



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Systematic Theology

“The History of the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit - II”

TRANSCRIPT

Let's have a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the Lord Jesus Christ and for the blessings that are ours through him. And we're thinking particularly of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and we know, Lord, that it is his office to glorify Jesus Christ, but we thank Thee that in the Word, thou hast given us many things in doctrinal form concerning him.

And we pray that as we study the third person of the Trinity that the result shall be that we shall not only come to know him better and his work in a deeper and more important way, but may the result be the desire of the Spirit that we be drawn closer to Jesus Christ. For he takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. And so we commit the hour to Thee for Thy blessing upon us, to this end.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Now, tonight is the second in our study of the History of the Doctrine of the Spirit, and this will conclude our study of this subject, and then we shall turn next time to the study of the Scriptures themselves, with reference to the doctrine of the Spirit. And our subject for next Monday night will be -- I believe it's part one of a two-part series

on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity, or the Holy Spirit and the Holy Trinity. So next time, that will be our topic.

By the way, some of you have been in the theology classes now for about two years, and I think it’s about time that you begin to read some theology for yourself. And so if you are feeling the urge, deep down within, to get your thoughts concerning Scriptural doctrines straight, I’d like to suggest to you some theologies that you might read. And particularly, since we are studying the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, it would be good for you to read the sections in them on the Holy Spirit. And of course, we have at Dallas Seminary, our founders’ theology as one of our texts that we often read, and it’s Dr. Chafer’s -- C-H-A-F-E-R -- Chafer’s “Systematic Theology.” And he has one volume that is devoted to pneumatology, or the Holy Spirit. So if you can get your hands upon Dr. Chafer’s theology, or that particular volume -- by the way, I think you’re eligible, each one of you, to go to the seminary library and take out books, so long as you can, I think, convince them that you are responsible human beings. And I’d be glad to go on the note of most of you in the audience anyway. So there are numbers of people in Dallas who do use our seminary library, and so far as I know, you are eligible.

And then there is a theology by a reformed theologian, Professor Louis Berkhof -- B-E-R-K-H-O-F -- that is a one-volume theology. It is written from the amillennial standpoint; that is, he does not believe in a literal kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the earth, but in many respects, this is a very sound theology, and it would be interesting for you, I’m sure, to read the things that Professor Berkhof has on the Holy Spirit and the Trinity. And in that particular section, he would be very sound.

And then there are two other theologies that are very worthwhile; one written by William G. T. Shedd -- S-H-E-D-D -- and that theology is a very helpful work, in my opinion.

And then there is an older one by Charles Hodge, which has many very, very fine things in it, but it is a little more difficult to read, and so for those of you that are more advanced and you have read some theology, you might want to read Hodge.

Now, if you’d like to begin, and you want a simple one to begin, which in some respects, is very helpful, Henry Clarence Thiessen. I hope I spell this right. I’m not sure I have. I think it’s “I-E.” Thiessen, I believe that’s it. I should have looked that up. I’m getting old. Thiessen -- T-H-I-E-S -- now it doesn’t -- I don’t think it has two “s”es either. But anyway, it’s something like that, and it’s H. C. Thiessen. And you can go to the seminary book room, and they would be happy to supply you with any of these book -- books that you would like to have, I’m sure. If they don’t have them in stock, they’ll be glad to order them for you.

And I’ll warn Mr. Bob Schraeder that you’re coming, so that you won’t overwhelm him with your orders. But by now, it’s time for you to begin to do a little studying for yourself, so why don’t you just pick one of these -- like Thiessen or Berkhof -- and begin to read a little theology. I think you will find it very, very profitable in the study of the Scriptures. Probably will give you lots of questions, too, so that you can ask in the question hour that follows.

Now for tonight, I’m going to read two verses from the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of John as a kind of banner passage for what we want to look at tonight. John chapter 14, verse 16 and verse 17. And these verses, as you know, are set in the context of our Lord’s Upper Room Discourse, and in the course of his message to the disciples he says,

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter.”

In other words, I am one comforter, I am one advocate. Well, he will give you another Comforter, that he might be with you until you sin, or for six months. Now that is, of course, not what our Lord said. He said, “that he might be with you forever.”

Now, he is called the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive. Notice it does not say “the world does not receive,” but “the world cannot receive.” “Because it does not see him nor know him. You know him because he abides with you, and is in you.”

Now, that is what my Greek text reads, but other texts I think, read -- and I believe they are correct -- “He shall -- he abides with you, and shall be in you.” A reference to the peculiar relationship that the Spirit shall bear to us from the Day of Pentecost on.

Now, the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and remember, we began our study last time by pointing out the importance of history, even though it has been maligned by others. I did not quote James Joyce, but in “Ulysses” he says, “History is a nightmare from which I am trying to escape.” But if we ignore history -- I said last time -- we are predestined to repeat its tragic errors. And if we ignore the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we shall be much more susceptible to the errors that are rampant in connection with this doctrine in the 20th century.

I think this has special reference to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, because it is a doctrine that is peculiarly plagued by the errors of men and the errors of men in the past. And because it is such an important subject, so definitely related to our daily Christian life, it’s important that we know the ways in which men have erred in connection with this doctrine.

Well, we began our study of the history of the doctrine of the Spirit by centering attention upon these things. We started with the post-apostolic age to the Reformation, and we spent our entire last time on that time, from 95 A.D. to 1517 A.D. And by the way, I’m going to ask you a question or two tonight. What happened in 1517 A.D? Does

anyone remember? I know it was about three weeks ago, but does anyone remember? 1517 A.D.? What happened then? I know what you’re thinking. Why has that fact so fled from my mind? What happened in 1517 A.D.? Look up your notes. Mr. Davis, what about it? Can’t read his writing. All right. Anyone else? Wait, somebody’s getting close. Luther did what? Right. All right. That was the day -- that was the year in which Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, and that is just a handy date for the beginning of the Reformation.

Well, after we pointed to the -- that particular time, we then launched into a discussion of the anti-Nicene period, which is the period from 95 to 325 A.D. And I tried to show that, during that period of time, the Christian church was generally Orthodox in its belief in the deity of the Holy Spirit, and in the personality of the Holy Spirit. But during that period of time, the excesses of the movements started by the prophet Montanus occurred, and those excesses of Montanism are very similar to the excesses of the modern Pentecostal movement. Then we went from the Nicene period to -- from Nicaea to Chalcedon, and at the Council of Chalcedon remember, in 451 A.D., the full deity of the Holy Spirit was affirmed. Now, the Church had believed that, but they officially in council, affirmed the deity of the Holy Spirit.

And then we discussed from the time from Chalcedon to the Reformation, or from 451 to 1517 A.D., and simply said that, the one question that came up of a doctrinal character, was the doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit. Did the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father and the Son, or from the Father only? And we said that in the east, they believed in the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father only, but due to the influence of Augustine in the west, the Church came to believe that Jesus Christ -- that the Holy Spirit came from -- proceeded from the Father and the Son. And so they like to say that, The Son of God was generated by the Father eternally. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Now tonight, we want to move on to -- from the Reformation to the present time, or from 1517 A.D. to the present time. And Capital A: The Reformation Age. Now, in earlier centuries, the emphasis of the inquiry of the church rested on the person of the Spirit, but in this period, the emphasis of the discussions of the church regarding the Spirit, rest on the work of the Holy Spirit. And let me -- as we think about the Reformation Age -- mention this; that the Eastern church -- what we know today as the Greek Orthodox Church -- the Eastern church in the middle ages was mainly, an intellectual system, with a Pelagian view of sin.

And let me stop again. Who was Pelagius? Can anyone tell me who Pelagius was? Now, you ought to know by now, because I have said so much about Pelagius in the last two years, that one of my friends has accused me of mentioning it in every message that I speak and I give. So if -- if you cannot tell me what Pelagius -- who Pelagius is or was, then I'll just have to go on mentioning him, because he is a very important man in the history of doctrine. Who was Pelagius? Can anyone tell me? A monk. Right. Now, from what country was he? Do you remember him? Anyone? A British monk. What was Pelagius responsible for in the history of the church? Can anyone tell me? What was Pelagius responsible for? Yes, very -- very similar to that. Pelagius believed that there was nothing that God commanded, that was not impossible for man to perform. He taught the sufficiency of human nature as created by God. He said the will was always free to choose good or evil. In other words, the will had not been touched by the fall. There was no inherited inclination to evil in human nature. He did not believe in original sin, and as a result of this, in effect, the doctrine of Pelagian was just moralism, that men could, apart from God, save himself. And so Pelagianism, with which Augustine had such a long and violent controversy, is, in essence, at the heart of all modernism, liberalism today in the Christian Church. It is not a new thing for a man today to say that, Man may out of his own will approach God and find acceptance with him. It is just as old as Pelagius. Now, he is a very important person for us to remember. So Pelagius, a British

monk. He was a popular preacher in Rome in the years 401 to 409 A.D., which proves that a man may be a very popular preacher, but at heart, very much a son of Satan.

Now, semi-Pelagianism was a doctrine which -- was a system of teaching which was very closely related to Pelagianism, but the semi-Pelagians did not believe that -- in just a moralistic approach to God. They believed that grace was essential, but the first steps in salvation are taken by man’s will. And when man, out of his own will, begins to turn to God, God gives him grace to turn to him.

Now, in the Reformation Age, this question of Pelagianism came again to the fore, and it’s only natural that when Pelagianism is rampant, that there should be neglect of the doctrine and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Let me ask you a question again. Why would there normally be a neglect of the work of the Holy Spirit, if Pelagianism is popular? Why would they -- there naturally be a neglect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit? Then what? Right. He would not need the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He would not need the ministry of the Holy Spirit in conviction of sin and conviction of righteousness and conviction of judgment. He would not need the Holy Spirit’s grace to turn his will toward God. He would not need the Spirit in regeneration.

In other words, any time there is a stress on what man is able to do by virtue of his own free will, there is less stress upon what God must do. And so when Pelagianism or semi-Pelagianism is popular and rampant, there is naturally, a de-emphasis upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the necessity of God working in the human heart.

And in the time of the Reformation, of course, when Luther and Calvin and others came on the scene, Pelagianism was very popular again, but the Reformation changed all of this. Through Luther and Calvin, the Church was freed from many things, but it was freed from Pelagianism. And their influence -- the influence of the Reformers -- is seen in three areas, and in each of these three areas, we find the doctrine of the Spirit is prominent.

First, in the area of the Scriptures. Holy Scripture was no longer simply an ecclesiastical law book when the Reformers came on the scene. Before they came on the scene, the Church thought of it as a kind of church book which needed the church’s interpretation, and further, it was guarded by the church to such a degree, that the average adherent to the church was not -- not only not expected to read the Bible for himself, but was discouraged from doing it.

Now, when the Reformers came on the scene, they restored the word of God to the average simple believer. They pointed out, that in the Scriptures there was an exhortation in many a place for the simple believer himself to read and study the Holy Scriptures. As you know, there is a tendency in human nature always, to want to hear the word of God from someone else and not to read it ourselves. And we can even fall prey to a similar type of error in a church such as Believer’s Chapel, or any other evangelical church for that matter. There is always a tendency for a man to not -- to desire not to think for himself, but to have someone else do his thinking for him. And of course, he in -- if he is a wise man, he will look around for a person whom he thinks is the wisest man he knows in the Scriptures, and he will listen to what he has to say. And he will in effect say, “What brother so-and-so says, or what Dr. so-and-so says is what I believe.”

It always reminds me of the man who was asked about his beliefs, and he said, “Well, I believe what my church believes.” And the man said, “Well, what does your church believe?” And he says, “Well, the church believes what I believe.” He said, “Well, what do you both believe?” He said, “We both believe the same thing.” And it’s that type of thing, you know. What do -- what do I believe? Well, I believe what they believe out at Believer’s Chapel. Well, what does Believer’s Chapel believe? Well, they believe what I believe. Well, what do you both believe? We believe the same thing. And in effect, what we’re saying is, we rely upon the teaching of one person.

Now, it is fortunate for us that men like Luther and Calvin came along, because they delivered professing Christians from adherents to a church, and the word of God

became again, the word of God to be received by personal faith and to be studied and understood under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Calvin particularly pointed out that the Scriptures were the word of God, and they became the word of God in our hearts in a real way through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The word and the Spirit went together. In fact, Calvin spoke about the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. And it was through the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, to the word of God, that men gained certainty with regard to justification and with regard to the other blessings of life. We’ll talk about the relationship of the Spirit to the word later, and we’ll take this up further.

But now the second thing -- the second way in which the Reformers influenced us, is in the doctrine of justification, and this too had a relationship to the doctrine of the Spirit. It was the Reformers’ teaching that men were justified by faith, but they went on to point out that it was the Spirit who gives faith, for it is the Spirit who regenerates.

Now, I’d like to -- I wish I had time to stress that, but we’re going to stress that too later. Let me just say this again; that when we are saved by faith, we have not said enough unless we also go on to point out that our faith itself is the gift of God. For only then can we really say that salvation is of God.

Now, Paul and our Lord agreed in this. Paul said, in the text I’m going to be exegeting in the Greek classes at the seminary tomorrow, “For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, that salvation by grace through faith is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.”

Now that means that the salvation is a gift of God. It means that the salvation by grace is a gift of God. It means that the salvation by grace through faith is a gift of God. It is not of works, lest anyone should boast. The whole thing comes from God. The salvation, the faith, the grace, it all comes from God. Now, that’s what our Lord meant when he said, “Ye must be born from above.” From above. In other words, it is of God.

Now, the Reformers stressed that, and consequently, the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration became an important teaching of the Christian church again. And finally, in

Calvinism and in Lutheranism, there was a tremendous stress upon the sovereignty of God. Many think that Calvin’s chief doctrine was the sovereignty of God.

Now, these controversies that arose out of the teaching of the sovereignty of God, controversies on pre-destination, controversies on free will, led to a greater emphasis on the Spirit’s work, because the Reformers stressed pre-destination. They stressed the fact that man did not have a free will. They stressed the fact that God was sovereign in our salvation, and that inevitably led to two things: one, a stress upon man’s utter sinfulness. Let me ask you a question. Is our human nature tainted or depraved? Why, it’s depraved of course. You’re learning. You are learning some things. At least four people knew the right answer to that. Our human nature is depraved. Our wills are corrupted. Our emotions are touched by sin. Our will itself. Our im -- our mind is blinded. These are all teachings of the New Testament.

Well now, if this is true, then it is more obvious that we need a work of God in order to be saved. So you can see how the stress on the Scriptures, the stress on justification, the stress on the sovereignty of God, led naturally to a stress on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. And I do not think it is wrong to say that, it is to John Calvin, more than anyone else, that we owe the teaching on the Holy Spirit that we have predominant in Christian churches today. He literally recovered the doctrine of the Holy Spirit for the Christian church, and it arose out of these great things that he stressed theologically.

Reformers then taught a two-fold message. We could put it in the words of John 15:5,

“Without me, ye can do nothing.”

And then they taught through Philippians 4:13, the other side of the message,

“I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me.”

So I can do nothing without him, but with him, all things are possible.

Now, let’s move on to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Reformers -- Calvin, Luther -- lived in the sixteenth century as you know. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it’s a curious but sad thing. I think it is true of almost every spiritual movement. The Christian church developed excesses which provoked reaction. And the Reformation was not different. As a result of the recovery of these great truths in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there occurred reaction. And these developed that I’ve listed here; seven of them. And they arose out of the Reformation and each has a bearing upon the history of the doctrine of the Spirit. You know, this is true of human nature. I think we can see it in the 20th century, and we can also see it in the lives of individual Christians. Very frequently, Christians are wonderfully converted and begin to grow like a weed and then they go to extremes, and it’s necessary to recover them from this extreme, or from that extreme. I have friends who are wonderfully converted. And because of the joy of the Lord, and the fact that their natures are somewhat emotional, they become prey to the emotionalism of the Pentecostal movement. And if the saints of God do not surround the other saints with prayer, they fall into the errors of Pentecostalism. They go to the extreme. They discovered the Holy Spirit. And instead of being satisfied with what I think the Bible teaches about the Spirit, they go to the extreme. And this is true in many areas of doctrine.

I have some friends at the present moment, who have been thrilled over the discovery of salvation by grace, but they have been so thrilled in the discovery of salvation by grace, that they have gone into an excessive position of, very close to antinomianism -- that is, anything goes in the Christian life. So it’s easy for us to go to excesses, and the only thing that will keep us is to stay close to the Scriptures. That’s why it’s so important for us to constantly study God’s word.

Now, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, these excesses occurred. And first of all, synergism. Now, I don’t expect you to know what “synergism” means, so I’m going to tell you what “synergism “ means. In theology, according to Webster -- and I’ll give you the definition you can get out of your dictionary. In theology, synergism is the doctrine that the human will cooperates with divine grace in effecting regeneration. The human will cooperates with divine grace in effecting regeneration. It is then, a semi-Pelagianism. Synergism; semi-Pelagianism in Lutheranism, and in the Lutheranism of the seventeenth century, there developed synergism, an undue emphasis on man’s free will. It was a reaction against the teaching of some of the Reformers. There was a trend consequently to de-emphasize the need of the Holy Spirit

Second, Arminianism. Arminianism is a term that is used to describe the teaching of a man by the name of Arminius. And Arminius was -- does anyone remember who Arminius was? We referred to him last year. All right. What did he believe? Well, now Alna, I know why you said that, because everybody says that, and in a sense, it is true that what we speak of today as Arminianism, that is the doctrine we associate with it. But strictly speaking, Arminius did believe in the perseverance of the saints. In other words, he did not believe what his followers later believed. So I’m going to give you seventy percent on that -- that answer. Does anyone remember who he was? Arminius. Anyone? Right. He were -- he really believed in the cooperation of the human will in our salvation, and he did not believe, as the Reformers did, in the sovereignty of divine grace. He was -- do you remember what country he came from? Close. Holland. Holland. He was a Dutch theologian, and Arminius was the leader of a movement against the Reform - - against the reformed teaching of Calvin, and is responsible for the positions of the Remonstrants.

And the Remonstrants set forth their views in a series of about five statements, and in response to these, the Calvinist replied with their five points, and that has come to be

known as the “Five Points of Calvinism”; the answer of the Calvinists to the doctrines of the Remonstrants, or the Arminians, the followers of Arminius. So Arminianism.

Now, Arminianism arose in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and became quite popular. And because of this tendency to stress human effort and human will in salvation -- similar to semi-Pelagianism in the medieval church -- the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was de-emphasized. So any time that there is a stress upon the part that man has to do in salvation beyond the word of God, there is a necessary de-emphasis on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. So stress on the Holy Spirit inevitably leads to a de-emphasizing of human ability to cooperate with God in salvation.

Mysticism. Mysticism was a third movement that arose in these two centuries. It was a reaction against the authority of the Church. And when the Christians were delivered from the authority of the Church at Rome, and they were told that their only authority was the word of God and the Holy Spirit, some of them went to the extremes of believing that all that was necessary, was them to be subject to the Spirit. And so they were launched out into the sea of subjectivity. Some of them ultimately -- a similar type of movement was Quakerism, in which men listened for an inner voice. It’s the same kind of attitude today that leads Christians to say, “The Holy Spirit spoke to me yesterday and said,” as if it were some kind of voice by which the Holy Spirit speaks to us today.

The Holy Spirit does not speak to us today in a voice. Any time you have Christians saying, “The Holy Spirit spoke to me today in a voice,” you can be sure that person is dwelling in spiritual kook-land, and they are in danger of a tremendous fall.

Now, the Holy Spirit is able to indicate to us his will, and he brings conviction. He witnesses with our spirits, but he does not speak to us in a voice. And we should beware also, of any voice of the Spirit, that is in any way, contrary to any principle in the word of God. Everything should be tested by the word of God and its principles. Anything that is contrary to a principle of the word of God, though it may be presented to us as very sweet and very nice, and a lot of zealous Christians are doing it, you can be

sure that it’s wrong. Wrong. If it’s contrary to the principles of the word of God, and it doesn’t make a bit of difference whether I do it, or someone else does it who is in -- who has some influence in the Christian movement, it’s wrong if it’s contrary to any principle in God’s word. Beware of anything that is presented to us as being very wonderful and delightful by zealous, attractive Christians contrary to the Scriptures. Now, in Mysticism, there was in a reaction against the authority of the Church, and that led to an over-emphasis on the spiritual side of the ministry of the Spirit in the believer’s life.

Then, fourth rationalism. Now, this is the reaction the other way, for in rationalism there is great stress upon the human reason, and a de-emphasis upon the Holy Spirit and upon the word of God, because we are interested in what human reason suggests to us, what is logical. Now I think, having had about twenty-five years of experience with the Christian church, there are just as many rationalists in the Christian church as there are mystics. Now mind you, it is all right to be mystic if we realize that by this, we are simply saying that our relationship to Jesus Christ is something we can’t put our finger on. But when we talk about Mysticism, we mean a reliance upon the voice of the Spirit as a kind of inner voice apart from the God -- the bounding of a --the correcting ministry and the boundaries of the word of God. And so there are some who are tend to Mysticism, but then there are some who tend to never believe anything in the Christian Church except that which is logical.

And I think this is particularly true of men who have responsibility in the Christian church, because all day long they are in their businesses, and everything is done according to logic. After all, in business, the way you make money, the way you become a successful businessman, is not only to work hard, but to think straight, and to do your -- to carry out your business in a logical, rational way. You will never be a successful businessman if you cannot think straight.

But now when you carry that over into the Christian church, and you say, “Because I’ve been successful in business, now I want to do everything logically,” you

discover that there is another dimension to life in the church of Jesus Christ. I can think of so many instances in the past when I would sit down with a group of men in churches -- men who were deacons, for example -- and we should -- we would then discuss the things that the church was going to do, and the finances by which we were to do them. I can still remember in one church that I was closely associated with, along about the first of December, the deacons met and we discussed the question of giving some gifts to missionaries. It was a custom of the church to give an extra gift to missionaries at Christmastime. And I can still one -- remember one particular man who used to argue against this on the basis of the fact that the money was not in the treasury at that point. And his standard argument was, “We cannot do this because the money is not in the treasury at the present time.” And we would try to say, “But we are -- we believe this is what the Lord wants us to do. We’re not going to give anything that’s not there, but we just want to act. And let’s plan to do this and trust God to supply the funds.” And it always happened. And about the third or fourth year, we would have the same discussion. It would -- the same identical discussion every year. And finally he got so he would say, “Now I know that you’re going to say that God will supply this, but ...” And every year, it happened the same way. We never gave anything away that we didn’t have. I don’t believe in doing that. I don’t believe in the Lord’s work, you should ever go in debt beyond your ability to pay, and I don’t think you should ever ask for funds. But there does come a time when you, as men of God say, “Now, I believe this is what the Lord would have us to do, and let’s look forward to doing it, providing he supplies the funds.”

Well, we can bring rationalism into the Christian church, and we can carry on the Lord’s work in a logical way, but we are out of touch with the Holy Spirit. For he guides and not just by logic. Sometimes it’s necessary for us to do the illogical thing. That’s what Israel did when they marched around the walls of Jericho seven times. I’m sure that a businessman might have had great difficulties with that plan of overcoming Jericho.

“Now, what is it you’re going to do?” “Well, we’re going to march around Jericho seven times.” “You’re what?” “Well, we’re going to march around Jericho seven times, and we’re going to blow our trumpets.” “You’re going to blow your trumpets, and the -- the walls of Jericho are ten or fifteen feet thick? Well, what’s going to happen then?” “Well, those walls are going to fall down, we believe.” And I can just see the tremendous difficulty that -- that that would occasion a logical thinking man, but it was God’s will. So let’s beware of Mysticism, but let’s also beware of Rationalism. Now, I do believe that God thinks very straight and clearly, always of the straightest and clearest possible way, but sometimes it’s necessary for us to take a step in faith.

Now, another movement that arose during this time, was Puritanism. Now, Puritanism in our century, is a very bad word. Puritanism is like a “radic Lib” or a Democrat [laughter] or Republican. It’s a terrible word. Puritan. Now the Puritans we think of today, as men who attempted to live pious lives, but who were really austere and solemn-faced and never enjoyed life at all. But Puritanism was a very salutary movement, and the Puritans were, for the most part, Calvinistic in their theology, and they helped stem the tide for a while during the commonwealth of Oliver Cromwell, you may remember from your English history. And one of the greatest of the Puritans, was a man by John Owen, and John Owen wrote a book on the Holy Spirit -- which is available today by the way, still -- which is one of the greatest works on the Holy Spirit. And so during the time of the Puritans in the seventeenth century, the Puritans were very instrumental in stemming the tide away from the word of God.

The Pietists -- I have six; Pietism. This movement correct -- connected with a German by the name of Spener, S-P-E-N-E-R, was a movement for the recovery of spiritual life, and it did much to reassert the Spirit’s ministry, too.

And seven; the Evangelical Revival. Evangelical revival is usually associated with Whitfield and Wesley in Great Britain, and with Jonathan Edwards in the United States. And through the Evangelical Revival, the Holy Spirit in the eighteenth century, was again

restored to its proper place in Christianity. And regardless of what we say about Wesley’s theology -- and I think there were things about Wesley’s theology that were not Scriptural -- he particularly insisted upon the witness of the Spirit in the believer’s life to his salvation. And so in the Wesleyan movements, which we know of today as the Methodist Church, although Whitfield was a Methodist and an Anglican and a Calvinist -- a very strong one -- but, the Wesleyan movement has been responsible for great stress upon the doctrine of the Spirit.

Now, coming on to the nineteenth century, and Irvingism. In the nineteenth century, that was a period of spiritual dryness, which affected seriously, the Spirit’s influence in the churches. And as a result of this dryness in the Christian church in the nineteenth century, there arose some movements which were movements designed to restore some of the vitality of the Spirit’s ministry. And Edward Irving, a Scot, was responsible for a movement known as Irvingism. It was practically a revival of Montanism. Why do you think in the nineteenth century, which was dry and dead, there should be a revival of Montanism? Why would you expect something like this perhaps? Anyone? Yes, an attempt also to get away from the dryness of the church. In fact, I think that Pentecostalism has arisen in the 20th century and has become a dominant movement for the simple reason that there are many people who are dissatisfied with what they have found in their churches. And here are some people who are talking about supernatural things that are happening, and anyone who is interested in something spiritual happening in their lives, it would be natural for them to be attracted to a movement like that. And so in the nineteenth century when with church was dead, it is not surprising that this Irvingism should arise, a kind of eighteenth century Montanism.

And then, Plymouth Brethrenism. Now, Plymouth Brethrenism is usually traced to John Nelson Darby, and a man by the name of Mueller, and these two were men who were members of the established churches. Darby, as I remember, was a member of the Church of Ireland, similar to the Anglican church. And they became very -- they were --

they -- Darby himself was a -- was a minister in that church, and he became very dissatisfied with the life of the church, and he became very interested in the fresh study of the word of God. And out of this, there arose a movement which, for about a hundred and fifty years, had tremendous influence among evangelicals. Many, many churches sprang up, and these churches were churches in which there was a tremendous stress on the spiritual gifts, and a great stress upon the fact that the Bible teaches the priesthood of every believer, and the practice of it in the meeting of the church.

There was also a great stress upon the -- the fact that in the New Testament, the ministry of the word of God in the meetings of the church was gifted ministry. That is, there was no one man who was the pastor with organizational authority over the church. The Brethren especially stressed the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and I think of all of things that they developed, their development of the doctrine of the gifts of the Spirit has been their greatest contribution to the Christian church.

Out of Brethrenism -- now, Brethrenism had what someone has called a vociferous tendency. That is, it had a tendency to break up into sects, and they tended to divide among themselves so that they lost a great deal of their testimony because of their divisions, and many know the Brethren today, as simply a group of various types of little sects, which have divided from one another. But the influence of Brethrenism extends to our Scofield Bible, and if you have a Scofield Bible, the theology in the Scofield Bible is largely -- not entirely -- the theology of the Brethren. And so when you’re reading the notes in the Scofield Bible, you’re reading things that J. N. Darby and William Kelly and Mueller, and others who were leaders in the Brethren movement were response -- those truths that they were responsible for discovering again. We’re very grateful to the Brethren, but their testimony has been blunted by the fact that they did not understand some things about the local church particularly, and their traditions have become as by -- as ironclad among themselves as the teaching of the word of God in many places.

For example, in some Brethren churches they will not allow anyone to teach on the platform who is not one of them, as if to say that every other gifted man who is not among them, is not really qualified to teach them the Scriptures. So they are very particular about this. They have a system of traditions which, in my opinion, is very, very strong, but we are grateful to them for their stress upon the gifts of the Spirit, and they did recover some truths that are important for us. And while we in Believer’s Chapel have always tried to maintain independency of any group, and independency of the Brethren, it is true that in one or two respects, particularly our own church polity here is similar to theirs.

Now, Revivalism and the Holiness Movements of the last part of the 19th century. I think that we can own -- that we need say only this; that in the last part of the 19th century, there -- there was a tremendous revival of evangelism. We have seen this, for example, in D. L. Moody, in the Keswick Conferences, and through Moody’s ministry and through the Keswick Conferences, and the modern missionary movement that has arisen out of these things, there has been great stress on the Spirit’s work.

Now, in the 20th century -- I’m going to pass by the 20th century, because we will be talking about the Pentecostals quite a bit in the future, and we will cover that. So let me just, in the few minutes that we have, say a few words about some conclusions and warnings. And Capital A - Intellectualism. These are some of the dangers that I think are particularly prominent in the study of the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. One is intellectualism. It is possible in our desire to get away from the extremes of Mysticism and Quakerism, to the place where we have a kind of intellectual understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

We should remember that the Spirit is, as our Lord said, the Spirit of truth. And because he is the Spirit of truth, he is not only the Spirit of mental truth, but also of moral and spiritual truth. And as Christians, we should beware of believing in the doctrines of the word of God in a purely intellectual way. I think particularly in a church like our

church or in evangelical churches in which there is a great stress on the ministry of the word of God, and a constant exposition of the word of God, there is a great danger that, in the gathering of all of the facts about the word of God which we gather through the study of the Scriptures, and through systematic theology, that it be just an intellectual thing with us.

Fletcher of Madely, after he lectured his students -- he was a Puritan -- he used to like to say as he finished, “Now all of you who interested in these truths that we’ve been talking about becoming a part of your personal life, will you now go with me into the little room to the side of the lecture room and let’s have a season of prayer about it?” And I think that’s a good emphasis. Intellectualism is a danger that faces us always, and it is particularly dangerous in the doctrine of the Spirit, because the doctrine of the Spirit should have a personal influence in our lives.

Now, Pelagianism. All movements tending to ignore the need of divine grace belong here, and Pelagianism is a constant danger to the full understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. That’s why I keep talking about Pelagianism, because you see, in the final analysis, if it’s possible for man, in his own will, to turn to God -- if it’s possible in his will -- man has a will, but if it’s possible in his will as a first cause for him to turn to God, then that’s the beginning of the acknowledgment of a fact -- of the fact that man has something that is acceptable to God, and a de-emphasis -- the beginning of it -- upon the grace of God.

Now, we do not deny that we have a will, we just deny that we have a free will, and -- and our will, in order to respond to God, must be first moved by God. Now that, I think, is tremendously important it principle, and that’s why I keep stressing it. Pelagianism; it leads inevitably to a de-emphasis upon the work of God in our life. That’s one of the dangers that we face in the study of the Spirit. So whenever you hear people saying, “Now, you have the will to choose or not,” you recognize in that, the beginning of an error that will lead ultimately to the denial of some of God’s glory and salvation.

And then the third danger is ecclesiasticism. The tendency to clanking chains of authoritating -- authoritarian churchianity with a rigid kind of sacerdotal ministry -- you know, all robed out and decked out -- have encouraged these extreme movements, and so we need to beware of ecclesiasticism, a kind of authoritarianism that stifles the life of the Spirit in the church. Now, that is why some of these movements have arisen. They have been reactions against the -- the quenching of the Holy Spirit in the local church.

Now, if you will let me, I’m going to read and close with this, because I think we can pass by the last two without loss of anything, and maybe next time if I think about it, I’ll just say a word about them.

I want to read something written by a Presbyterian about the quenching of the Holy Spirit in the local church, and I think you will recognize that it has something to do with the Church today. This is by Professor James Denny and he says, “I’ve hinted at ways in which the Spirit is quenched.” He is writing on 1 Thessalonians 5:19, “Quench not the Spirit,” which by the way, does not have anything to do with the individual, and his quenching of the ministry of the Spirit in his life. It has to do with the quenching of the Spirit in the meetings of the church, as the context shows. “Despise not prophesying. Quench not the Spirit. Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good.” In those days, in the meetings of the church when men got up and said something that was a little out -- astray, Paul would say, “Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good.” People today don’t like to be asked to test the utterances of a preacher, and so we don’t like that. We like today, to come into church and just to have it dished out like pabulum, you know. We don’t like to have to think.

Now, it’s in -- in that background that Professor Denny has this to say, “I have hinted at ways in which the Spirit is quenched. It is sad to reflect that, from one point of view, the history of the church is a long series of transgressions of this precept, checked by equally long series of rebellions of the Spirit. “Where the Spirit of the Lord is,” the apostle tells us elsewhere, “there is liberty.” But liberty in a society has its dangers. It is,

to a certain extent, at war with order, and the guardians of order are not apt to be too considerate of it. Hence, it came to pass that at a very early period, and in the interest of good order, the freedom of the Spirit was summarily suppressed in the Church. The gift of ruling -- it has been said like Aaron’s rod -- seem to swallow up the other gifts. The rules of the Church became a class entirely apart from its ordinary members.” That’s the minister becoming the minister, and everybody else, a Christian of a different order. “And all exercise of spiritual gifts for the building up of the church was confirmed to them -- confined to them. Nay, the monstrous idea was originated and taught as a dogma that, they alone were depositories -- depositaries, or as it is sometimes called, the custodians of the grace and truth of the Gospel. Only through them could men come into contact with the Holy Ghost.”

And believe it or not, there are churches in the 20th century in evangelicalism who believe that in the final analysis, it’s the man who stands behind the pulpit regularly, who has absolute authority in the church, and what he says goes. That’s what he’s talking about. “In plain English, the Spirit was quenched when Christians met for worship. One great extinguisher was placed over the flame that burned in the hearts of the brethren. It was not allowed to show itself. It must not be stirred by its eruption in praise or prayer or fiery exhortation, the decency and order of divine service. I say that was a condition to which Christian worship was reduced at a very early period, and it is unhappily, the condition in which for the most part, it subsists at this moment. Do you think we are gainers by it? I do not believe it. It is always come, from time to time, to be intolerable. The Botanists of the second century, the heretical sects of the middle ages, the independents and Quakers of the English Commonwealth, the lay preachers of Wesleyanism, the Salvationists, the Plymouthists, and the evangelistic associations of our own day; all these are in various degrees, the protest of the Spirit, and its right and necessary protest against the authority which would quench it, and by quenching it, impoverish the Church.

In many non-conformist churches, there is a movement just now, in favor of liturgy. Now, liturgy may indeed be a defense against the coldness and incompetence of the one man to whom the whole conduct of public worship is at present left. But our true refuge is not this mechanical one, but the opening of the mouths of all Christian people. A liturgy, however beautiful, is a melancholy witness to the quenching of the Spirit. It may be better or worse than the prayers of one man, but it can never compare for fervor with the spontaneous prayers of a living church.”

That is why I believe that in the Christian church, we need a meeting in which there is an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to loosen the tongues of all the saints who have been blessed, and to give them an opportunity to express -- to express it. That, I also believe, is one reason why movements such as Campus Crusade and others have been very attractive to young people. They don't have a great deal of doctrine in those movements. They could be corrected in many ways I think, but they have allowed the young people who have felt quenched in our churches, to express themselves, and rightly so. And so we must beware of quenching the Spirit. Well, our time is up. Let's close in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for this story of the history of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit: sad in many ways and glorious in others. And in the succeeding Monday nights, we studied the doctrine of the Spirit as taught in the Scriptures. Guard us against the errors of reaction, reaction toward rationalism and its coldness, and reaction toward the extremes of some of the more fanatical sects. Help us to listen to the Scriptures and be subject to them. And also, Lord, move in experience the vital reality of our doctrines, not just the intellectualistic. And so may this be our experience.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.