

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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It is fortunately no longer necessary formally to introduce Dr. Kuyper to the American religious public. Quite a number of his remarkable essays have appeared of late years in our periodicals. These have borne such titles as "Calvinism in Art," "Calvinism the Source and Pledge of Our Constitutional Liberties," "Calvinism and Confessional Revision," "The Obliteration of Boundaries," "The Antithesis between Symbolism and Revelation"; and have appeared in the pages of such publications as Christian Thought, Bibliotheca Sacra, The Presbyterian and Reformed Review--not, we may be sure, without delighting their readers with the breadth of their treatment and the high and penetrating quality of their thought. The columns of The Christian Intelligencer have from time to time during the last year been adorned with examples of Dr. Kuyper's practical expositions of Scriptural truth; and now and again a brief but illuminating discussion of a topic of present interest has appeared in the columns of The Independent. The appetite whetted by this taste, of good things has been partially gratified by the publication in English of two extended treatises from his hand--one discussing in a singularly profound way the principles of "The Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology" (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), and the other expounding with the utmost breadth and forcefulness the fundamental principles of "Calvinism" (The Fleming H. Revell Company, 1899). The latter volume consists of lectures delivered on "The L. P. Stone Foundation," at Princeton Theological Seminary in the autumn of 1898, and Dr. Kuyper's visit to America on this occasion brought him into contact with many lovers of high ideas in America, and has left a sense of personal acquaintance with him on the minds of multitudes who had the good fortune to meet him or to hear his voice at that time. It is impossible for us to look longer upon Dr. Kuyper as a stranger, needing an introduction to our favorable notice, when he appears again before us; he seems rather now to be one of our own prophets to whose message we have a certain right, and a new book from whose hands we welcome as we would a new gift from our near friend charged in a sense with care for our welfare. The book that is at present offered to the American public does not indeed come fresh from his hands. It has already been within the reach of his Dutch audience for more than a decade (it was published

in 1888). It is only recently, however, that Dr. Kuyper has come to belong to us also, and the publication of this book in English, we may hope, is only another step in the process which will gradually make all his message ours.

Certainly no one will turn over the pages of this volume--much less will he, as our Jewish friends would say, "sink himself into the book"--without perceiving that it is a very valuable gift which comes to us in it from our newly found teacher. It is, as will be at once observed, a comprehensive treatise on the Work of the Holy Ghost--a theme higher than which none can occupy the attention of the Christian man, and yet one on which really comprehensive treatises, are comparatively rare. It is easy, to be sure, to exaggerate the significance of the latter fact. There never was a time, of course, when Christians did not confess their faith in the Holy Ghost; and there never was a time when they did not speak to one another of the work of the Blessed Spirit, the Executor of the Godhead not only in the creation and upholding of the worlds and in the inspiration of the prophets and apostles, but also in the regenerating and sanctifying of the soul. Nor has there ever been a time when, in the prosecution of its task of realizing mentally the treasures of truth put in its charge in the Scriptural revelation, the Church has not busied itself also with the investigation of the mysteries of the person and work of the Spirit; and especially has there never been a time since that tremendous revival of religion which we call the Reformation when the whole work of the Spirit in the application of the redemption wrought out by Christ has not been a topic of the most thorough and loving study of Christian men. Indeed, it partly arises out of the very intensity of the study given to the saving activities of the Spirit that so few comprehensive Treatises on the work of the Spirit have been written. The subject has seemed so vast, the ramifications of it have appeared so far-reaching, that few have had the courage to undertake it as a whole. Dogmaticians have, to be sure, been compelled to present the entire range of the matter in its appropriate place in their completed systems. But when monographs came to be written, they have tended to confine themselves to a single segment of the great circle; and thus we have had treatises rather on, say, Regeneration, or Justification, or Sanctification, on the Anointing of the Spirit; or the Intercession of the Spirit, or the Sealing of the Spirit, than on the work of the Spirit as a whole. It would be a great mistake to think of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as neglected, merely because it has been preferably presented under its several rubrics or parts, rather than in its entirety. How easily one may fall into such an error is fairly illustrated by certain criticisms that have been

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THE  
WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**VOLUME ONE**

The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Church as a Whole

First Chapter.

**INTRODUCTION.**

I.

Careful Treatment Required.

"Who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit."--1 Thess. iv. 8.

The need of divine guidance is never more deeply felt than when one undertakes to give instruction in the work of the Holy Spirit--unspeakably tender is the subject, touching the inmost secrets of God and the soul's deepest mysteries.

We shield instinctively the intimacies of kindred and friends from intrusive observation, and nothing hurts the sensitive heart more than

the rude exposure of that which should not be unveiled, being beautiful only in the retirement of the home circle. Greater delicacy befits our approach to the holy mystery of our soul's intimacy with the living God. Indeed, we can scarcely find words to express it, for it touches a domain far below the social life where language is formed and usage determines the meaning of words.

Glimpses of this life have been revealed, but the greater part has been withheld. It is like the life of Him who did not cry, nor lift up nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. And that which was heard was whispered rather than spoken--a soul-breath, soft but voiceless, or rather a radiating of the soul's own blessed warmth. Sometimes the stillness has been broken by a cry or a raptured shout; but there has been mainly a silent working, a ministering of stern rebuke or of sweet comfort by that wonderful Being in the Holy Trinity whom with stammering tongue we adore as the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual experience can furnish no basis for instruction; for such experience rests on that which took place in our own soul. Certainly this has value, influence, voice in the matter. But what guarantees correctness and fidelity in interpreting such experience? And again, how can we distinguish its various sources--from ourselves, from without, or from the Holy Spirit? The twofold question will ever hold: Is our experience shared by others, and may it not be vitiated by what is in us sinful and spiritually abnormal?

Although there is no subject in whose treatment the soul inclines more to draw upon its own experience, there is none that demands more that our sole source of knowledge be the Word given us by the Holy Spirit. After that, human experience may be heard, attesting what the lips have confessed; even affording glimpses into the Spirit's blessed mysteries, which are unspeakable and of which the Scripture therefore does not speak. But this can not be the ground of instruction to others.

The Church of Christ assuredly presents abundant spiritual utterance in hymn and spiritual song; in homilies hortatory and consoling; in sober confession of outbursts of souls wellnigh overwhelmed by the floods of persecution and martyrdom. But even this can not be the foundation of knowledge concerning the work of the Holy Spirit.

The following reasons will make this apparent:

First, The difficulty of discriminating between the men and women whose

experience we consider pure and healthy, and those whose testimony we put aside as strained and unhealthful. Luther frequently spoke of his experience, and so did Caspar Schwenkfeld, the dangerous fanatic. But what is our warrant for approving the utterances of the great Reformer and warning against those of the Silesian nobleman? For evidently the testimony of the two men can not be equally true. Luther condemned as a lie what Schwenkfeld commended as a highly spiritual attainment.

Second, The testimony of believers presents only the dim outlines of the work of the Holy Spirit. Their voices are faint as coming from an unknown realm, and their broken speech is intelligible only when we, initiated by the Holy Spirit, can interpret it from our own experience. Otherwise we hear, but fail to understand; we listen, but receive no information. Only he that hath ears can hear what the Spirit has spoken secretly to these children of God.

Third, Among those Christian heroes whose testimony we receive, some speak clearly, truthfully, forcibly, others confusedly as though they were groping in the dark. Whence the difference? Closer examination shows that the former have borrowed all their speed from the Word of God, while the others tried to add to it something novel that promised to be great, but proved only bubbles, quickly dissolved, leaving no trace.

Last, When, on the other hand, in this treasury of Christian testimony we find some truth better developed, more clearly expressed, more aptly illustrated than in Scripture; or, in other words, when the ore of the Sacred Scripture has been melted in the crucible of the mortal anguish of the Church of God, and cast into more permanent forms, then we always discover in such forms certain fixed types. Spiritual life expresses itself otherwise among the earnest-souled Lapps and Finns than among the light-hearted French. The rugged Scotchman pours out his overflowing heart in a different way from that of the emotional German.

Yea, more striking still, some preacher has obtained a marked influence upon the souls of men of a certain locality; an exhorter has got hold of the hearts of the people; or some mother in Israel has sent forth her word among her neighbors; and what do we discover? That in that whole region we meet no other expressions of spiritual life than those coined by that preacher, that exhorter, that mother in Israel. This shows that the language, the very words and forms in which the soul expresses itself, are largely borrowed, and spring but rarely from one's own spiritual consciousness; and so do not insure the correctness of their interpretation of the soul's experience.

And when such heroes as Augustine, Thomas, Luther, Calvin, and others present us something strikingly original, then we encounter difficulty in understanding their strong and vigorous testimony. For the individuality of these choice vessels is so marked that, unless sifted and tested, we can not fully comprehend them.

All this shows that the supply of knowledge concerning the work of the Holy Spirit, which, judging superficially, was to gush forth from the deep wells of Christian experience, yields but a few drop.

Hence for the knowledge of the subject we must return to that wondrous Word of God which as a mystery of mysteries lies still uncomprehended in the Church, seemingly dead as a stone, but a stone that strikes fire. Who has not seen its scintillating sparks? Where is the child of God whose heart has not been kindled by the fire of that Word?

But Scripture sheds scant light on the work of the Holy Spirit. For proof, see how much the Old Testament says of the Messiah and how comparatively little of the Holy Spirit. The little circle of saints, Mary, Simeon, Anna, John, who, standing in the vestibule of the New Testament, could scan the horizon of the Old Testament revelation with a glance--how much they knew of the Person of the Promised Deliverer, and how little of the Holy Spirit! Even including all the New Testament teachings, how scanty is the light upon the work of the Holy Spirit compared with that upon the work of Christ!

And this is quite natural, and could not be otherwise, for Christ is the Word made Flesh, having visible, well-defined form, in which we recognize our own, that of a man, whose outlines follow the direction of our own being. Christ can be seen and heard; once men's hands could even handle the Word of Life. But the Holy Spirit is entirely different. Of Him nothing appears in visible form; He never steps out from the intangible void. Hovering, undefined, incomprehensible, He remains a mystery. He is as the wind! We hear its sound, but can not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. Eye can not see Him, ear can not hear Him, much less the hand handle Him. There are, indeed, symbolic signs and appearances: a dove, tongues of fire, the sound of a rushing, mighty wind, a breathing from the holy lips of Jesus, a laying on of hands, a speaking with foreign tongues. But of all this nothing remains; nothing lingers behind, not even the trace of a footprint. And after the signs have disappeared, His being remains just as puzzling, mysterious, and

distant as ever. So almost all the divine instruction concerning the Holy Spirit is likewise obscure, intelligible only so far as He makes it clear to the eye of the favored soul.

We know that the same may be said of Christ's work, whose real import is apprehended solely by the spiritually enlightened, who behold the eternal wonders of the Cross. And yet what wonderful fascination is there even for a little child in the story of the manger in Bethlehem, of the Transfiguration, of Gabbatha and Golgotha. How easily can we interest him by telling of the heavenly Father who numbereth the hairs of his head, arrayeth the lilies of the field, feedeth the sparrows on the house-top. But is it possible so to engage his attention for the Person of the Holy Spirit? The same is true of the unregenerate: they are not unwilling to speak of the heavenly Father; many speak feelingly of the Manger and of the Cross. But do they ever speak of the Holy Spirit? They can not; the subject has no hold upon them. The Spirit of God is so holily sensitive that naturally He withdraws from the irreverent gaze of the uninitiated.

Christ has fully revealed Himself. It was the love and divine compassion of the Son. But the Holy Spirit has not done so. It is His saving faithfulness to meet us only in the secret place of His love.

This causes another difficulty. Because of His unrevealed character the Church has taught and studied the Spirit's work much less than Christ's, and has attained much less clearness in its theological discussion. We might say, since He gave the Word and illuminated the Church, He spoke much more of the Father and the Son than of Himself; not as though it had been selfish to speak more of Himself--for sinful selfishness is inconceivable in regard to Him--but He must reveal the Father and the Son before He could lead us into the more intimate fellowship with Himself.

This is the reason that there is so little preaching on the subject; that text-books on Systematic Theology rarely treat it separately; that Pentecost (the feast of the Holy Spirit) appeals to the churches and animates them much less than Christmas or Easter; that unhappily many ministers, otherwise faithful, advance many erroneous views upon this subject--a fact of which they and the churches seem unconscious.

Hence special discussion of the theme deserves attention.

That it requires great caution and delicate treatment need not be said.

It is our prayer that the discussion may evince such great care and caution as is required, and that our Christian readers may receive our feeble efforts with that love which suffereth long.

## II.

### Two Standpoints.

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."--Psalm xxxiii. 6.

The work of the Holy Spirit that most concerns us is the renewing of the elect after the image of God. And this is not all. It even savors of selfishness and irreverence to make this so prominent, as though it were His only work.

The redeemed are not sanctified without Christ, who is made to them sanctification; hence the work of the Spirit must embrace the Incarnation of the Word and the work of the Messiah. But the work of Messiah involves preparatory working in the Patriarchs and Prophets of Israel, and later activity in the Apostles, i.e., the foreshadowing of the Eternal Word in Scripture. Likewise this revelation involves the conditions of man's nature and the historical development of the race; hence the Holy Spirit is concerned in the formation of the human mind and the unfolding of the spirit of humanity. Lastly, man's condition depends on that of the earth: the influences of sun, moon, and stars; the elemental motions; and no less on the actions of spirits, be they angels or demons from other spheres. Wherefore the Spirit's work must touch the entire host of heaven and earth.

To avoid a mechanical idea of His work as though it began and ended at random, like piece-work in a factory, it must not be determined nor limited till it extends to all the influences that affect the sanctification of the Church. The Holy Spirit is God, therefore sovereign; hence He can not depend on these influences, but completely controls them. For this He must be able to operate them; so His work must be honored in all the host of heaven, in man and in his history, in the preparation of Scripture, in the Incarnation of the Word, in the salvation of the elect.

But this is not all. The final salvation of the elect is not the last link in the chain of events. The hour that completes their redemption will be the hour of reckoning for all creation. The Biblical revelation of Christ's return is not a mere pageant closing this preliminary dispensation, but the great and notable event, the consummation of all before, the catastrophe whereby all that is shall receive its due.

In that great and notable day the elements with commotion and awful change shall be combined into a new heaven and earth, i.e., out of these burning elements shall emerge the real beauty and glory of God's original purpose. Then all ill, misery, plague, everything unholy, every demon, every spirit turned against God shall become truly hellish; that is, every thing ungodly shall receive its due, i.e., a world in which sin has absolute sway. For what is hell other than a realm in which unholiness works without restraint in body and soul? Then man's personality will recover the unity destroyed by death, and God will grant His redeemed the fruition of that blest hope confessed on earth amid conflict and affliction in the words "I believe in the resurrection of the body." Then shall Christ triumph over every power of Satan, sin, and death, and thus receive His due as the Christ. Then wheat and tares shall be separated; the mingling shall cease, and the hoe of God's people become sight; the martyr shall be in rapture and his Executioner in torment. Then, too, shall the veil be drawn from the Jerusalem that is above. The clouds shall, be dispelled that kept us from seeing that God was righteous in all His judgments; then the wisdom and glory of all His counsels shall be vindicated both by Satan and his own in the pit, and by Christ and His redeemed in the city of our God, and the Lord be glorious, in all His works.

Thus radiating from the sanctification of the redeemed, we see the work of the Spirit embracing in past ages the Incarnation, the preparation of Scripture, the forming of man and the universe; and, extending into the ages, the Lord's return, the final judgment, and that last cataclysm that shall separate heaven from hell forever.

This standpoint precludes our viewing the work of the Spirit from that of the salvation of the redeemed. Our spiritual horizon widens; for the chief thing is not that the elect be fully saved, but that God be justified in all His works and glorified through judgment. To all who acknowledge that "He that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abiding on him," this must be the only true

standpoint.

If we subscribe this awful statement; not having lost our way in the labyrinth of a so-called conditional immortality, which actually annihilates man, then how can we dream of a state of perfect bliss for the elect as long as the lost ones are being tormented by the worm that dieth not? Is there no more love or compassion in our hearts? Can we fancy ourselves for a single moment enjoying heaven's bliss while the fire is not quenched and no lighted torch is carried into the outer darkness?

To make the bliss of the elect the final end of all things while Satan still roars in the bottomless pit is to annihilate the very thought of such bliss. Love suffers not only when a human being is in pain, but even when an animal is in distress; how much more when an angel gnashes his teeth in torture, and that angel beautiful and glorious as Satan was before his fall. And yet the very mention of Satan unconsciously lifts from our hearts the burden of fellow pain, suffering, and compassion; for we feel immediately that the knowledge of Satan's suffering in the pit does not in the least appeal to our compassion. On the contrary, to believe that Satan exists but not in utter misery were a wound to our profound sense of justice.

And this is the point: to conceive of the blessedness of a soul not in absolute union with Christ is unholy madness. No one but Christ is blessed, and no man can be blessed but he who is vitally one with Christ--Christ in him and he in Christ. Equally it is unholy madness to conceive of man or angel lost in hell unless he has identified himself with Satan, having become morally one with him. The conception of a soul in hell not morally one with Satan is the most appalling cruelty from which every noble heart recoils with horror.

Every child of God is furious at Satan. Satan is simply unbearable to him. In his inward man (however unfaithful his nature may be) there is bitter enmity, implacable hatred against Satan. Hence it satisfies our holiest conscience to know that Satan is in the bottomless pit. To encourage a plea for him in the heart were treason against God. Sharp agony may pierce his soul like a dagger for the unspeakable depth of his fall, yet as Satan, author of all that is demoniac and fiendish, who has bruised the heel of the Son of God, he can never move our hearts.

Why? What is the sole, deep reason why as regard's Satan compassion is dead, hatred is right, and love would be blameworthy? Is it not that we

never can look upon Satan without remembering that he is the adversary of our God, the mortal enemy of our Christ? Were it not for that we might weep for him. But now our allegiance to God tells us that such weeping would be treason against our King.

Only by measuring the end of things by what belongs to God can we stand right in this matter. We can view the matter of the redeemed and the lost from the right standpoint only when we subordinate both to that which is highest, i.e., the glory of God. Measured by Him, we can conceive of the redeemed in a state of bliss, enthroned, yet not in danger of pride; since it was and is and ever shall be by His sovereign grace alone. But also measured by Him, we can think of those identified with Satan, joyless and miserable, without once hurting the sense of justice in the heart of the upright; for to be mercifully inclined toward Satan is impossible to him who loves God with love deep and everlasting. And such is the love of the redeemed.

Considered from this far superior standpoint, the work of the Holy Spirit necessarily assumes a different aspect: Now we can no more say that His work is the sanctification of the elect, with all that precedes and follows; but we confess that it is the vindication of the counsel of God with all that pertains thereto, from the creation and throughout the ages, unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and onward throughout eternity, both in heaven and in hell.

The difference between these two viewpoints can easily be appreciated. According to the first, the work of the Holy Spirit is only subordinate. Unfortunately man is fallen; hence he is diseased. Since he is impure and unholy, even subject to death itself, the Holy Spirit must purify and sanctify him. This implies, first, that had man not sinned the Holy Spirit would have had no work. Second, that when the work of sanctification is finished, His activity will cease. According to the correct viewpoint, the work of the Spirit is continuous and perpetual, beginning with the creation, continuing throughout eternity, begun even before sin first appeared.

It may be objected that some time ago the author emphatically opposed the idea that Christ would have come into the world even if sin had not entered in; and that now he affirms with equal emphasis that the Holy Spirit would have wrought in the world and in man if the latter had remained sinless.

The answer is very simple. If Christ had not appeared in His capacity of Messiah, He would have had, as the Son, the Second Person in the Godhead, His own divine sphere of action, seeing that all things consist through Him. On the contrary, if the work of the Holy Spirit were confined to the sanctification of the redeemed, He would be absolutely inactive if sin had not entered into the world. And since this would be equal to a denial of His Godhead, it can not for a moment be tolerated.

By occupying this superior viewpoint, we apply to the work of the Holy Spirit the fundamental principle of the Reformed churches: "That all things must be measured by the glory of God."

### III.

The Indwelling and Outgoing Works of God.

"And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."--Psalm xxxiii. 6.

The thorough and clear-headed theologians of the most flourishing periods of the Church used to distinguish between the indwelling and outgoing works of God.

The same distinction exists to some extent in nature. The lion watching his prey differs widely from the lion resting among his whelps. See the blazing eye, the lifted head, the strained muscles and panting breath. One can see that the crouching lion is laboring intensely. Yet the act is now only in contemplation. The heat and the ferment, the nerve-tension are all within. A terrible deed is about to be done, but it is still under restraint, until he pounces with thundering roar upon his unsuspecting victim, burying his fangs deep into the quivering flesh.

We find the same distinction in finer form among men. When a storm has raged at sea, and the fate of the absent fishing-smacks that are expected to return with the tide is, uncertain, a fisherman's awe-stricken wife sits on the brow of the sand-hill watching and waiting in speechless suspense. As she waits, her heart and soul labor in prayer; the nerves are tense, the blood runs fast, and breathing is almost suspended. Yet there is no outward act; only labor within. But on

the safe return of the smacks, when she sees her own, her burdened heart finds relief in a cry of joy.

Or, taking examples from the more ordinary walks of life, compare the student, the scholar, the inventor thinking out his new invention, the architect forming his plans, the general studying his opportunities, the sturdy sailor nimbly climbing the mast of his ship, or yonder blacksmith raising the sledge to strike the glowing iron upon the anvil with concentrated muscular force. Judging superficially, one would say the blacksmith and sailor work, but the men of learning are idle. Yet he that looks beneath the surface knows better than this. For if those men perform no apparent manual labor, they work with brain, nerve, and blood; yet since those organs are more delicate than hand or foot, their invisible, indwelling work is much more exhausting. With all their labor the blacksmith and sailor are pictures of health, while the men of mental force, apparently idle among their folios, are pale from exhaustion, their vitality being almost consumed by their intense application.

Applying this distinction without its human limitations to the works of the Lord, we find that the outgoing works of God had their beginning when God created the heavens and the earth; and that before that moment which marks the birth of time, nothing existed but God working within Himself. Hence this twofold operation: The first, externally manifest, known to us in the acts of creating, upholding, and directing all things--acts that, compared to those of eternity, seem to have begun but yesterday; for what are thousands of years in the presence of the eternal ages? The second, behind and underneath the first--an operation not begun nor ended, but eternal like Himself; deeper, richer, fuller, yet not manifested, hidden within Him, which we therefore designate indwelling.

Although these two operations can scarcely be separated--for there never was one manifest without which was not first completed within--yet the difference is strongly marked and easily recognized. The indwelling works of God are from eternity, the outgoing belong to time. The former precede, the latter follow: The foundation of that which becomes visible lies in that which remains invisible. The light itself is hidden, it is the radiation only that appears.

The Scripture, speaking of the indwelling works of God, says: "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of His heart to all generations" (Psalm xxiii. 11). Since in God heart and thought have