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Michael A. G. Haykin

The Fading Vision? The Spirit and Freedom in the Pastoral Epistles

The paucity of references to the Holy Spirit in the Pastoral Epistles has often led scholars to see a more rigid, less charismatic understanding of Christian theology and practice in them. Dr. Haykin, a Professor at the Central Baptist Seminary, Toronto, shows that the evidence is capable of a different interpretation.

C. F. D. Moule, in his reappraisal of the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles which he published in 1965, noted that the truly significant differences between the Pastoral Epistles and the rest of the Pauline corpus lie primarily in the realm of theological thought.¹ In support of this observation, Moule cites two examples. The first concerns the Pauline phrase 'in Christ', while the second has to do with the person of the Holy Spirit. He writes as follows:²

... the famous Pauline phrase 'in Christ' (etc.), although used in the Pastorals, is not used in connection with a directly personal relationship, but only with non-personal words such as 'the faith', or 'the life that is in Christ Jesus' (1 Tim. iii.13; 2 Tim. i.1, etc.). [While] the word 'Spirit' (πνεῦμα) is only comparatively rarely used in the Pastorals, and only twice of the Spirit of God given to Christians (2 Tim. i.14, Tit. iii.5).

Now, the fact that the author of the Pastoral Epistles refers so infrequently to the Holy Spirit, which seems so unlike the man who wrote Rom. 8 or Gal. 5, has been a common objection to the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. For instance, B. S. Easton, in his commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, stated:³

¹ 'The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 47 (1964-65), 431-2, 437.

² *Ibid.*, 437.

³ *The Pastoral Epistles* (New York: 1947), 11-12.

Paul's religion is Spirit filled to the last degree; here the merely statistical observation that he uses 'Spirit' about 80 times far understates the extent of the experience of the Spirit in Paul's thought and life. But the Pastor uses 'Spirit' exactly three times (2 Tim. 1:14; Tit. 3:5; 1 Tim. 4:1) and exactly once in each letter—and never in a phrase written by himself! Nowhere except in 2 Tim. 1:14 and Tit. 3:5—and both are citations—does he remind Timothy or Titus that they and their people will have the omnipotent help of the Spirit in the arduous tasks that lie before them; there is no parallel to 'if ye by the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live' (Rom. 8:13). So little part does the Spirit play in the Pastor's own thought that in 2 Tim. 1:7 his reminiscence of Rom. 8:15 omits what to Paul was all-essential—and so turns triumphant ecstasy into moralistic exhortation.

Easton's observations have been reiterated and developed by a number of scholars, of whom the most notable are Ernst Käsemann and James D. G. Dunn.

Käsemann's most extensive comments on the pneumatology of the Pastoral Epistles occur in the midst of an essay entitled 'Ministry and Community in the New Testament'.⁴ In this essay Käsemann argues that the Pauline concept of every believer as a bearer of the Spirit has all but disappeared in the Pastoral Epistles. On the basis of 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6, Käsemann maintains that some of the communities founded by Paul had come to regard the one who was properly ordained to ecclesiastical office as the true bearer of the Spirit. Käsemann locates the reason for this change in understanding in the Church's struggle against Gnosticism. In the debate with Gnostic enthusiasts, who supported their views with an appeal to their possession of the Spirit, these communities found an effective defence in the interlocking of the Spirit and ecclesiastical office. As the pre-eminent bearer of the Spirit, the holder of ecclesiastical office could thus function as the guarantor of sound doctrine.⁵ Thus, Käsemann concludes: 'We can now speak inelegantly, but with absolute accuracy, of the Spirit as the ministerial Spirit.'⁶ Dunn's view of the doctrine of the Spirit in the Pastoral Epistles is developed in his books *Jesus and the Spirit* and *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament*.⁷ In both of these works he argues

⁴ 'Ministry and Community in the New Testament' in his *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W. J. Montague (London: 1964), 63–94.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 86–9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁷ *Jesus and the Spirit. A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (London: 1975); *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament. An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* (London: 1977).

that the Pauline vision of a charismatic community has definitely faded in the Pastoral Epistles. Dunn finds evidence of this fading vision primarily in the ways the Pauline concept of *charisma* has been modified. For Paul, this term denotes a variety of manifestations which the Spirit produces in various believers for the edification of all. But for the Pastoral Epistles, *charisma* has become a single gift given once and for all to those who have been ordained, which they now possess within themselves and which equips them for their different responsibilities. In support of this interpretation, Dunn has recourse to the same texts which Käsemann cites, namely, 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6.⁸ Moreover, on the basis of 2 Tim 1:14, Dunn regards the concern for the preservation of sound doctrine in the Pastoral Epistles as an indication that the Spirit was no longer viewed as the source of new revelation, but had become simply the power to preserve the heritage handed on from the past.⁹ And like Käsemann, he finds a possible reason for this fading of Paul's vision of a charismatic community in the Pastoral Epistles in the Church's struggle against enthusiasm and its excesses.

Perhaps the enthusiasts won the day in the Pauline churches after his death, and the conclusion was drawn that charismatic community is unworkable and leads inevitably to anarchy and self-destruction.¹⁰

On the other hand, Dunn also considers it possible that the Pastoral Epistles were written as a rebuttal of a resurgence of such enthusiastic excesses. But whatever the reason, the Pastoral Epistles, in Dunn's opinion, reveal a situation in which 'ministry and authority have become the prerogative of the few, the experience of the Christ-Spirit has lost its vitality, the preservation of the past has become more important than openness to the present and future.'¹¹

Now, although the ecclesiastical structures in the Pastoral Epistles are somewhat more developed than those in evidence in the rest of Paul's epistles, the Holy Spirit has not thereby been forgotten or imprisoned within these structures. For in the Pastoral Epistles, as Ronald Y. K. Fung has observed, the Spirit 'is still upheld as the sovereign Spirit in his prophetic (1 Tim. 1:18; 4:14; 4:1) and enabling (2 Tim. 1:14) as well as regenerative (Tit.

⁸ *Jesus and the Spirit*, 348–9; *Unity and Diversity*, 115.

⁹ *Jesus and the Spirit*, 348–9; *Unity and Diversity*, 69, 361.

¹⁰ *Jesus and the Spirit*, 349. See also his view of the Pastoral Epistles in 'Rediscovering the Spirit',² *The Expository Times*, 94 (1982–83), 12.

¹¹ *Jesus and the Spirit*, 349.

3:5) power'.¹² This paper will seek to demonstrate that such a vibrant pneumatology does exist in the Pastoral Epistles. It will do so by focusing on three major pneumatological themes which are visible in the Pastoral Epistles: first, the presentation of the Spirit as the Spirit of prophecy in 1 Tim. 1:18; 4:1 and 4:14; second, the description of the Spirit's role with regard to the ministry in 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 6–14; and third, the affirmation found in Tit. 3:4–7 about the work of the Spirit in salvation.

The Spirit of Prophecy

Dunn finds it extremely significant that none of the explicit statements in the Pastoral Epistles with regard to prophecy refer to prophecy as a current phenomenon.¹³ In 1 Tim. 4:1–3 there is an appeal to a prophetic word from the past, while in 1 Tim. 1:18 and 4:14 the prophecies mentioned are those which occurred at the time of Timothy's initiation into ministry. According to Dunn, these texts indicate that prophecy is now merely 'an authoritative voice from the past';¹⁴ at best, it has become a formalized aspect within the ordination service.¹⁵ In Dunn's eyes, this stifling of prophecy is an excellent illustration of the way in which the author of the Pastoral Epistles has attempted to exclude vigorous religious experience from the life of the Church, or at least contain it within the past.¹⁶ However, a careful examination of these three texts will reveal that while they have very little to say about the ongoing manifestation of the gift of prophecy, they do indicate a high regard for this gift of the Spirit.

In the first text, 1 Tim. 4:1–3, a prophecy is employed to refute an aspect of the teaching of the gnosticizing form of Jewish Christianity which was threatening the church at Ephesus.¹⁷

¹² 'Charismatic versus Organized Ministry? An Examination of an Alleged Antithesis', *The Evangelical Quarterly*, 52 (1980), 210.

¹³ *Jesus and the Spirit*, 453, n. 14. See also Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community. The Early House Churches in their Historical Setting* (Exeter: 1980), 194.

¹⁴ *Unity and Diversity*, 130. See also David Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (Atlanta: 1979), 140.

¹⁵ *Unity and Diversity*, 361.

¹⁶ *Jesus and the Spirit*, 359; *Unity and Diversity*, 197–8, 361.

¹⁷ On the nature of the heresy threatening the church at Ephesus, see Lorin Cranford, 'Encountering Heresy: Insight from the Pastoral Epistles', *Southwestern Journal of Theology*, 22 (1980), 23–40; Günter Haufe, 'Gnostische Irrlehre und ihre Abwehr in den Pastoralbriefen' in K.-W Tröger, ed., *Gnosis und Neues Testament. Studien aus Religionswissenschaft und Theologie* (Gütersloh: 1973), 325–39; R. J. Karris, 'The Background and Significance of the Polemic of the Pastoral Epistles', *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 92 (1973), 549–64.

The Spirit explicitly says that in later times (ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς) some will fall away from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and demonic doctrines through the hypocritical preaching of liars, whose consciences have been seared, and who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

Any discussion of this text must provide answers to at least two questions. First, was the oracle of verses 1–3 uttered in the past or at the time of writing? Second, if the oracle was uttered in the past, does it necessarily imply that prophetic activity had ceased to play an important role in the life of some Christian communities? The prophetic oracle which is recorded in 1 Tim. 4:1–3 emphasizes that apostasy, that is, the renunciation of the Church's confession of Christ, should be regarded as a prominent feature of the 'later times' (ὑστέροις καιροῖς).¹⁸ Although the phrase 'later times' is unique in Greek biblical literature, there is no substantial difference between it and other terms which are employed in the New Testament to denote the final age of history, which stretches from the ascension of Christ to his second coming.¹⁹ Now, it can be reasonably inferred from the tone of the refutation of the heretics in verses 3–5 that the author is convinced that he is living in this final age of history.²⁰ Thus, the purpose behind the citation of the prophetic oracle cannot be to predict an event yet to come and to implicitly call for spiritual vigilance with regard to it. For the deceitful spirits are already at work, seeking to mislead men with their demonic teachings, of which two are cited in verse 3: the renunciation of marriage and abstinence from certain foods. Consequently, despite the use of the present tense in the phrase 'the Spirit explicitly says', the oracle probably should be regarded as having been uttered in the past.

But does the fact that this prophecy stems from the past imply that prophetic activity had all but ceased within the Christian

¹⁸ J.D. Quinn, 'The Holy Spirit in the Pastoral Epistles' in Daniel Durken, ed., *Sin, Salvation, and the Spirit* (Collegeville, Minnesota: 1979), 357.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 356–7. See also Easton, *Pastoral Epistles*, 138–9; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (1963 ed.; repr. Grand Rapids: 1981), 94; William L. Lane, '1 Tim. IV. 1–3. An Early Instance of Over-Realized Eschatology?', *New Testament Studies*, 11 (1964–65), 164; Norbert Brox, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (Regensburg: 1969), 166–7. Pace Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: 1957), 91–92; M. Eugene Boring, *Sayings of the Risen Jesus. Christian Prophecy in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge: 1982), 120.

²⁰ E. Glenn Hinson, '1–2 Timothy and Titus' in C. J. Allen *et al.*, eds., *The Broadman Bible Commentary* (London: 1972), XI, 322. Cf. Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro, and ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: 1972), 64.

community, or at least within that community known to the author of the Pastoral Epistles? Dunn believes so, as do a number of other scholars, including Robert Banks, Eugene Boring and David Hill.²¹ Confirmation of this view is purportedly found in the phrase 'the Spirit . . . says' (τὸ πνεῦμα . . . λέγει), which is described as 'an established formula to introduce a word from tradition'.²² However, it can be equally argued that the definitive appeal to a prophetic oracle as well as its detailed recollection indicates a high regard for prophecy;²³ an unlikely position for one, who, in the words of Dunn, is merely 'bent on maintaining good order'.²⁴ Moreover, the phrase 'the Spirit says', which elsewhere in the New Testament introduces prophetic announcements (e.g., that of Agabus in Acts 21:11)²⁵ or citations of the Old Testament (e.g., that of Ps. 95:7–11 in Heb. 3:7–11),²⁶ is not in itself compelling evidence to suppose that prophetic activity was a thing of the past. As the introduction to a prophecy which had been given in the past and which is now in the process of fulfilment, the phrase performs a function similar to that of the very same phrase in Heb. 3:7–11. There, the phrase 'the Spirit says' indicates that Ps. 95:7–11 is not regarded as 'a dead letter of a bygone period but as fully existential in its significance, so that what was spoken or written . . . centuries before continues to have a dynamic applicability to the people of God'.²⁷ Here, in 1 Tim. 4:1–3, this introductory formula serves to remind Timothy that the Spirit's past announcement is vitally relevant to the danger which he is facing, for it unambiguously indicates the true source of the teachings cited in verse 3. In itself, the phrase provides no indication as to whether prophetic activity had all but ceased or still continued unabated.

Nor do 1 Tim. 1:18 and 4:14 provide an unequivocal answer to the question about whether or not prophetic activity had largely

²¹ Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 194; Boring, *Sayings*, 37–8; Hill, *New Testament Prophecy*, 140.

²² Hill, *New Testament Prophecy*, 140. Cf. Easton, *Pastoral Epistles*, 234; Eduard Schweizer et al., *Spirit of God*, trans. A. E. Harvey (London: 1960), 99; Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 453, n. 14.

²³ G. T. Montague, *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition* (New York: 1976), 233–4.

²⁴ *Unity and Diversity*, 130.

²⁵ See also Acts 13:2; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22; 14:13; E. Earle Ellis, 'Λέγει κύριος Quotations in the New Testament' in his *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (Tübingen: 1978), 184–5.

²⁶ See also Acts 28:25–27. Cf. Heb. 10:15–17.

²⁷ Philip Edgcumbe Hughes, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: 1977), 141.

died out in that community of which the Pastoral Epistles are representative. In 1 Tim. 1:18 it is stressed that Timothy's responsibility for the rooting out of heresy and the promotion of sound teaching is in accord with the will of God as it had been revealed through prophecy: 'I entrust this charge to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the former prophecies (τὰς προσαγούσας . . . προφητείας)²⁸ about you, in order that by them you may fight the good fight'. Neither the exact occasion when these prophecies were made nor their precise content is revealed. But from 1 Tim. 4:14 it can be concluded that these prophecies were given at the time of Timothy's initiation into ministry.²⁹ For this latter verse exhorts Timothy not to neglect the spiritual gift which had been given to him 'through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you (διὰ προφητείας μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου)'.³⁰ Moreover, on the assumption that these two verses refer to the same event, one may also come to a conclusion with regard to the content of the prophetic utterances: they revealed that God had given to Timothy a special spiritual endowment for his ministry, a fact which otherwise might have remained unknown until Timothy actually began to exercise his gift.³¹ Thus, the prophecies mentioned in these texts have significance primarily for Timothy. As one can ascertain from the contexts in which these verses occur, the specific reason for their mention is to encourage Timothy in his work at Ephesus.³² Consequently, it is not surprising that they have nothing explicit to say about the ongoing exercise of prophecy. But they do demonstrate that the author of the Pastoral Epistles has a high regard for the manifestation of prophecy. While Dunn is correct when he asserts that all of the references to prophecy in the Pastoral Epistles refer to the exercise of this gift in the past, he errs when he infers from this fact that the author of the Pastoral Epistles was thereby attempting to curb the exercise of this gift. In each of the texts which contain an explicit allusion to prophecy, there is evident a great appreciation for the authentic exercise of this charismatic phenomenon.

²⁸ For this translation of τὰς προσαγούσας . . . προφητείας, see Hermann von Lips, *Glaube - Gemeinde - Amt. Zum Verständnis der Ordination in den Pastoralbriefen* (Göttingen: 1979), 173; W. A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Washington, D.C.: 1982), 203 and nn. 37, 38.

²⁹ Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 57; C. K. Barrett, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Oxford: 1963), 47, 71; Grudem, *Gift of Prophecy*, 203-4.

³⁰ For this translation of τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου, see John P. Meier, 'Presbyteros in the Pastoral Epistles', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 35 (1973), 339-44.

³¹ Grudem, *Gift of Prophecy*, 205.

³² Pace, Boring, *Sayings*, 37.

The Spirit of Ministry

1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6 are central to the attempt by both Käsemann and Dunn to show that there is a significant difference between the Pastoral Epistles and the undisputed letters of the Pauline corpus with regard to the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community. Both Käsemann and Dunn maintain that these texts reveal that the Spirit is seen as furnishing only the one who has been duly ordained, and not every member of the Christian community, with a spiritual gift. Furthermore, that this gift has come to be regarded almost as a permanent possession or ability which can be activated or allowed to lie dormant at will. In other words, the Spirit and his gifts have been effectively imprisoned within the ecclesiastical structure of the Church.³³ Yet, once again, an examination of the texts in question reveals otherwise, for they depict the sovereignty of the Spirit in his choice and empowerment of Timothy for leadership in the Church.

First of all, the context of 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6 should be noted. From the reference in both texts to the imposition of hands most exegetes have inferred that these passages allude to the setting apart of Timothy for ministry.³⁴ When both texts also make mention of a special spiritual gift which Timothy received at the time of this initiation into ministry, one may reasonably conclude that this gift was given for the task to which Timothy had been called. There is no indication in either of these two texts that only those in ecclesiastical office were the recipients of spiritual gifts. For both texts simply serve to remind Timothy that he had been the recipient of a special gift, which he should employ and not neglect in his unique role in the Christian community at Ephesus. Furthermore, as Jerome D. Quinn and Fung have noted, the concurrence of prophecy with the bestowal of the spiritual gift emphasizes that it is Timothy who is at the Spirit's disposal and not the other way around. For it was the Spirit who sovereignly inspired the prophecy about Timothy and who freely furnished him with a special spiritual gift.³⁴

Now, there is no doubt that 2 Tim. 1:6 and its wider context contain the richest pneumatological vein in the Pastoral Epistles.

³³ Käsemann, 'Ministry and Community', 86-7; Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 348-9; *idem*, *Unity and Diversity*, 69-70, 115.

³⁴ See, e.g., Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 106-8; Barrett, *Pastoral Epistles*, 71-2, 93; Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 98, 125-126; Homer A. Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles. Studies in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Chicago: 1982), 158-60, 250; A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids/London: 1982), 94-5, 121.

For in verses 6–8, which contains a clear parallel to Rom. 8:15, Timothy is exhorted:

Rekindle (ἀναζωπυρεῖν) the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands; for God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but one of power and of love and of self-control (σωφρονισμού). Therefore, do not be ashamed of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but join [with me] in suffering for the gospel in the power of God.

And then in verses 13–14, the section concludes with the exhortation:

Take as your model the sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; guard the splendid trust (τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην)³⁶ through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

In the first passage, the gift given by the Spirit is likened to a fire which needs constant stirring to be kept at full flame.³⁷ One should not overlook the similarity between this text and 1 Thess. 5:19, where the Thessalonian believers are admonished not to quench the fiery power and light of the Spirit either by refusing to allow the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit or by ignoring them.³⁸ The gifts of the Spirit cannot be manifested without human co-operation. It is in this sense that the exhortation of 2 Tim. 1:6, the 'positive counterpart' to the admonition of 1 Thess. 5:19,³⁹ should be understood. The text contains no suggestion that the gifts of the Spirit operate automatically.

The basis for this exhortation in 2 Tim. 1:6 is given in the following verse. The Spirit of God does not produce cowardice in those who have been called to leadership in the Church, but provides them with the power, the love, and the self-discipline to exercise their gifts and carry out their responsibilities.⁴⁰ The

³⁵ Quinn, 'Holy Spirit', 359–60; Fung, 'Charismatic versus Organized Ministry?', 206–10.

³⁶ For this translation of τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην, see Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 158, 167.

³⁷ For this meaning of ἀναζωπυρεῖν, see Easton, *Pastoral Epistles*, 39; Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 159; Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 125–6; John R. W. Stott, *Guard the Gospel. The Message of 2 Timothy* (Downers Grove, Illinois: 1973), 30.

³⁸ See Ernest Best, *A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (New York: 1972), 238.

³⁹ W. C. van Unnik, '“Den Geist löscht nicht aus” (I Thessalonicher V 19)', *Novum Testamentum*, 10 (1968), 259.

⁴⁰ For the relationship between verses 6 and 7, see Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 98.

context indicates that the pronoun 'us' in verse 7 should probably be taken primarily as a reference to Paul and Timothy.⁴¹ However, contrary to Käsemann and Dunn, this verse does not prove that the author of the Pastoral Epistles believed that only a select few were the true bearers of the Spirit; for, in Tit. 3:6 it is stated that the Holy Spirit has been 'poured out upon us richly', where the pronoun 'us' clearly refers to the entire Church.⁴² The Spirit is characterized by three qualities. The first two, power and love, are, as A. T. Hanson notes, described as the work of the Spirit in other passages of the Pauline corpus.⁴³ Although the third quality, which describes the Spirit as a Spirit of self-discipline (σωφρονισμοῦ), is somewhat unexpected, one should not immediately conclude, as Hanson does, that such a description of the Spirit is totally non-Pauline.⁴⁴ While this is the sole occurrence of the term in the New Testament, some of its cognate forms do appear in the rest of the New Testament.⁴⁵ More importantly, self-discipline is not presented as 'either a natural endowment or the fruit of painstaking efforts', but as a Christian virtue which is produced by the Spirit.⁴⁶

In view of the spiritual resources which the Spirit has given Timothy, Timothy is now urged in verse 8 'to join [with me] in suffering for the gospel in the power of God'. Hanson feels that this call to suffer for the sake of the gospel fails to capture the Pauline concept of the believer's identification with the crucified Christ. For it is, he argues, linked to Christ at one remove: Timothy is to suffer hardship because he has been entrusted with the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁴⁷ But this observation fails to take into account the implications of verse 10, where it is declared that it was in Christ that death was abolished and immortality revealed. Just as the power of God was at work in the crucified Christ, so in the sufferings of Timothy God is at work through the Spirit of

⁴¹ See E. F. Scott, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: 1936), 91; Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 159–60.

⁴² See E. H. Andrews, *The Promise of the Spirit* (Welwyn, Hertfordshire: 1982), 90–2.

⁴³ *Pastoral Epistles*, 121.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 121–2.

⁴⁵ For a brief, but comprehensive, treatment of these cognate forms, see Siegfried Wibbing, 'Discipline, Prudence, Immorality, Prostitute: σωφροσύνη', *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, I (1975), 502.

⁴⁶ Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 160.

⁴⁷ *Pastoral Epistles*, 41–2. See also his 'The Domestication of Paul: A Study in the Development of Early Christian Theology', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 63 (1980–81), 405–7.

power who indwells Timothy.⁴⁸ That paradigm for the Christian life which Paul found in the crucified Christ, namely that God's strength is displayed in human weakness, is here implicitly set forth. It should be noted, moreover, that Timothy's suffering for the gospel, like his work in proclaiming the gospel, is only possible in the strength which the Spirit gives.

Verse 14 serves as a fitting summary to this section. Timothy is urged to 'guard the splendid trust (τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον) through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us'. Dunn is convinced that this text depicts the Spirit solely as the preserver of past tradition and reflects a closed attitude to new revelations which the Spirit might give.⁴⁹ Yet, the exhortation is somewhat more complex than it appears at first sight. For, in verse 13, the exhortation to Timothy to employ Paul's teaching as a model for his own does not suggest that Timothy must rigidly reproduce what Paul has taught. The word translated 'model' (ὑποτύπωσιν) denotes the idea of a rough sketch or outline which will form the basis of further work. It suggests that while Timothy must remain loyal to Paul's teaching, he has the freedom to interpret and expound it in his own way.⁵⁰ Thus, Timothy is not only to rely upon the Spirit's aid to guard the truth of the gospel, but he must also be sensitive to the Spirit's leading in its exposition.

The Spirit of Regeneration and Renewal

The final text of the Pastoral Epistles which makes explicit mention of the Holy Spirit is Tit. 3:4–8a:

When the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous deeds which we ourselves had done, but in virtue of his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying,

The trustworthy saying which is mentioned in verse 8a should

⁴⁸ See William C. Weinrich, *Spirit and Martyrdom. A Study of the Work of the Holy Spirit in Contexts of Persecution and Martyrdom in the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (Washington, D.C.: 1982), 58–59.

⁴⁹ *Unity and Diversity*, 361.

⁵⁰ E. Kenneth Lee, 'Words Denoting "Pattern" in the New Testament', *New Testament Studies*, 8 (1961–62), 171–2; Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 166; Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 132. See also Hanson, *Pastoral Epistles*, 125.

probably be regarded as stretching from verse 4 to verse 7.⁵¹ Despite the fact that analysis of these verses is no easy task since the passage is so dense, the major theme of the passage is quite evident: the grandeur of the grace and mercy of God.⁵² The failure to appreciate this context had led a number of commentators to ascribe to this text a quasi-magical understanding of the role of baptism in salvation. For instance, E. F. Scott maintains that:⁵³

With Paul . . . baptism is regarded as only setting the seal on the essential act of faith (cf. Rom. vi. 2–4). By faith in Christ we share in His death and resurrection, and this passing into a new life is symbolized and in some manner made valid by baptism. The writer of the Pastorals seems to think of baptism as efficacious by itself. Out of his mercy God has granted us this mysterious rite through which the Spirit works for our renewal. One cannot but feel that since Paul the Church has advanced another step towards sacramental religion.

Scott concludes that the conception of the Spirit presented in this text is one which regards the Spirit as ‘a mysterious force which operates in baptism’.⁵⁴ Easton takes a similar position when he argues that verse 7 describes justification as ‘a fruit of baptism worked in the soul by the entrance of the Holy Spirit’.⁵⁵ Neither of these interpretations does justice to the passage, especially to verse 5 which brings to the fore, not an outward rite, but the inner work of the Spirit.

The passage opens with the unequivocal assertion that salvation is totally the work of God. It cannot be acquired by righteous deeds, but is accomplished solely by the gracious manifestation of God’s mercy in the person and work of Jesus Christ.⁵⁶ Following this assertion is the much-debated clause: ‘by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου)’. Most exegetes understand the term ‘washing’ (λουτροῦ) to be a reference to water-baptism.⁵⁷ Recently, however, Dunn⁵⁸

⁵¹ George W. Knight, III, *The Faithful Sayings in the Pastoral Letters* (Kampen: 1968), 80–6.

⁵² Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 252–3; Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 205; Knight, *Faithful Sayings*, 139–40.

⁵³ *Pastoral Epistles*, 176.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁵⁵ *Pastoral Epistles*, 103.

⁵⁶ Knight, *Faithful Sayings*, 92–4, 139–40.

⁵⁷ See, e.g., Scott, *Pastoral Epistles*, 175; Easton, *Pastoral Epistles*, 100, 102; W. F. Flemington, *The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism* (London: 1948), 101–5; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (1962 ed.; repr. Grand Rapids: 1977), 209–16; Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 251–4; Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 205; Hanson, *Pastoral Epistles*, 190–3.

and George W. Knight⁵⁹ have presented a persuasive case for the view that the 'washing' envisaged in Tit. 3:5 is an inner work of the Spirit, whereby the Spirit 'regenerates and renews the inner nature and mind of the convert'.⁶⁰ But whatever interpretation is given to this term, the major emphasis of the clause is patent, namely, the saving work of the Spirit.⁶¹ The genitive 'of the Holy Spirit' is a subjective genitive;⁶² in other words, it is the Spirit who effects the renewal (ἀνακαινώσεως) of men and women. Now, the terms 'regeneration' (παλιγγενεσίας) and 'renewal' are all but synonymous in this clause and should not be regarded as denoting two separate experiences: 'to be reborn is to be made anew'.⁶³ Confirmation of this interpretation is found in the fact that both terms are dependent upon the phrase 'through the washing (διὰ λουτροῦ)'.⁶⁴ But if 'regeneration' and 'renewal' are so closely bound together, then 'regeneration', like 'renewal', has to be qualified by the subjective genitive 'of the Holy Spirit'. Consequently, the text must be understood as an affirmation that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of both regeneration and renewal: 'regeneration and renewal are alike wrought by the Spirit'.⁶⁵

However, if, as most expositors feel, this text records a credal statement which could have been spoken during the baptismal service,⁶⁶ is it not for this reason inadmissible as evidence of the pneumatology of the author of the Pastoral Epistles? Dunn feels so; for, although he maintains that the trustworthy saying of Tit. 3 does not significantly differ from the Pauline view of baptism, he does believe that the author of the Pastoral Epistles has

⁵⁸ *Baptism in the Holy Spirit. A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in relation to Pentecostalism today* (London: 1970), 165–69.

⁵⁹ *Faithful Sayings*, 95–6, 109–11.

⁶⁰ Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 159. See also *idem*, *Baptism*, 168; D. Edmond Hiebert, 'Titus' in Frank E. Gaebelin, *et al.*, eds., *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: 1978), XI, 445; Andrews, *Promise*, 90. Cf. Dale Moody, *Spirit of the Living God. The Biblical Concepts Interpreted in Context* (Philadelphia: 1968), 147–9.

⁶¹ C. H. Pinnock, 'The Concept of Spirit in the Epistles of Paul' (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester, 1963), 276.

⁶² Knight, *Faithful Sayings*, 101, n. 77; Dibelius and Conzelmann, *Pastoral Epistles*, 149, n. 16.

⁶³ Dunn, *Baptism*, 166. See also Beasley-Murray, *Baptism*, 210; Barrett, *Pastoral Epistles*, 142; Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 252. Pace Hiebert, 'Titus', 445.

⁶⁴ Dunn, *Baptism*, 166.

⁶⁵ Beasley-Murray, *Baptism*, 211. See also Dunn, *Baptism*, 166.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., Kelly, *Pastoral Epistles*, 254; Knight, *Faithful Sayings*, 109–11; Quinn, 'Holy Spirit', 347–8, 352.

understood it in a strongly sacramental sense.⁶⁷ The major reason which he presents in support of this position is the fact that passages such as 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6 bear witness to a tendency of the Pastoral Epistles to limit the work of the Spirit to the rites and institutions of the Church.⁶⁸ But, as has been shown above and as Fung has indicated in his criticism of Käsemann, this interpretation is without exegetical support.⁶⁹ Moreover, Dunn's appeal to these other passages from the Pastoral Epistles simply demonstrates that there is no inherent reason to conclude from either Tit. 3:4-7 or its context that the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit has been subordinated to an external rite. In fact, verse 6 provides clear evidence that the author of the Pastoral Epistles wishes to present the pneumatological position of the credal affirmation as his own. For there it is stated that the Holy Spirit has been 'poured out upon *us* richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour'. With the retention of the first person plural the author of the Pastoral Epistles includes himself among those who have experienced the rich outpouring of the Spirit. Prior to his conversion the characteristics listed in verse 3 accurately described his condition: blind to spiritual realities, contemptuous of divine and human authority, led astray by blind guides, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, and gripped by ill-will and hatred towards his fellow men. Totally unable to extricate himself from this state, it was the Spirit of regeneration and renewal who enabled him to break free.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is not a prominent one in the Pastoral Epistles, there is no reason to regard the pneumatological statements of these letters as similar to those of a later author such as Ignatius of Antioch, for whom the gifts of the Spirit, especially the gift of prophecy, were the special domain of the bishop.⁷⁰ The Spirit in the Pastoral Epistles is still regarded as Lord over the Church, for it is he who provides freedom from sin and empowerment for ministry, and who

⁶⁷ *Baptism*, 168-9; *Unity and Diversity*, 159, 352.

⁶⁸ *Unity and Diversity*, 352.

⁶⁹ See Fung, 'Charismatic versus Organized Ministry?', 206-8.

⁷⁰ James L. Ash, 'The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church', *Theological Studies*, 37 (1976), 235-6, 250. See also the recent study by Christine Trevett, 'Prophecy and Anti-Episcopal Activity: a Third Error Combated by Ignatius?', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 34 (1983), 1-18.

ensures that the truth is expounded in a living and authoritative way from generation to generation. Clearly, there is nothing with regard to the Spirit in these letters which Paul could not have written.

A final word should be said about the influence of the circumstances which the Pastoral Epistles address upon the pneumatology of these letters. There is no direct evidence that the opponents who are in view in the Pastoral Epistles claimed the inspiration of the Spirit for their teaching.⁷¹ Nonetheless, there is indirect evidence that the Pastoral Epistles were written to refute a movement, whose doctrine and conduct were characterized by enthusiastic excesses. For instance, the great emphasis upon self-control in the Pastoral Epistles would seem to indicate such a state of affairs.⁷² Thus, the Pastoral Epistles reiterate the frequent concern of Paul to strike a balance between barren orthodoxy and unbridled enthusiasm. And as such, the pneumatology of these letters remains a challenge and guide for the Church of today.⁷³

⁷¹ Karris, 'Background and Significance', 557-8.

⁷² J. M. Ford, 'A Note on Proto-Montanism in the Pastoral Epistles', *New Testament Studies*, 17 (1970-71), 342-3. While I do not endorse Ford's view of the date of the Pastoral Epistles, I can agree with her statement that the 'Pastorals do not deny inspiration by the Holy Spirit . . . [but] stress the Spirit with complete sobriety' (*ibid.*, 343). It may be the case that the Pastoral Epistles have in view a situation similar to that at Colossae, where misdirected enthusiasm led Paul to emphasize the person and work of Christ, and to some extent shroud the doctrine of the Spirit. On the lack of an extensive pneumatology in Col., see E. Schweizer, 'Christus und Geist in Kolosserbrief' in Barnabas Lindars and Stephen S. Smalley, eds., *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament* (Cambridge: 1973), 297-313.

⁷³ See R. P. Martin, *New Testament Foundations. A Guide for Christian Students* (Grand Rapids: 1978), II, 307.