

The Fullness of the Holy Spirit for Life and Work - 1

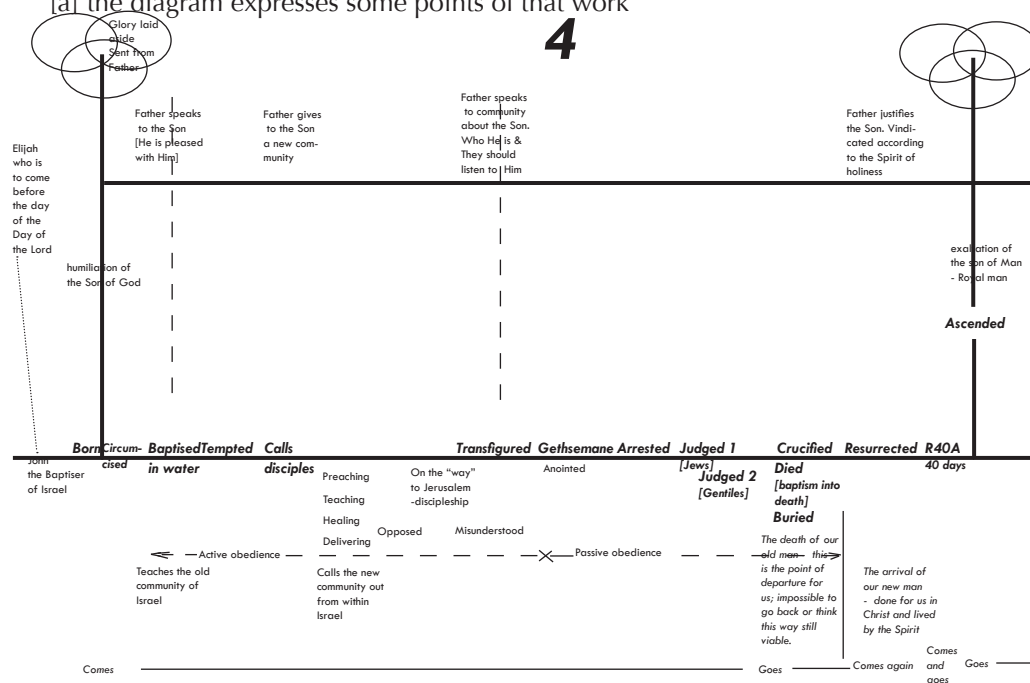
As a person of great dignity, the love of Jesus for his own meant that He served them. By his example he taught them to keep each other's feet clean, even as, in regard to their whole persons, each was already bathed in the sanctifying words of Jesus.

They were to trust Him and the Father that his going from them would mean that the Spirit would take up residence within their persons. The Spirit would bring the experience of the Father and the Son - they would be in union with God as He took up residence within them. The Life of the glorified Son of God has come and interpenetrated our own - making us to know the Father through the Son - and all this is by the Spirit.

We are to trust that this union has taken place and that, being in the Spirit, we are intimate with the life of God within, and that the movement and work of the Spirit in and through us is from the inside-out.

1. The full salvation that God has done for us in Christ is a finished work of the Son.

[a] the diagram expresses some points of that work



[b] this full work of the Saviour for us, is recorded in the Gospels. Particularly in Matthew, Mark and Luke the record of the words and works of Jesus is accompanied by the call of the disciples as an elect group taken from among Israel, and brought into existence by the Father giving them to the Son who called them to follow Him.

2. The blindness of the disciples before the coming of the Spirit

What we should not find remarkable is that, as we read the Gospels we must take seriously - for it is the intention of the writers that we should - the blindness, the forgetfulness, the competitive spirit and unfaithful life of the disciples in relation to the Saviour as towards the end of his life they desert Him. They are clearly not put forward here in the Gospels as stunning examples of men who are expressing the life changes that they later did.

Indeed, the work of the Saviour, and his presence with them, meant that they had the teaching and the example of the very Son of God before them; but it was to no avail to bring about the change in their life that sharing in the life of God would come to mean.

The Fullness of the Holy Spirit for Life and Work - 1

3. The Spirit was not yet... [John 7.37-39]

All the Gospels note this blindness very clearly, and John's Gospel begins to give the reason for it. It is that we must begin to pay attention to the fact that, as the Saviour was doing this work led, empowered and sometimes driven by the Spirit of God there was being prepared for us, in His Person, the Spirit of the glorified Christ who was to come to us. Until Christ was glorified, the Spirit was not yet....

John 1.29-34 Jesus the one who baptises in the Holy Spirit.

John 2. Wedding at Cana - water for washing ceremonially the outside - wine of celebration

Ezekiel last ten chapters. [Revelation 21]

John 3. 1-10 Nicodemus - [see the previously written material about this by DB].

John 4 - the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. "Living water"

John 6.52-59 Eat my flesh and drink my blood.

John 7.37-39 - Rivers of living water flowing out from our bellies. The movement

So we learn that the disciples, at this time as they followed the Saviour, were men and women through whom the message of the kingdom was preached, demons could be cast out and people healed. In the OT model, they had the Spirit upon them, and the authority of Jesus to act in His name, but the Spirit was definitely "with them"; He certainly was not "in them" as yet.

So they were men who knew the Saviour after the flesh, they were not 'spiritual' men as Paul would later distinguish, they were carnal and they showed evidence of it; as we all can do.

4. The eternal Word of God, in whom was the Life, encamped among us

John's Gospel speaks of the word of God as the Person of the eternal Son of God who was there in the beginning with God. As Son he was with the Father and is Himself God. He is the agent of creation, through Whom all things came into existence. In Him was Life, which was the light of men. It is this Life, which as light enters the darkness of the fallen world of men and women, who stumble along alienated from God and unable to see truly. [John 1.1-5]

When the eternal Word of God takes flesh - which is his way of entry into the world - it is said that he "tabernacled" - pitched his tent among us [John 1.14a]. It was the coming of God to live among men and women. It was the accessibility of God in Person. And that in a way that the tabernacle of old was not. For God was present but hidden, and inaccessible to sinful and defiled people - which is to say everyone.

[OT the tabernacle was the moving of God - off the mountain - to dwell among them. To come and dwell among his people. Leading His people as He came Later in history, this tabernacle, upon the entry into the promised land of Canaan, was set up at Shiloh, and then later as the kingship of David and the permanency of the City of David being Jerusalem there was a desire to build for God a full temple in which He might dwell. Under Solomon, this came to fruition.]

Later, we see that Jesus could make clear to Nathaniel that the son of man was a person who, reminiscent of Jacob's ladder, would be the joining hinge between the open access of earth and heaven. He would function as an access, a conduit, an entry point into the very life of God [John 1.51].

Later, as the Gospel records the cleansing of the Temple at Jerusalem, there is an altercation between Jesus and the group John calls "the Jews" Jesus makes this cryptic remark. "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up". They understand him to be speaking of the temple Herod took 46 years to refurbish. John, our writer, makes clear that He was speaking about the temple [νάος] of his body [John 2.22]. [See Trench for the contrast of τό ἱερόν and νάος]. This meant that the body of Jesus was the house of God, for all the fullness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell in Him [Colossians 1.18b-19].

5. When the time came for Jesus to leave

The apostolic band were very troubled in their hearts when it dawned on them that their Master was about to leave them. They were to lose the presence of the One who had honoured them in being their rabbi, had demonstrated the most wonderful wisdom and power of God to them, and who made them feel safe and in touch with the very Father of the Son by his presence with them.

We shall begin to look at what the Saviour said they ought to be doing in reference to his leaving them, and then coming to them in a way that would change everything for them. We want to look at this material because it is addressed to "us" all as a unified group before it is to be appropriated and understood individually within our persons. We shall get to the definite, individual practice, which is involved; but first we must hear what the Lord said to the Church, to the elect group He had called out of Israel to be with Him and to share his life.

So our early readings are to come from the chapters of John's Gospel where the Lord addresses their

The Fullness of the Holy Spirit for Life and Work - 1

sadness at his going to the Father, and listen to his explanations as to why it is to their advantage that He is going away. John 13 - 17 will be where we start.

6. We live post-Pentecost

In Galatians we saw how the apostle answered the terrible mistake of the Galatians that, having begun their Christian life in the power and exuberance of the Holy Spirit engendering faith within them, and seeing his full work among them, they then thought that the Christian life could be carried on to maturity in the flesh. This was the error that made them pray to the Judaizing sect that visited them and led them into the false teaching to which they had already become open.

So many of the letters of the apostles are written after the coming of the Spirit about the matters that indicate the communities fell out of the power of that Spirit in their lives for failing to attend to the Person and work of the Spirit within them.

A reading of John 13-14

There are two farewell discourses: 13.36-14.31 and 15.1-17.26

1. Knew his ministry as coming forth from God - and going to God. Coming and going.
2. Loved his own [who are in the world] - demonstrates this by a loving act.
3. Foretells the Betrayal 13.21-30
4. Gives a new Commandment 13.31-35

Four questions: 13.36-14.31: answers the individual and then speak to all.

[a] Peter 13.36-38 Why can't I follow you now?

[b] Thomas 14.5-7 How can we know the way?

[c] Philip 14.8-21 Show us the Father?

[d] Judas 14.22ff How can you show yourself to us and not to the world?