

Principle 36

The Moving of the Holy Spirit

In The Book of Acts the Church was birthed, led, sustained and grew in the power of the Holy Spirit.⁸²⁵ Yet, for many there is a hesitancy to speak much of depending radically on the moving of the Holy Spirit. Today for many sincere Bible believing Christians this terminology brings to mind many excesses of the worst kind—whether it's the selfish seeking after the Spirit of God for a feeling,⁸²⁶ an anointing to enjoy for ourselves,⁸²⁷ some sort of extravagant healing such as gold in the teeth or other blatant extra-Biblical manifestations that grieve the heart of God.⁸²⁸ The Devil, our enemy, always makes a pseudo⁸²⁹ of the genuine in attempts to deceive some⁸³⁰ and deter others. Some claim the Chinese Church as a whole is experiencing the same extra-Biblical manifestations, but this is simply not the case.

“The gifts of the Holy Spirit are widely accepted and practiced, *in the rural House Churches in China*, but certain activities like speaking in tongues and prophesying are not emphasized. What makes the charismatic element unique in China is that it is not disorderly.”⁸³¹

The rural underground Church in China relies upon and even expects that when the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is declared there will be verification at times with great signs and wonders.⁸³² This dependence on the Holy Spirit to move, direct, guide and verify the Gospel is Biblical and needed now more than ever in the Church. It was not unusual for healings⁸³³ to occur in every village that the pioneers of the house Church movement entered when they were driven all across China because of persecution. It must be asked in our lives: How much do we depend and truly rely⁸³⁴ on the Holy Spirit on a daily basis?

“They are on fire Christians with a real vital walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. There are no denominations in the rural underground Church. There are no Methodists, Presbyterians or Baptists, or any other. They are just simply followers of Christ. In the underground Church no one has seminary training. Their dependence is upon the Holy Spirit to teach them.”⁸³⁵

“Perhaps it is because we had nothing, therefore God had special mercy on us. He has given us the faith of a mustard seed, simple childlike trust in Him. The Chinese Christians just believe God and His Word. We believe that He is able and willing to do great things for us.”⁸³⁶ Without strong institutional and hierarchic structure some of the house Churches have to rely on the Holy Spirit greatly for guidance.

Just like the Holy Spirit gave directions to the early Christians, the house Churches also receive direct instructions⁸³⁷ from the Holy Spirit.

During the strongest persecution in China a co-worker relates: “But in the midst of this fiery suffering and trial, God preserved his children and protected His Church. He also used this opportunity to purify His Church, cleansing the faith of His Children. This is the testimony of many Christians who went through this period of tribulation. In the midst of trial, they recognized their own weakness and corruption, seeing the shortcomings in their faith.”⁸³⁸

During the Communist Cultural Revolution Bibles were scarce and difficult to obtain. A house Church prayed and asked the Lord Jesus Christ to give them His Word. There was an elderly deaconess who was over eighty years old. She had totally fasted (*abstention from food and water*) and prayed for nineteen days. She became filled with the Holy Spirit and would sit in the middle of the house Church. Everyone would sit around her. Through the unction of the Holy Spirit⁸³⁹ this sister would recite Bible verses loudly and clearly, and every one would write down the words in their books. Every word was the Word of God at the time when there were few Bibles in China. God had anointed a sister with a special charismatic gift of reciting Bible verses.

God has given us the Holy Spirit not only as a comforter and guide⁸⁴⁰ but also as a life-changing power.⁸⁴¹ Any work done in someone's life, without the Holy Spirit, is of the flesh and counts for nothing.⁸⁴² In Zechariah this truth is shown where it says: "So he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord Almighty.'"⁸⁴³ Yet many are denying the life-changing power of God and His Spirit: "Having a form of godliness but denying its power."⁸⁴⁴ The Holy Spirit still gives the power to witness, as in Acts 1:8, but we must ask Him and we must surrender to Him.

Brother Enguan from the *Lixin* underground house Church network gives this testimony: "We were one of the most heavily-persecuted Churches in all of China. The police regularly swept through our area and conducted sting operations. Every year more than one hundred leaders would be arrested. Christians in our area were not Christians for long before they were rounded up by the police. You would have one believer who had been a believer for six years and had served five and a half of those years in prison. It was not uncommon to have believers that were baby Christians only being saved for a month or more before being martyred for their faith. This was life in those days. Those were hard days."⁸⁴⁵

Let us suppose we were being threatened with beatings and imprisonment for proclaiming the Gospel. Would we do it? Many of us hardly witness now. The early Christians, after being threatened, did not pray for protection, or for safety, or for God to punish those that were threatening to hurt them. Here is what they prayed: *“Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable Your servants to speak Your Word with great boldness. Stretch out Your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the Name of Your holy servant Jesus.”* After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God boldly.”⁸⁴⁶ God the Father was pleased with their prayer and shook the house⁸⁴⁷ and gave them boldness. God and His Holy Spirit’s power were with them.⁸⁴⁸ Beloved sisters and brothers, do you want that? Ask the Father, He wants to give you His Holy Spirit. Pray as our sisters and brothers did in the Book of Acts. Pray as our persecuted sisters and brothers do in China and wherever they are persecuted. God wants to send, through you and me, the Gospel even accompanied by signs and wonders⁸⁴⁹ through the holy Name of His Son Jesus.