

Published based on [5 Evidences of the Holy Spirit in A Christian's Life](#)

5 Evidences of the Holy Spirit in A Christian's Life



5 EVIDENCES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN A CHRISTIAN'S LIFE

The following sermon on 5 evidences of the Holy Spirit in a Christian's life about how to know if the Holy Spirit has been received into a person's life is taken out of a larger sermon preached by the late George Whitefield. I have formatted and slightly edited the excerpt to make it more reader friendly and to have more of a sermon outline form. Rev. Whitefield told it like it was and preached a fiery message. There are certainly other marks or evidences that could be added to his list, but the ones he has are good. - E.L.

(Source: MARKS OF HAVING RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST - by George Whitefield)

TEXT:

Acts 19:2, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"

1. A SPIRIT OF PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION

FIRST I shall mention, is, our having received a spirit of prayer and supplication; for that always accompanies the spirit of grace. No sooner was Paul converted, but "behold he prayeth." And this was urged as an argument, to convince Ananias that he was converted. And God's elect are also said to "cry to him day and night."

And since one great work of the Holy Spirit is to convince us of sin, and to set us upon seeking pardon and renewing grace, through the all-sufficient merits of a crucified Redeemer, whosever has felt the power of the world to come, awakening him from his spiritual lethargy, cannot but be always crying out, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Or, in the language of the importunate blind Bartimeus, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me."

The blessed Jesus, as he received the Holy Ghost without measure, so he evidenced it by nothing more, than his frequent addresses at the throne of grace. Accordingly we read, that he was often alone on the mountain praying; that he rose a great while before day to pray; nay, that he spent whole nights in prayer. And whosever is made partaker of the same Spirit which the holy Jesus, will be of the same mind, and delight in nothing so much, as to "draw nigh unto God," and lift up holy hands and hearts in frequent and devout prayer.

It must be confessed, indeed, that this spirit of supplication is often as it were sanably lost, and decays, for some time, even in those who have actually received the Holy Ghost. Through spiritual dryness and barrenness of soul, they find in themselves a listlessness and backwardness to this duty of prayer; but then they esteem it as their cross, and still persevere in seeking Jesus, though it be sorrowing; and their hearts, notwithstanding, are fixed upon God, though they cannot exert their affections so strongly as usual, on account of that spiritual deadness, which God, for wise reasons, has suffered to beramb their souls.

But as for the formal believer, it is not so with him; no, he either prays not at all, or if he does enter into his closet, it is with reluctance, out of custom, or to satisfy the checks of his conscience. Whereas, the true believer can no more live without prayer, than without food day by day. And he finds his soul as really and perceptibly fed by the one, as his body is nourished and supported by the other. A

2. NOT COMMITTING SIN

SECOND scripture mark of our having received the Holy Ghost, is, Not committing sin.

"Whosoever is born of God," (says St. John) sinneth not, neither can he sin, because his seed remaineth in him." Neither can he sin, this expression does not imply the impossibility of a Christian's sinning; for we are told, that "in many things we offend all." It only means thus much: that a man who is really born again of God, doth not willfully commit sin, much less live in the habitual practice of it. For how shall he that is dead to sin, as every converted person is, live any longer therein?

It is true, a man that is born again of God, may, through surprise, or the violence of a temptation, fall into an act of sin; witness the adultery of David, and Peter's denial of his Master. But then, like them, he quickly rises again, goes out from the world, and weeps bitterly; washes the guilt of sin away by the tears of sincere repentance, joined with faith in the blood of Jesus Christ; takes double heed to his ways for the future, and perfects holiness in the fear of God.

The meaning of this expression of the Apostle, that "a man who is born of God, cannot commit sin," has been fully illustrated, by the example of a covetous worldling, to the general bent of whose inclinations, liberality and profuseness are directly opposite: but if, upon some unexpected, sudden occasion, he does play the prodigal, he immediately repents him of his fault, and returns with double care to his niggardliness again. And so is every one that is born again: to commit sin, is as contrary to the habitual frame and tendency of his mind, as generosity is to the inclinations of a miser; but if at any time, he is drawn into sin, he immediately, with double zeal, returns to his duty, and brings forth fruits meet for repentance. Whereas, the unconverted sinner is quite dead in trespasses and sins; or if he does abstain from gross acts of it, through worldly selfish motives, yet, there is some right eye he will not pluck out; some right-hand which he will not cut off; some specious Agag that he will not sacrifice for God; and thereby he is convinced that he is but a mere Saul; and consequently, whatever pretensions he may make to the contrary, he has not yet received the Holy Ghost. (You are almost half way through the evidences of the Holy Spirit.)

3. CONQUEST OVER THE WORLD

A THIRD mark whereby we may know, whether or not we have received the Holy Ghost, is, Our conquest over the world.

"For whosever is born of God, (says the Apostle) overcometh the world." By the world, we are to understand, as St. John expressed it, "all that is in the world, the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life." And by overcoming of it, is meant, our renouncing these, so as not to follow or be led by them: for whosever is born from above, has his affections set on things above: he feels a divine attraction in his soul, which forcibly draws his mind heavenwards; and as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so doth it make his soul so long after the enjoyment of his God.

Not that he is so taken up with the affairs of another life, as to neglect the business of this: No, a truly spiritual man dares not stand any day idle; but then he takes care, though he laboureth for the meat which perisheth, first to secure that which endureth to everlasting life. Or, if God has exalted him above his brethren, yet, like Moses, Joseph, and Daniel, he, notwithstanding, looks upon himself as a stranger and pilgrim upon earth: having received a principle of new life, he walks by faith and not by sight; and his hopes being full of immortality, he can look on all things here below as vanity and vexation of spirit: In short, though he is in, yet he is not of the world; and as he was made for the enjoyment of God, so nothing but God can satisfy his soul.

The ever-blessed Jesus was a perfect instance of overcoming the world. For though he went about continually doing good, and always lived as in a press and throng; yet, wherever he was, his conversation tended heavenwards. In like manner, he that is joined to the Lord in one spirit, will so order his thoughts, words, and actions, that he will evidence to all, that his conversation is in heaven.

On the contrary, an unconverted man being of the earth, is earthy; and having no spiritual eye to discern spiritual things, he is always seeking for happiness in this life, where it never was, will, or can be found. Being not born again from above, he is bowed down by a spirit of natural infirmity: the serpent's curse becomes his choice, and he eats of the dust of the earth all the days of his life. A

4. LOVING ONE ANOTHER

FOURTH scripture mark of our having received the Holy Ghost, is, Our loving one another.

"We know (says St. John) we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "And by this (says Christ himself) shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another." Love is the fulfilling of the gospel, as well as of the law: for "God is love; and whosever dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God."

But by this love we are not to understand a softness and tenderness of mere nature, or a love founded on worldly motives (for this a natural man may have); but a love of our brethren, proceeding from love towards God: loving all men in general, because to their relation to God; and loving good men in particular, for the grace we see in them, and because they love our Lord Jesus in sincerity.

This is Christian charity, and that new commandment which Christ gave to his disciples. NEW, not in its object, but in the motive and example whereon it is founded, even Jesus Christ. This is that love which the primitive Christians were so renowned for, that it became a proverb, SEE HOW THESE CHRISTIANS LOVE ONE ANOTHER. And without this love, though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burnt, it would profit us nothing.

Further, this love is not confined to any particular set of men, but is impartial and catholic: A love that embraces God's image wherever it beholds it, and that delights in nothing so much as to see Christ's kingdom come.

This is the love wherewith Jesus Christ loved mankind: He loved all, even the worst of men, as appears by his weeping over the obstinately perverse; but wherever he saw the least appearance of the divine likeness, that soul he loved in particular. Thus we read, that when he heard the young man say, "All these things have I kept from my youth," that so far he loved him. And when he saw any noble instance of faith, though in a Centurion and a Syrophenician, aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, how is he said to marvel at, to rejoice in, speak of, and commend it? So every spiritual disciple of Jesus Christ will cordially embrace all who worship God in spirit and in truth, however they may differ as to the appendages of religion, and in things not essentially necessary to salvation.

I confess, indeed, that the heart of a natural man is not thus enlarged all at once; and a person may really have received the Holy Ghost, (as Peter, no doubt, had when he was unwilling to go to Cornelius) though he be not arrived to this: but then, where a person is truly in Christ, all narrowness of spirit decreases in him daily; the partition wall of bigotry and party zeal is broken down more and more; and the nearer he comes to heaven, the more his heart is enlarged with that love, which there will make no difference between any people, nation, or language, but we shall all, with one heart, and one voice, sing praises to him that sitteth upon the throne for ever. But I hasten to a

5. LOVING OUR ENEMIES

FIFTH scripture mark, Loving our enemies.

"I say unto you, (says Jesus Christ) Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to those that hate you, ad pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." And this duty of loving your enemies is so necessary, that without it, our righteousness does not exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, or even of Publicans and sinners: "For if you do good to them only, who do good to you, what do you more than others? Do not even the Publicans the same?" And these precepts our Lord confirmed by his own example, when he wept over the bloody city; when he suffered himself to be led as a sheep to the slaughter, when he made that noble reply to the traitor Judas, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" and more especially, when in the agonies and pangs of death, he prayed for his very murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

This is a difficult duty to the natural man; but whosever is made partaker of the promise of the Spirit, will find it practicable and easy: for if we are born again of God, we must be like him, and consequently delight to be perfect in this duty of doing good to our worst enemies in the same manner, though not in the same degree as he is perfect: He sends his rain on the evil and the good; causeth his sun to shine on the just and unjust; and more especially commended his love towards us, that whilst we were his enemies, he sent forth his Son, born of a woman, made under the law, that he might become a curse for us.

Many other marks are scattered up and down the scriptures, whereby we may know whether or not we have received the Holy Ghost: such as, "to be carnally minded, is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." "Now the fruits of the Spirit are joy, peace, long-suffering, meekness," with a multitude of texts to the same purpose. But as most, if not all of them, are comprehended in the duties already laid down, I dare affirm, whosever upon an impartial examination, can find the aforesaid marks on his soul, may be as certain, as though an angel was to tell him, that his pardon is sealed in heaven.

As for my own part, I had rather see these divine graces, and this heavenly temper stamped upon my soul, than to hear an angel from heaven saying unto me, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

These are infallible witnesses; these are Emmanuel, God with and in us; these make up that white stone, which none knoweth, saving he who hath received it: these are the earnest of the heavenly inheritance in our hearts: In short, these are glory begun, and are that good thing, that better part, and which if you continue to stir up this gift of God, neither men nor devils shall ever be able to take from us.

..... I hope you enjoyed this message on some of the **evidences of the Holy Spirit** in a Christian's life.

You can also find this article published on [5 Evidences of the Holy Spirit in A Christian's Life](#)