

Review - Passivity

We have covered a lot of complicated material, and this is probably a good time for a quick review of passivity.

Deception

Satan will first use deception to bring the believer to a place of non-spiritual production, to destroy your witness, where you will not be a threat to him or his plan. This place of “non-production” we called “passivity,” where the believer may think he is being productive and that he is doing the work of God but in reality he is not. There are several types of passivity.

Passivity of the will

The objective is to get the believer to cease the use his will and thus not choose for God. This is what we might call a “super-submissive state”. They are deceived into thinking the human will doesn’t matter?

“I don’t have to use my will. It is ALL God’s will anyway. Whatever happens will happen.”

That is passivity of the will. Whose will are you doing? Are you busy doing what you want? Or more accurately what Satan wants? Your free will is God-given and He expects you to make informed decisions based on reason and sound doctrine resident in the soul and will to act on it. To put your will in a passive state is to open yourself to any kind of leading by unclean spirits

Passivity of the mind

Have you given up because you just aren’t smart enough for this?

“God can’t really use me, I am too dumb! Just keep feeding me milk; that is all I can handle. Don’t want any meat! No tough doctrines, where I have to really think about it. Don’t make me have to figure all this out!”

If this sounds like you, then you have placed your intellect into a passive state. You are called to use your mind to reason, examine and test. Failing to do so is to ASSUME all that comes at you is divine in nature. Satan would prefer it if the believer never examined anything, just passed it on through. This is an open door to unclean spirits. This is a classic failing of many believers in many denominations. They have become conditioned to receive whatever the “authority” they have set up delivers. Often that authority is an unclean spirit or a person deceived by one.

Passivity of judgment or reason

This believer has closed his mind to Scriptural arguments? They “know” this doctrine or that doctrine is “correct” and refuse to acknowledge scriptural evidence or teaching that clearly and Biblically are in conflict with what they think they know?

Their judgment and reason are in a passive state.

Refusal to correct error despite efforts by the Holy Spirit through God's people will lead to hardness of the heart (scar tissue) and more false doctrines. The longer the truth is rejected the deeper the believer is drawn into the deception and the more difficult it is to get him out. When something is presented to you, you best give it a thorough hearing, use your mind and doctrine, and determine if your closely held theology is really true—or is it in error? Passivity of judgment or reason will not allow this.

“I am right and nothing you can say will change my mind!”

That is arrogance and a hostile mindset to the truth.

2 Ti 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure **sound** doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears....

“Sound” in the Greek means healthy or figuratively: uncorrupt. The idea is that some doctrine is healthy for your spiritual life and some is not. Those suffering from passivity of reason or judgment reject what is “healthy” in favor of what is unhealthy.

Passivity of conscience

This is a believer so open to supernatural leadings, that no warning bells ever go off in the conscience? The conscience is God given. It will tell you things long before your intellect will, but it can become corrupted with false teachings delivered as deceptions by unclean spirits, or rendered inoperative through the suggestion by those same unclean spirits that you don't need it.

Your conscience is a tripwire for danger, but once it is shut down as unneeded and becomes passive, or corrupted with false doctrines, it becomes unreliable. What was false becomes true and what was once true is false. Or the believer simply ignores its warnings in favor of these supernatural leadings. Many believers are caught in this very deception. The classic example of this is liberalism, which rejects absolutes in favor of relativism. For them anything can be right when they want it to be. The conscience is corrupted with this relativism, has ceased to function properly, and the perspective is distorted.

Passivity of the human spirit

Are you in tune with your “self” and not your spirit? Are you a slave to your body and are led by it? A slave to your sin nature and led by it? Are you SO intent on getting by day-by-day, making a living, so stressed that you are more attuned to the physical than the spiritual?

In other words, have you shut out your spirit? Have you put your spirit into neutral and rendered it passive and submissive to your soul and body, and in the process, closed yourself off from the Holy Spirit and any leading from God? If your spirit is shut out, the Holy Spirit cannot lead you without resorting to a severe shock to get your attention.

Even then, if the person is far enough gone, that may not work. Beware of becoming focused on self and self's problems.

Passivity of the whole person

The extreme passivity is where the person begins shutting down and becoming dysfunctional? Here we see damaged friendships and burned bridges, someone who is irritable, easy to anger, loses control, and develops irritating habits. Satan has so succeeded in distorting their perspective, that they have problems with relationships.

This is a person on the extreme and close to psychosis. They have built up massive amounts of scar tissue. They have a damaged conscience. As a result they experience increased spiritual blindness. There is an intensified disturbance of the soul and spiritual unrest that requires great effort to suppress. This person is a casualty in the angelic conflict, and his chances of recovering from his wounds are not good.

One of the chief methods of deception is to bring the believer to a state of **passivity**. In this state the believer is brought to a point of **inactivity**. This is the exact opposite of what God wants for you. He has work for you to do.

He desires the surrender to His will by **active choice** to do His will as it may be revealed to you.

By contrast Satan would make the believer a machine blindly following what he (the believer) believes is the will of God. We are called to follow God but never called to do so blindly.

Counterfeits of the Divine

In seeking to deceive the believer the first thing Satan and his evil spirits will do is get you to accept their suggestions, leadings, and doctrines as the communications, leading, and working of God. They will create a counterfeit designed to deceive the believer into accepting it as from God. Probably the most common device for doing this is to counterfeit a divine presence, which the deceived believer will accept as the very presence of God. They will then mislead the believer as they so please, because he is convinced this leading is divine.

Those who get caught in this tend to become very inwardly focused, sometimes withdrawing from association with other believers. They live inwardly in communion, worship, and vision and become spiritually introverted, cramped and narrow in their outlook with no spiritual vision. The result is their spiritual capacity becomes dwarfed and powerless. They may become very academically bright, but application is weak or even non-existent.

Victims of this “inner voice,” which they believe is God’s leading, become fixed on this inward leading, becoming essentially self-absorbed and self-focused. This introverted condition causes them to become non-productive. This is the most common form of deception. This is the deception that charismatics and the Pentecostals are caught in.

The very first lie that creates the opening for these false doctrines is the mistaken location of God. Now what do I mean by that?

The deceived mistakenly believe that God is in them or that God is around them physically, and they are consciously aware of His presence. The key is they are looking for sensory feed-back. They are looking for an ecstatic experience that is ideally both physical and emotional, but at the very least, intensely emotional. Here is the problem: their focus is misdirected, because God is not in them in the sense they are thinking, and they are looking for this sensory stimulation when they should not be. This inward turning to the subjective location of God as indwelling, speaking, communing and guiding in a materialistic and conscious sense is very dangerous. This opens the believer up for deception by Satan and his lying spirits.

What is the ultimate result of this mistaken location of God? Historically it has led to some believing they are the Christ! Two modern classic examples of this are Jim Jones in Guyana and the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas. The assertion that God is wholly in a person implies they are practically divine.

God is not wholly in any man. He dwells in those who receive Him by His Spirit communicated to them. God is spirit and sensuous feelings or conscious physical enjoyment of some spiritual presence is not Scriptural. What the deceived seek and experience is not true communion of human spirit with Holy Spirit, such as what God seeks from those who worship Him.

John 4:24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Worship of the Father is only possible through the spirit and made possible by our identity with Christ and personal relationship with Him. There is no worship apart from that process. When you deviate from that you get deception and apostasy.

Where is God located? Short answer: God is in heaven. Christ the glorified man is in heaven, and the location of God is of supreme importance. We must understand that or risk deception if we think of God as in us or around us for our worship or for our enjoyment. This is an open door to evil spirits.

In Scripture we find references to three heavens. The first heaven is the atmosphere that surrounds the earth. We have references to the fowls of heaven in Hosea 2:18 and the clouds of heaven in Daniel 7:13. The second heaven is the stellar heavens as mentioned in Genesis 1:1 "And God created the heavens and the earth". This is this infinite expanse that we call space, which from time to time the space telescope Hubble sends back pictures for us to marvel at. I believe this "heaven" was created as the abode of all supernatural angelic creatures.

The third heaven, its actual location is unrevealed to man, is the abode of God, that is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Until the Church Age heaven had never been entered into by any human being. Prior to the Church Age, before the ascension of our Lord in Glory, the souls of the elect resided in Paradise, also called "Abraham's Bosom," a compartment of Hades. Paradise is now empty, and those who were in it have been transported to heaven now that Christ sits on the right hand of the Father. In this age those who are asleep in Christ go immediately to heaven and are face-to-face with our Lord as spoken of by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:8 and Philippians 1:23. For the record, there is no such thing as "soul sleep" as some teach. Under this heresy, it is said that the soul goes to "sleep" until the rapture, and they use 1 Thessalonians 4:15 to support that, but the two previous passages I just cited contradict such an interpretation of the First Thessalonians passage.

Heaven is a place and not a state of mind or being (John 14:1-3). Heaven is a physical location.

Our understanding of heaven is a matter of testimony from Scripture. We have three human witnesses to what heaven is like. Christ discloses more of heaven than any other person in Scripture. The apostle Paul evidently was caught up to the third heaven on the occasion of his stoning to death (Acts 14:19-22; 2 Cor. 12:1-9). He was prohibited from speaking about what he saw there. The Apostle John was called into heaven (Rev. 4:1) and given instructions to record all that he saw and heard. Why was

Paul instructed not to tell, but John was instructed to tell? Best guess is Paul's experience was more like that which we will experience at death. John's experience more resembled the rapture. John was given a message to deliver in the form of visions as prophecy for the Church and future times. In spite of the warning Paul wrote after in Philippians in the passage cited above "...having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better". He said that not because he was anticipating the wonders of heaven much as we do but because he had seen it. There is an old saying that applies here, "Heaven is a prepared place for prepared people."

The Mistaken Location of God

One point that causes some considerable confusion among believers is the location of God. God is omnipresent you say and is everywhere, so how can the location of God be an issue? True, God is omnipresent, but His location can be a problem and is the very center of a deception Satan perpetrates on believers. The deception that results from this is a huge problem in the Church, and very few are even aware of it. Before I get into that, let's establish God's location. I warn you, my beloved, this lesson will not be milk for babes in Christ. It will be red meat, filet mignon. This is advanced stuff that will require some brain power.

Yes, God is omnipresent, but He is in heaven. The Scriptures are very clear on this point. Let's go look at a few passages

Hebrews 1:2-3 ...but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Hebrews 4:14-16 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 9:24 For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.

John 14:2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

John 14:12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

It is clear from these passages that Christ is seated on the right hand of the Father in heaven. The God we worship, the Christ we are identified with is in heaven, and it is there that we approach Him. It is there that we through faith have union with Him in Spirit.

Not only is Christ in heaven, but we too are raised with Him and seated with Him above the earthly plane and the lower heavens where the powers of darkness reign. That is right, believers are seated with Him, and we see the powers of darkness under His feet. This is taught in

Ephesians 1:19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

This latter passage is rather clear on that issue, “And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.” This is not the future glorification of the Church after the rapture. This is right now—today!

Now, I am going to confuse you. I just said Christ is in heaven seated on the right hand of the Father and gave passages to support that. I also just said believers are raised up with Him and gave passages to support that. Now I am going to tell you that Christ indwells the believer. If you will read the Gospel of John chapters 14, 15, and 16 you will see the truth of this and references to Christ in you.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

John 14:23 Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

These passages speak of “Christ in you”. Christ indwells the believer. In one sense that is true, but technically that is not completely accurate. It is at best an over simplification of a complicated doctrine.

In the John 14:23 passages we have a very interesting Greek word used for “abode” (“make our home” ESV). The word is *mon-ay'* and means a place or abode. It comes from *meno*, which is translated “abide.” This is not only a place but can also be a state or relationship, which is the way it is used here, as a state or relationship rather than a physical place. According to Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, the word carries the meaning of “being completely operative in him by his divine influence and energy.” Furthermore, this message is spoken to the apostles and, as representatives of the Church, it applies to Church Age believers, the Whole Body of Christ. This is an important piece of understanding, so please bear with me. I will pull it all together before we are finished and make sense of it for you.

Christ is in heaven. The believer is raised up with Him (in heaven). Christ “makes his abode” with the believer. The believer is here on earth. Confused yet? Taken at face value those four statements seem to be in complete contradiction with each other. Let me assure you they are not, but how can all these be true at the same time? The key is understanding that abiding is a relationship and not a place. If you can grasp that, it is possible that Christ is in heaven and we are raised up to Him, while at the same time we are here on earth and Christ is in us, then you can understand this.

I am going to explain this with a simple statement: Our union with the glorified Christ results in an **outflow** and an **inflow**. Let’s define these terms and see what I mean here.

The outflow is our faith directed towards the object of our faith, Christ in heaven. This outflow of faith results in the inflow of the Christ life produced in us. Or you might say, what is subjective or personal by way of experience comes from the object of faith. That which is subjective, the Christ Life, is produced in those believers who demonstrate faith in the object of our faith, Christ in heaven. What results is not a physical abiding but a relationship of the most intimate nature. Or as Thayer said, “being completely operative in him by his divine influence and energy.”

We saw this in Galatians 5. The “walking” (abiding) believer demonstrates faith in the guiding and enablement of the spirit (Gal 5:16) and the result is the Holy Spirit producing the Fruit of the Spirit, which is the very lifestyle of Christ in the believer (Gal 5:22-23).

Christ does not physically indwell the believer, but the Life of Christ, His influence and energy does. In that sense we are indeed indwelt by Christ. Christ is formed in us (Col 1:27; Gal 4:19). The believer is said to be the temple of God. Literally speaking, that can be referring to the indwelling Spirit of God. The Temple in Jerusalem during the Age of the Law was the place where God met His children, and His Glory resided in the Temple (as long as Israel remained true to the covenant). And as the Holy of Holies in the Temple was the residence of the Glory of God on earth during the Age of Israel, the body of the believer is likewise the residence of the Glory of Christ during this Church Age.

The “object,” Christ in heaven, is the basis of faith for the subjective inflow of His life and power by the Holy Spirit into the believer. Christ abides in us by His Spirit and through His Word, but He Himself, as a person, is in Heaven. It is only as we abide in Him THERE – **outflow** - that His Spirit and His life, through His Word can be manifested in us HERE – **inflow**.

This is what we called the “spiritual life”. This is the mechanics of how we experience that spiritual life. Through our faith and trust in Christ (in heaven) we experience the very lifestyle of Christ produced in us and out through us.

What difference does the location of God really make, and how can Satan use our misunderstanding of that against us? “Abiding” means an attitude of trust and dependence on a Person in heaven. It does not mean a literal physical indwelling of Christ. BUT if the attitude is changed into a trust and dependence upon a Christ within, it is really **resting on an inward experience** and turning from the Christ in heaven. This effectively short-circuits this outflow/inflow process and thus terminates the spiritual walk. In that state the believer is deceived by Satan, is in a condition of disobedience, and is no longer following the leading of God but is following Satan’s leading. All the while the inwardly focused believer thinks he is following the leading of God. The believer is disassociated from co-operation with Christ by His Spirit.

Any manifestation, therefore, of a “presence” within, cannot be a true manifestation from God, if it de-focuses the believer from his right attitude toward Christ in heaven. And there are many that are focused on a presence within!

There is a true knowledge of the presence of God, but it is in the Spirit when joined with Him. That is the outflow/inflow process we developed previously. This true knowledge lifts the believer out of himself to abide with Christ. That is fulfillment of Ephesians 2:6 “And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus.” By virtue of faith in the object of our faith, the believer is, in a very real sense, himself seated with Christ in heaven.

The counterfeit “presence” of God is nearly always manifested as an **emotional or ecstatic experience**, to which the believer often opens himself without even thinking about it. The “manifestation” in his mind is very real. He “feels” it inside. I call it a warm and fuzzy glow. This can be a very physical experience. Moreover, it is mentally stimulating, filling, and emotionally satisfying. In the deceived mind, it feels good, therefore it must be from God. Can you see the problem? Anytime you are looking for an emotional or ecstatic experience to “feel the presence of God” you have turned your focus inward. In that process you have opened yourself up to Satan delivering exactly what you are expecting, and you think you are feeling God’s presence. This is the very deception that the Pentecostals and the charismatics are trapped in. They are looking inward for that emotional experience, and Satan delivers, deceiving them right OUT of God’s plan for their lives. They end up worshiping and praying to demons when they believe they are worshiping God. They end up doing the will of Satan and they think they are filled with the Holy Ghost.

There are legitimate emotional responses to God working in our lives, but the Christian experience should not be built around a frantic search for that emotional or ecstatic experience under the premise that if you don't find it you are either not saved or not yet filled with the Spirit. Such is not Scriptural.

Let's review the concept –

God is in heaven. The focus of our faith, Jesus Christ, is in heaven, and yet we are told Christ is in us, and we know we are yet here on earth – how can this be?

Outflow – Inflow. Faith produces the Christ life in us. This exact principle was depicted in the OT Tabernacle/Temple arrangement. Prior to the Cross, man, in his fallen state could not approach God, so God had to meet man half way, so-to-speak. The Tabernacle and later the Temple were set up under the Mosaic Covenant for man to have a relationship with God and enjoy the blessings that God had to offer to those in right relationship with Him. Under the Law these blessings were earned by behavior modification. During this period (except under Menassah) God resided with Israel in the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle/Temple. Man could approach God only through an elaborate process of animal sacrifices using an intermediary, the priests. Man had to bring his behavior into alignment with God's standards by the confession of his sins and making the proper animal sacrifice at the Temple. That process made the man blamelessness in God's eyes, not sinless but declared judicially (legally) blameless, because man had met the requirements of the Mosaic Covenant to receive that status.

The Shekinah Glory resided in the Holy of Holies. We are told in 1 Corinthians 3:16 “Know ye not that ye are the **temple of God**, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” In Hebrews 9:24 “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

Christ, as the Glory of God, was no longer present in the Temple in Jerusalem when this was written. Paul was saying that Christ has assumed His throne in heaven. What was correct and true under the Law was only “figures of the true”. “Figure” is antitupon *an-tee'-oo-pon* which is a compound word made up of anti *an-tee'* which means opposite and tupos *too'-pos*, which means style or resemblance, or type. The word means a resemblance or type for picturing a future event. The Temple was merely a picture of something yet future. It is picturing when the believer would become the Temple of God, and Christ, who is now risen and glorified and seated at the right hand of the Father, would establish residence and relationship with him (abide).

That relationship is established through the yielding of man's will to God's will and faith in God – **outflow**. The believer experiences the same life, same relationship with the Father, same empowerment that Christ experienced during His earthly ministry – **inflow**. This concept is also seen in Galatians 5:22-23 in the Fruit of the Spirit. Faith is exhaled or output toward the object of our faith, Christ in heaven. In return we receive

all that Christ had and was and has to offer by way of Grace and divine enablement. The medium of exchange, that is the vehicle that makes this possible, is the presence of the Holy Spirit and the creation of our human spirit at salvation (...is born of the Spirit... John 3:6).

Remember this word “abiding” is not just a physical presence, rather it is a relationship presence, and I believe that is the way this should be understood. Christ does not physically indwell the believer, but the Life of Christ, His influence and energy does. In that sense we are indeed indwelt by Christ.

The Counterfeit Presence of God

The danger of the mistaken location of God is Satan will use that against the believer to create the counterfeit presence of God. Remember how we talked about this deception of the counterfeit presence of God causes the believer to become inwardly focused? When we are inwardly focused we damage our relationship with God - the outflow and inflow process. This opens the believer to deception by Satan.

The best example of this I can think of is the Pentecostal experience. When the believer is looking for a sense of God’s presence, the enemy presents the unsuspecting with an experience that he assumes can only be from God. The believer was looking for it, and Satan delivered. Once in this ecstatic state, “divine” guidance is suggested, and here is where the doctrines of demons are presented as truth and readily accepted as truth. The person is now sure that God has spoken to him and given him a mission or a message. He has been spoken to by God! Singled out! Received special favor! God has come to him personally, and he is gifted as a result. Do you see the narcissism, the self-centeredness, the self-love, the arrogance of such an experience? Guess what happens now? The scar tissue builds

1 Tim 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; **2*** Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron

They become unteachable. “There is nothing you can say that will convince me that tongues is wrong!” is the statement given to someone I know when he tried to convince the person of his doctrinal error. The person will not listen, because he has received a direct revelation! His emotional experience, this inward focus, becomes for him more powerful than the Word of God, even when it demonstrates the error of his theology. In his self-centered, experience-driven mind, to ignore that “direction from God” becomes a sin. The person ceases to use his reason and consider the truth even when presented from Scripture, and we have passivity of judgment or reason, and the conscience ceases to act as an alarm.

This is their mindset: “I am a special instrument of God,” which feeds their self-love and arrogance. “I am more advanced than others,” which blinds the person to sober self-

knowledge and he is unable to correctly analyze his own condition. "I am different from others," and he thinks he has received special attention from God. God has singled him out as unique and gifted him. "I must take a separate path," which feeds the independent spirit.

All these experiences give the person a false sense of his spiritual status. He perceives himself as VERY spiritual, anointed, and special in the eyes of God. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:3) A person in this situation is even more open to deception and has more scar tissue blocking the truth.

The counterfeit presence of God is always sensuous. It should be recognized as false whenever the experience is in the physical realm. The true indwelling of God is in the spiritual realm only, and the soul or personality of the believer is merely a vehicle for the expression of Christ. The person is governed by God through the human spirit. Such governance is made possible ONLY when the person, exercising his free choice, submits his own will to the will of God.

This true spirit realm indwelling looks like this – **Holy Spirit > human spirit > soul or personality/intellect > body**. The counterfeit looks like this – **Deceiving spirits > Soul > Body**. In the latter the human spirit is bypassed—passivity of the human spirit, where it is non-functional. The experiences are all emotional and physical. The person believes he is experiencing the presence of God and begins to pray and worship that "inner presence". He has turned inward. This is when we see such heresy as "unknown tongues" and praying in the "language of angels" which is "divine" and "understood only by God".

Through these subtle delusions the person comes to believe that God Himself is in conscious possession of the body. The body experiences warmth, heat, even agonies which are accepted as the vicarious "sufferings of Christ". This can go to the extreme of feeling the same pain Christ felt—the nails in the hands and feet. An example of this extreme is stigmatics. This is passivity of the whole person. Counterfeit manifestations of the "divine life" intensify with sensations of warmth or cold, tongues, quaking of the body, shaking or trembling. The genuine working of Christ in you IS NOT in the physical but in the spiritual

Remember

- Christ is in heaven seated on the right hand of the father
- He does not physically reside in the believer
- The believer expresses faith toward Christ in heaven
 - That is the outflow toward the object of faith
- The life of Christ, the abiding, takes place through the Holy Spirit
 - That is the inflow of the subject, the believer.
- God working in the believer looks like this: The Holy Spirit > human spirit > soul > body of the believer.

- The counterfeit cuts out completely the connection with Christ IN HEAVEN
- And the connection between the Holy Spirit > human spirit > and the soul
- And substitutes a connection between the deceiving spirits > soul > body
- What results are all emotional and physical experiences.
- So, instead of a focus on Christ, the person becomes focused on self and **experiences**
 - He is “giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron”
 - You see this in the charismatic movement and the Pentecostal movement.
 - You also see this in many of the cults.
 - And even in Roman Catholicism and its several branches.
- When people are looking for a physical experience as from God, Satan will deliver it.

The Counterfeit Voice of God

We have seen there is a counterfeit presence of God, and that presence is always emotional and sensual. It appeals to that part of us that wants to feel accepted and even special. And nothing could possibly be more special than to be seen as “special in God’s eyes”. It turns the believer inward, as he seeks an emotional experience. And there you have the underlying motivation for movements like tongues, healing, visions, and other non-active spiritual gifts and communications from God. These believers have been deceived with the most basic appeal, the appeal to self.

God does not speak directly to His children during this present age. Hebrews 1:2 say, “God has spoken to us by his son.” John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Then in verse 14 it says, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” The time for visions and divine voices like burning bushes has passed, because we have Christ and Christ personified in the Word of God. The canon of Scripture was not completed until about 70 years after the start of the Church Age. The Church was in a transitional period during that time, and until the Canon of Scripture was completed and God’s Plan fully revealed, there were temporary spiritual gifts to fill the void. There were supernatural communications between God and man, like tongues, visions, dreams, knowledge, prophecy, and other direct communications, but with the completion of the Canon, those gifts were no longer needed. And to continue to emphasize them (falsely) is to divert attention from the Word. That is exactly what Satan wants, and is exactly what is happening. The churches that still teach systematic theology and verse-by-verse are rare indeed these days. Rather, pastors are feeding their flocks emotional baby food, and they are not growing spiritually.

So, how do we know these gifts have ceased? Open your Bibles to First Corinthians chapter 13 and begin reading in verse 1 through 12. Here we have a key passage on spiritual gifts and the temporary nature of some of them.

Here Paul is speaking to the church at Corinth and chastising them for their undue focus on certain spiritual gifts. He is charging them with spiritual immaturity when he says they do not have love (charity). The word is agape and refers to the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). They are so very proud that they speak in tongues and prophesy, but they have not advanced spiritually.

Now look at verse 8. Paul says, “But whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away.” He says these spiritual gifts will vanish away—end. When? The answer is in the following verses. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.” “Part” is meros *mer'-os*, which means part or a portion and comes from the Greek *meiromai*, which means to get as a section or allotment. What they know and what they prophesy is only a part of the total, an allotment or a section of a whole.

Now verse 10. “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” The Pentecostals say the “perfect” is Christ at the Second Advent. So they argue that until Christ returns all these gifts will be active. Trouble is the Greek word translated “perfect” is not in the masculine gender, it is in the neuter gender. It cannot be a person, it is a thing, and therefore it cannot be referring to Christ. Furthermore, these spiritual gifts will be active right after the Second Advent during the Kingdom or Millennium, as Christians refer to it (Joel 2:28). If they are active until Christ comes and active after, but then “vanish” they must vanish for only a few seconds. Houston, we have a problem!

Since the “perfect” is not a person, it is a thing, the only “thing” that qualifies as perfect is the inspired word of God. When Paul wrote this letter much of the New Testament did not exist, and what did exist was not yet compiled into what we know as the Bible. Paul is saying that once that happens these gifts will cease. The reason is they will no longer be needed.

Paul continues in verse 11 “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.” Implicit in that statement is that there was a period of immaturity (the apostolic period), and that period would pass, then there would be a maturing to adulthood. These temporary gifts are for this immature period and will eventually be put away.

Now verse 12 “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” And here is the clincher. These temporary gifts are only a shadow of what is to come. We could look into this “mirror,” which is the partially revealed Word of God, and see ourselves reflected back “darkly”. This word “darkly” is an enigma *ah'-ee-nig-ma*, and it doesn't mean dark as in the absence of light; it means an enigma or riddle, something not clearly seen or understood. What we see reflected was not clear. And here is that “part” word again, “now I know in part”. Paul says he is only knows pieces of a whole. “But then shall I know even as also I am known”. Paul says there is a time coming when we will have all of it, and we will be able to see ourselves exactly as God sees us. The Word of God is

designed to convict us, so that we look into this mirror we call the Bible and see our flaws and failures CLEARLY reflected back, and we see ourselves exactly as God sees us—“then shall I know even as also I am known.” And that often is not a pretty image, but that is what the Bible is supposed to do.

Clearly we have a message in these verses that once the Canon of Scripture is completed all these special communication gifts will cease. And for a very good reason: they are no longer needed. We have God’s Word to look into the mirror “brightly” and see ourselves as He sees us and see what He desires for us.

These spiritual gifts are what we call “edification gifts”. Their purpose was to serve as a tool to reveal the entire New Testament Canon, get it recorded, and get it disseminated. The last book written was the Book of the Revelation, and that was written some 40 or so years after First Corinthians. These apostolic period Christians needed these New Testament doctrines as quickly as possible. These temporary spiritual gifts served the specific purpose of filling that doctrinal void, but they revealed only “part” of what was to come. Once all the New Testament doctrines were revealed and disseminated they were no longer needed.

Why is this important? The reason is because Satan is using these inactive spiritual gifts to deceive believers into a system of apostasy and away from the truth of God’s Word as revealed in Scripture. Satan is mimicking these spiritual gifts in Pentecostal, so called “full gospel,” and charismatic churches all over the world. He has believers deceived into a state of passivity, where they are not productive for God and are not a witness against Satan. They are trapped in spiritual immaturity and in effect a witness FOR Satan! These believers think they are hearing the voice of God, and are responding to it, when in fact they are hearing a counterfeit voice of God and responding to demons! If that thought doesn’t get you quaking in your boots, something is dreadfully wrong with your understanding of all this.

We are led by God, providentially and through His Spirit working in our hearts. Our basis of evaluating leadings should always be from the Word, because there is no such thing in this age of voices or visions from God to lead us or tongues to reveal “new” spiritual truths. We are to be self-sustained spiritual warriors, relying on internalized Bible doctrine from the Bible and Spirit led and enabled.