herself blessed. Filled with this Holy Spirit, Zacharias also, the father of John, prophesied , telling how many good things the Only-begotten should procure, and that John should be His harbinger through baptism. By this Holy Ghost also it was revealed to just Symeon, \_that he should not see death, till he had seen the Lord's Christ\_ Luke 2:26-35; and he received Him in his arms, and bore clear testimony in the Temple concerning Him.

And John also, who had been filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb , was for this cause sanctified, that he might baptize the Lord; not giving the Spirit himself, but preaching glad tidings of Him who gives the Spirit. For he says, \_I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that comes after me\_, and the rest; \_He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire\_. Matthew 3:11

But wherefore with fire? Because the descent of the Holy Ghost was in fiery tongues; concerning which the Lord says joyfully, \_I have come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled\_ Luke 12:49?

This Holy Ghost came down when the Lord was baptized, that the dignity of Him who was baptized might not be hidden; as John says, \_But He which sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, Upon whomsoever you shall see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, the same is He which baptizes with the Holy Ghost\_. John 1:33 But see what says the Gospel; \_the heavens were opened\_; they were opened because of the dignity of Him who descended; for, \_lo\_, he says, \_the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and lighting upon Him\_ Matthew 3:16: that is, with voluntary motion in His descent. For it was fit, as some have interpreted, that the primacy and first-fruits of the Holy Spirit promised to the baptized should be conferred upon the manhood of the Saviour, who is the giver of such grace. But perhaps He came down in the form of a dove, as some say, to exhibit a figure of that dove who is pure and innocent and undefiled, and also helps the prayers for the children she has begotten, and for forgiveness of sins ; even as it was emblematically foretold that Christ should be thus manifested in the appearance of His eyes; for in the Canticles she cries concerning the Bridegroom, and says, \_Your eyes are as doves by the rivers of water\_.

Of this dove, the dove of Noe, according to some, was in part a figure. For as in his time by means of wood and of water there came salvation to themselves, and the beginning of a new generation, and the dove returned to him towards evening with an olive branch; thus, say they, the Holy Ghost also descended upon the true Noe, the Author of the second birth, who draws together into one the wills of all nations, of whom the various dispositions of the animals in the ark were a figure:— Him at whose coming the spiritual wolves feed with the lambs, in whose Church the calf, and the lion, and the ox, feed in the same pasture, as we behold to this day the rulers of the world guided and taught by Churchmen. The spiritual dove therefore, as some interpret, came down at the season of His baptism, that He might show that it is He who by the wood of the Cross saves them who believe, He who at eventide should grant salvation through His death.

And these things perhaps should be otherwise explained; but now again we must hear the words of the Saviour Himself concerning the Holy Ghost. For He says, *“Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”* John 3:5 And that this grace is from the Father, He thus states, *“How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.”* Luke 11:13 And that we ought to worship God in the Spirit, He shows thus, *“But the hour comes and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth; for the Father also seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”* John 4:23 And again, *“But if I by the Spirit of God cast out devils.”* Matthew 12:28; and immediately afterwards, *“Therefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”* And again He says, *“And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you for ever, the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him; but you know Him, for He abides with you, and shall be in you.”* John 14:16 And again He says, *“These things have I spoken unto you being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”* And again He says, *“But when the Comforter has come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceeds from the Father, He shall testify of Me.”* And again the Saviour says, *“For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. .... And when He has come, He will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.”* ; and afterwards again, *“I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He the Spirit of Truth has come, He will declare unto you all the truth; for He shall not speak from Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak, and He shall announce unto you the things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and shall announce it unto you. All things that the Father has are mine; therefore said I, That He shall take of Mine, and shall announce it unto you.”* I have read to you now the utterances of the Only-begotten Himself, that you may not give heed to men's words.

The fellowship of this Holy Spirit He bestowed on the Apostles; for it is written, *“And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and says unto them, Receive the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins you*

remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins you retain, they are retained\_. John 20:22 This was the second time He breathed on man (His first breath having been stifled through wilful sins); that the Scripture might be fulfilled, \_He went up breathing upon your face, and delivering you from affliction\_. But whence went He up? From Hades; for thus the Gospel relates, that then after His resurrection He breathed on them. But though He bestowed His grace then, He was to lavish it yet more bountifully; and He says to them, I am ready to give it even now, but the vessel cannot yet hold it; for a while therefore receive ye as much grace as you can bear; and look forward for yet more; \_but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be clothed with power from on high\_. Luke 24:39 \_Receive\_ it in part now; then, you shall wear it in its fullness. For he who receives, often possesses the gift but in part; but he who is clothed, is completely enfolded by his robe. Fear not, He says, the weapons and darts of the devil; for you shall bear with you the power of the Holy Ghost. But remember what was lately said, that the Holy Ghost is not divided, but only the grace which is given by Him.

Jesus therefore went up into heaven, and fulfilled the promise. For He said to them, \_I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter\_. John 14:16 So they were sitting, looking for the coming of the Holy Ghost; \_and when the day of Pentecost was fully come\_, here, in this city of Jerusalem, — (for this honour also belongs to us ; and we speak not of the good things which have happened among others, but of those which have been vouchsafed among ourselves,)— on the day of Pentecost, I say, they were sitting, and the Comforter came down from heaven, the Guardian and Sanctifier of the Church, the Ruler of souls, the Pilot of the tempest-tossed, who leads the wanderers to the light, and presides over the combatants, and crowns the victors.

But He came down to clothe the Apostles with power, and to baptize them; for the Lord says, \_you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence\_. Acts 1:5 This grace was not in part, but His power was in full perfection; for as he who plunges into the waters and is baptized is encompassed on all sides by the waters, so were they also baptized completely by the Holy Ghost. The water however flows round the outside only, but the Spirit baptizes also the soul within, and that completely. And wherefore do you wonder? Take an example from matter; poor indeed and common, yet useful for the simpler sort. If the fire passing in through the mass of the iron makes the whole of it fire, so that what was cold becomes burning and what was black is made bright — if fire which is a body thus penetrates and works without hindrance in iron which is also a body, why wonder that the Holy Ghost enters into the very inmost recesses of the soul?

And lest men should be ignorant of the greatness of the mighty gift coming down to them, there sounded as it were a heavenly trumpet, For \_suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind\_ Acts 2:2, signifying the presence of Him who was to grant power unto men to seize with violence the kingdom of God; that both their eyes might see the fiery tongues, and their ears hear the sound. \_And it filled all the house where they were sitting\_; for the house became the vessel of the spiritual water; as the disciples sat within, the whole house was filled. Thus they were entirely baptized according to the promise, and invested soul and body with a divine garment of salvation. \_And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost\_. They partook of fire, not of burning but of saving fire; of fire which consumes the thorns of sins, but gives lustre to the soul. This is now coming upon you also, and that to strip away

and consume your sins which are like thorns, and to brighten yet more that precious possession of your souls, and to give you grace; for He gave it then to the Apostles. And He sat upon them in the form of fiery tongues, that they might crown themselves with new and spiritual diadems by fiery tongues upon their heads. A fiery sword barred of old the gates of Paradise; a fiery tongue which brought salvation restored the gift.

\_\_And they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance\_\_. The Galilean Peter or Andrew spoke Persian or Median. John and the rest of the Apostles spoke every tongue to those of Gentile extraction; for not in our time have multitudes of strangers first begun to assemble here from all quarters, but they have done so since that time. What teacher can be found so great as to teach men all at once things which they have not learned? So many years are they in learning by grammar and other arts to speak only Greek well; nor yet do all speak this equally well; the Rhetorician perhaps succeeds in speaking well, and the Grammarian sometimes not well, and the skilful Grammarian is ignorant of the subjects of philosophy. But the Holy Spirit taught them many languages at once, languages which in all their life they never knew. This is in truth vast wisdom, this is power divine. What a contrast of their long ignorance in time past to their sudden, complete and varied and unaccustomed exercise of these languages!

The multitude of the hearers was confounded — it was a second confusion, in the room of that first evil one at Babylon. For in that confusion of tongues there was division of purpose, because their thought was at enmity with God; but here minds were restored and united, because the object of interest was godly. The means of falling were the means of recovery. Wherefore they marvelled, saying Acts 2:8, \_\_How hear we them speaking\_\_? No marvel if you be ignorant; for even Nicodemus was ignorant of the coming of the Spirit, and to him it was said, \_\_The Spirit breathes where it lists, and you hear the voice thereof, but cannot tell whence it comes, and whither it goes\_\_ ; but if, even though I hear His voice, I know not whence he comes, how can I explain, what He is Himself in substance?

\_\_But others mocking said, They are full of new wine\_\_ Acts 2:13, and they spoke truly though in mockery. For in truth the wine was new, even the grace of the New Testament; but this new wine was from a spiritual Vine, which had oftentimes ere this borne fruit in Prophets, and had budded in the New Testament. For as in things sensible, the vine ever remains the same, but bears new fruits in its seasons, so also the self-same Spirit continuing what He is, as He had often wrought in Prophets, now manifested a new and marvellous work. For though His grace had come before to the Fathers also, yet here it came exuberantly; for formerly men only partook of the Holy Ghost, but now they were baptized completely.

But Peter who had the Holy Ghost, and who knew what he possessed, says, *Men of Israel*, you who preach Joel, but know not the things which are written, *these men are not drunken as you suppose*. Drunken they are, not however as you suppose, but according to that which is written, *They shall be drunken with the fatness of your house; and you shall make them drink of the torrents of your pleasure*. They are drunken, with a sober drunkenness, deadly to sin and life-giving to the heart, a drunkenness contrary to that of the body; for this last causes forgetfulness even of what was known, but that bestows the knowledge even of what was not known. They are drunken, for they have drunk the wine of the spiritual vine, which says, *I am the vine and you are the branches*. John 15:5 But if you are not persuaded by me, understand what I tell you from the very time of the day; for *it is the third hour of the day*. For He who, as Mark relates, was crucified at the third hour, now at the third hour sent down His grace. For His grace is not other than the Spirit's grace, but He who was then crucified, who also gave the promise, made good that which He promised. And if you would receive a testimony also, *Listen*, he says: *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass after this, says God, I will pour forth of My Spirit* Joel 2:28 — (and this word, *I will pour forth*, implied a rich gift; *for God gives not the Spirit by measure, for the Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand* John 3:34-35; and He has given Him the power also of bestowing the grace of the All-holy Spirit on whomsoever He will) — *I will pour forth of My Spirit unto all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*; and afterwards, *Yea, and on My servants and on My handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit, and they shall prophesy* Joel 2:29 . The Holy Ghost is no respecter of persons; for He seeks not dignities, but piety of soul. Let neither the rich be puffed up, nor the poor dejected, but only let each prepare himself for reception of the Heavenly gift.

We have said much today, and perchance you are weary of listening; yet more still remains. And in truth for the doctrine of the Holy Ghost there were need of a third lecture; and of many besides. But we must have your indulgence on both points. For as the Holy Festival of Easter is now at hand we have this day lengthened our discourse and yet we had not room to bring before you all the testimonies from the New Testament which we ought. For many passages are still to come from the Acts of the Apostles in which the grace of the Holy Ghost wrought mightily in Peter and in all the Apostles together; many also from the Catholic Epistles, and the fourteen Epistles of Paul; out of all which we will now endeavour to gather a few, like flowers from a large meadow, merely by way of remembrance.

For in the power of the Holy Ghost, by the will of Father and Son, Peter stood with the Eleven, and lifting up his voice, (according to the text, *Lift up your voice with strength, you that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem* Isaiah 40:9), captured in the spiritual net of his words, *about three thousand souls*. So great was the grace which wrought in all the Apostles together, that, out of the Jews, those crucifiers of Christ, this great number believed, and were baptized in the Name of Christ, and *continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and in the prayers*. Acts 2:42 And again in the same power of the Holy Ghost, *Peter and John went up into the Temple at the hour of prayer, which was the ninth hour*, and in the Name of Jesus healed the man at the Beautiful gate, who had been lame from his mother's womb for forty years; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken, *Then shall the lame man leap as an hart*. Isaiah 35:6 And thus, as they captured in the spiritual net of their doctrine five thousand believers at once, so they confuted the misguided rulers of the people and chief priests, and

that, not through their own wisdom, for \_they were unlearned and ignorant men\_ Acts 4:13, but through the mighty power of the Holy Ghost; for it is written, \_Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost said to them\_. So great also was the grace of the Holy Ghost, which wrought by means of the Twelve Apostles in them who believed, that \_they were of one heart and of one soul\_ , and their enjoyment of their goods was common, the possessors piously offering the prices of their possessions, and no one among them wanting anything; while Ananias and Sapphira, who attempted to lie to the Holy Ghost, underwent their befitting punishment.

\_And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people\_. Acts 5:12 And so great was the spiritual grace shed around the Apostles, that gentle as they were, they were the objects of dread; for \_of the rest dared no man join himself to them; but the people magnified them; and multitudes were added of those who believed on the Lord, both of men and women\_; and the streets were filled with the sick on their beds and couches, \_that as Peter passed by, at least his shadow might overshadow some of them\_. And \_the multitude also of the cities round about came\_ unto this holy Jerusalem, \_bringing sick folk, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one\_ in this power of the Holy Ghost.

Again, after the Twelve Apostles had been cast into prison by the chief priests for preaching Christ, and had been marvellously delivered from it at night by an Angel, and were brought before them in the judgment hall from the Temple, they fearlessly rebuked them in their discourse to them concerning Christ, and added this, that \_God has also given His Holy Spirit to them that obey Him\_. And when they had been scourged, they went their way rejoicing, and ceased not to \_teach and preach Jesus as the Christ\_ Acts 5:42 .

And it was not in the Twelve Apostles only that the grace of the Holy Spirit wrought, but also in the first-born children of this once barren Church, I mean the seven Deacons; for these also were chosen, as it is written, being \_full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom\_. Of whom Stephen, rightly so named , the first fruits of the Martyrs, a man \_full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, wrought great wonders and miracles among the people\_, and vanquished those who disputed with him; \_for they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke\_. But when he was maliciously accused and brought to the judgment hall, he was radiant with angelic brightness; for \_all they who sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face, as it had been the face of an Angel\_. And having by his wise defense confuted the Jews, those \_stiffnecked men, uncircumcised in heart and ears, ever resisting the Holy Ghost\_ , he beheld \_the heavens opened\_, and saw \_the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God\_. He saw Him, not by his own power, but, as the Divine Scripture says, \_being full of the Holy Ghost, he looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God\_.

In this power of the Holy Ghost, Philip also in the Name of Christ at one time in the city of Samaria drove away the unclean spirits, \_crying out with a loud voice\_; and healed the palsied and the lame, and brought to Christ great multitudes of them that believe. To whom Peter and John came down, and with prayer, and the laying on of hands, imparted the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, from which Simon Magus alone was declared an alien, and that justly. And at another time Philip was called by the Angel

of the Lord in the way, for the sake of that most godly Ethiopian, the Eunuch, and heard distinctly the Spirit Himself saying, \_Go near, and join yourself to this chariot\_. He instructed the Eunuch, and baptized him, and so having sent into Ethiopia a herald of Christ, according as it is written, \_Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hand unto God\_, he was caught away by the Angel, and preached the Gospel in the cities in succession.

With this Holy Spirit Paul also had been filled after his calling by our Lord Jesus Christ. Let godly Ananias come as a witness to what we say, he who in Damascus said to him, \_The Lord, even Jesus who appeared to you in the way which you came, has sent me, that you may receive your sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost\_. Acts 9:17 And straightway the Spirit's mighty working changed the blindness of Paul's eyes into newness of sight; and having vouchsafed His seal unto his soul, made him \_a chosen vessel\_ to \_bear the Name\_ of the Lord who had appeared to him, \_before kings and the children of Israel\_, and rendered the former persecutor an ambassador and good servant — one, who \_from Jerusalem, and even unto Illyricum, fully preached the Gospel\_ Romans 15:19, and instructed even imperial Rome, and carried the earnestness of his preaching as far as Spain, undergoing conflicts innumerable, and performing signs and wonders. Of him for the present enough.

In the power of the same Holy Spirit Peter also, the chief of the Apostles and the bearer of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, healed Æneas the paralytic in the Name of Christ at Lydda, which is now Diospolis, and at Joppa raised from the dead Tabitha rich in good works. And being on the housetop in a trance, he saw heaven opened, and by means of the vessel let down as it were a sheet full of beasts of every shape and sort, he learned plainly to call no man common or unclean, though he should be of the Greeks. Acts 10:11-16 And when he was sent for by Cornelius, he heard clearly the Holy Ghost Himself saying, \_Behold, men seek you; but arise and get you down, and go with them, nothing doubting; for I have sent them\_. And that it might be plainly shown that those of the Gentiles also who believe are made partakers of the grace of the Holy Ghost, when Peter had come to Cesarea, and was teaching the things concerning Christ, the Scripture says concerning Cornelius and them who were with him; \_While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word; so that they of the circumcision also which came with Peter were astonished, and when they understood it said that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost\_.

And in Antioch also, a most renowned city of Syria, when the preaching of Christ took effect, Barnabas was sent hence as far as Antioch to help on the good work, being a \_good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith\_; who seeing a great harvest of believers in Christ, brought Paul from Tarsus to Antioch, as his fellow-combatant. And when crowds had been instructed by them and assembled in the Church, \_it came to pass that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch\_; the Holy Ghost, methinks, bestowing on the believers that new Name, which had been promised before by the Lord. And the grace of the Spirit being shed forth by God more abundantly in Antioch, there were there prophets and teachers of whom Agabus was one. Acts 11:28 And \_as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them\_. And after hands had been laid on them, \_they were sent forth by the Holy Ghost\_. Now it is manifest, that the Spirit which speaks and sends, is a living Spirit, subsisting, and operating, as we have said.

This Holy Spirit, who in unison with Father and Son has established the New Covenant in the Church Catholic, has set us free from the burdens of the law grievous to be borne — those I mean, concerning things common and unclean, and meats, and sabbaths, and new moons, and circumcision, and sprinklings, and sacrifices; which were given for a season, and \_had a shadow of the good things to come\_ Hebrews 10:1, but which, when the truth had come, were rightly withdrawn. For when Paul and Barnabas were sent to the Apostles, because of the question moved at Antioch by them who said that it was necessary to be circumcised and to keep the customs of Moses, the Apostles who were here at Jerusalem by a written injunction set free the whole world from all the legal and typical observances; yet they attributed not to themselves the full authority in so great a matter, but send an injunction in writing, and acknowledge this: \_For it has seemed good unto the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication\_ ; showing evidently by what they wrote, that though the writing was by the hands of human Apostles, yet the decree is universal from the Holy Ghost: which decree Paul and Barnabas took and confirmed unto all the world.

And now, having proceeded thus far in my discourse, I ask indulgence from your love , or rather from the Spirit who dwelt in Paul, if I should not be able to rehearse everything, by reason of my own weakness, and your weariness who listen. For when shall I in terms worthy of Himself declare the marvellous deeds wrought by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the Name of Christ? Those wrought in Cyprus upon Elymas the sorcerer, and in Lystra at the healing of the cripple, and in Cilicia and Phrygia and Galatia and Mysia and Macedonia? Or those at Philippi (the preaching, I mean, and the driving out of the spirit of divination in the Name of Christ; and the salvation by baptism of the jailer with his whole house at night after the earthquake); or the events at Thessalonica; and the address at Areopagus in the midst of the Athenians; or the instructions at Corinth, and in all Achaia? How shall I worthily recount the mighty deeds which were wrought at Ephesus through Paul, by the Holy Ghost Acts 19:1-6? Whom they of that City knew not before, but came to know Him by the doctrine of Paul; and when Paul had laid his hands on them, and the Holy Ghost had come upon them, \_they spoke with tongues, and prophesied\_. And so great spiritual grace was upon him, that not only his touch wrought cures, but even the \_handkerchiefs and napkins\_ , brought from his body, healed diseases, and scared away the evil spirits; and at last \_they also who practised curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men\_.

I pass by the work wrought at Troas on Eutychus, who \_being borne down by his sleep fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead\_; yet was saved alive by Paul. I also pass by the prophecies addressed to the Elders of Ephesus whom he called to him in Miletus, to whom he openly said, \_That the Holy Ghost witnesses in every city, saying\_ — and the rest; for by saying, \_in every city\_, Paul made manifest that the marvellous works done by him in each city, were from the operative power of the Holy Ghost, by the will of God, and in the Name of Christ who spoke in him. By the power of this Holy Ghost, the same Paul was hastening to this holy city Jerusalem, and this, though Agabus by the Spirit foretold what should befall him; and yet he spoke to the people with confidence, declaring the things concerning Christ. And when brought to Cesarea, and set amid tribunals of justice, at one time before Felix, and at another before Festus the governor and King Agrippa, Paul obtained of the Holy

Ghost grace so great, and triumphant in wisdom, that at last Agrippa himself the king of the Jews said, \_Almost you persuade me to be a Christian\_. wouldest persuade me to become a Christian."}}--> This Holy Spirit granted to Paul, when he was in the island of Melita also, to receive no harm when bitten by the viper, and to effect various cures on the diseased. This Holy Spirit guided him, the persecutor of old, as a herald of Christ, even as far as imperial Rome, and there he persuaded many of the Jews to believe in Christ, and to them who gainsaid he said plainly, \_Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Esaias the Prophet, saying unto your fathers, and the rest\_.

And that Paul was full of the Holy Ghost, and all his fellow Apostles, and they who after them believed in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, hear from himself as he writes plainly in his Epistles; \_And my speech\_, he says, \_and my preaching was not in persuasive words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power\_. 1 Corinthians 2:4 And again, \_But He who sealed us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the earnest of the Spirit\_. 2 Corinthians 1:22 And again, \_He that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit which dwells in you\_. Romans 8:11 And again, writing to Timothy, \_That good thing which was committed to you guard through the Holy Ghost which was given to us\_.

And that the Holy Ghost subsists, and lives, and speaks, and foretells, I have often said in what goes before, and Paul writes it plainly to Timothy: \_Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in later times some shall depart from the faith\_ 1 Timothy 4:1 — which we see in the divisions not only of former times but also of our own; so motley and diversified are the errors of the heretics. And again the same Paul says, \_Which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it has now been revealed unto His Holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit\_. Ephesians 3:5 And again, \_Wherefore, as says the Holy Ghost\_ Hebrews 3:7; and again, \_The Holy Ghost also witnesses to us\_. And again he calls unto the soldiers of righteousness, saying, \_And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, with all prayer and supplication\_. Ephesians 6:17 And again, \_Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs\_. And again, \_The grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all\_ 2 Corinthians 13:14 .

By all these proofs, and by more which have been passed over, is the personal, and sanctifying, and effectual power of the Holy Ghost established for those who can understand; for the time would fail me in my discourse if I wished to quote what yet remains concerning the Holy Ghost from the fourteen Epistles of Paul, wherein he has taught with such variety, completeness, and reverence. And to the power of the Holy Ghost Himself it must belong, to grant to us forgiveness for what we have omitted because the days are few, and upon you the hearers to impress more perfectly the knowledge of what yet remains; while from the frequent reading of the sacred Scriptures those of you who are diligent come to understand these things, and by this time, both from these present Lectures, and from what has before been told you, hold more steadfastly the Faith in One God the Father Almighty; and in our Lord Jesus Christ, His Only-Begotten Son; and in the Holy Ghost the Comforter. Though the word itself and title of Spirit is applied to Them in common in the sacred Scriptures, — for it is said of the Father, \_God is a Spirit\_ John 4:24, as it is written in the Gospel according to John; and of the Son, \_A Spirit before our face, Christ the Lord\_ , as Jeremias the prophet says; and of the Holy Ghost, \_the

Comforter, the Holy Ghost\_ John 14:25, as was said — yet the arrangement of articles in the Faith, if religiously understood, disproves the error of Sabellius also. Return we therefore in our discourse to the point which now presses and is profitable to you.

Beware lest ever like Simon thou come to the dispensers of Baptism in hypocrisy, your heart the while not seeking the truth. It is ours to protest, but it is yours to secure yourself. If \_you stand in faith\_ Romans 11:20, blessed are you; if you have fallen in unbelief, from this day forward cast away your unbelief, and receive full assurance. For, at the season of baptism, when you have come before the Bishops, or Presbyters, or Deacons —(for its grace is everywhere, in villages and in cities, on them of low as on them of high degree, on bondsmen and on freemen, for this grace is not of men, but the gift is from God through men,)— approach the Minister of Baptism, but approaching, think not of the face of him you see, but remember this Holy Ghost of whom we are now speaking. For He is present in readiness to seal your soul, and He shall give you that Seal at which evil spirits tremble, a heavenly and sacred seal, as also it is written, \_In whom also ye believed, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise\_.

Yet He tries the soul. He casts not His pearls before swine; if you play the hypocrite, though men baptize you now, the Holy Spirit will not baptize you. But if you approach with faith, though men minister in what is seen, the Holy Ghost bestows that which is unseen. You are coming to a great trial, to a great muster, in that one hour, which if you throw away, your disaster is irretrievable; but if you be counted worthy of the grace, your soul will be enlightened, you will receive a power which you had not, you will receive weapons terrible to the evil spirits; and if you cast not away your arms, but keep the Seal upon your soul, no evil spirit will approach you; for he will be cowed; for verily by the Spirit of God are the evil spirits cast out.

If you believe, you shall not only receive remission of sins, but also do things which pass man's power. receivest now remission of thy sins, and the gifts of the King's spiritual bounty.}}--> And may thou be worthy of the gift of prophecy also! For you shall receive grace according to the measure of your capacity and not of my words; for I may possibly speak of but small things, yet you may receive greater; since faith is a large affair. All your life long will your guardian the Comforter abide with you; He will care for you, as for his own soldier; for your goings out, and your comings in, and your plotting foes. And He will give you gifts of grace of every kind, if you grieve Him not by sin; for it is written, \_And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you were sealed unto the day of redemption\_. Ephesians 4:30 What then, beloved, is it to preserve grace? Be ready to receive grace, and when you have received it, cast it not away.

And may the very God of All, who spoke by the Holy Ghost through the prophets, who sent Him forth upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost in this place, Himself send Him forth at this time also upon you; and by Him keep us also, imparting His benefit in common to us all, that we may ever render up the fruits of the Holy Ghost, \_love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance\_ Galatians 5:22-23, in Christ Jesus our Lord:— By whom and with whom, together with the Holy Ghost, be glory to the Father, both now, and ever, and for ever and ever. Amen.

---

Source: Translated by Edwin Hamilton Gifford. From *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. 7*. Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1894.

Text sourced from New Advent ([newadvent.org](http://newadvent.org)). Original translation public domain (pre-1900). Accessed April 2026.

Translation: Gifford translation, 1894. Edwin Hamilton Gifford (1820–1905) — translation public domain. No separate translation copyright applies.

<https://www.thestromata.com/texts/catechetical-lecture-xvii>