



# Spirit of Truth





‘In a topic usually known more for its disagreements, Jackman steers a sure-footed course through the main lines of thought about the Holy Spirit. Every Christian should be a theologian of the Holy Spirit and this book will greatly help us in this goal. It carries us along, with skillful and pastoral insight, to a greater appreciation for the third Person of the Trinity.’

Derek W. H. Thomas

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*Unlocking the Bible's Teaching  
on the Holy Spirit*

David Jackman

**CHRISTIAN FOCUS**





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## FOREWORD

It is a great pleasure and privilege to have been asked by Christian Focus Publications to prepare this second and considerably revised version of *Spirit of Truth* for publication. The book first appeared in 1993 as a series of simple, straightforward expositions of key Biblical passages about the person and work of the Holy Spirit. All of its chapters began as preached material, several at the Keswick Convention and some others at Above Bar Church in Southampton, where I was the senior minister from 1980 to 1991. The aim was to provide an overview of the Bible's teaching in a format which could be used equally for personal or for group study. The basic structure of the book remains the same in this second edition. However, as the times have changed and fresh issues have been raised, I have added to many of the chapters some further explanation and detail, which I hope will help to clarify some more urgent contemporary causes of debate or confusion.

In the foreword to the first edition, I asked the questions, "So, why yet another book about the Holy Spirit? Haven't we already enough to fill a library?" The same could be said today with even greater justification, but I think my answers then remain remarkably relevant now and so I would like to rehearse them, briefly.

Firstly, in all the debate about the charismatic movement over the past thirty years, much of the written material has been





## Spirit of Truth

produced specifically to develop, or answer, rather specific and detailed arguments about particular experiences or phenomena. There is a danger in that; namely that this whole area of Christian thought and experience is expected to generate more heat than light. For many Christians the great and glorious Biblical truths about the Holy Spirit have been lost in the cross-fire of argument and counter-argument, so that the whole subject has become a ground of contention and dispute, rather than of enlightenment and joy. There is a place, I believe, for a simple restatement of the great doctrines of the Spirit's person and work for a new generation of Christians, many of whom have been forced to adopt positions and take sides in arguments, perhaps without fully realizing the foundation principles on which such discussions are based.

Secondly, my method is simply to allow the Bible to speak for itself. There is no special pleading here for a particular view or position, other than that which is clearly taught in Scripture. I have often said, when teaching the Bible, "Don't believe this because I say it. Only believe it if you are convinced the Bible is saying it". My main concern therefore has been to write each chapter as an exposition of a Bible passage, because I believe that one of the greatest needs in the universal church today is to learn to listen carefully to Scripture and therefore this method runs through all my teaching. The text of the passage has been printed at the start of each chapter, so that the material can still be studied even if a Bible is not to hand. Although all the material has been re-worked, I hope and pray that something of the preacher's urgency will also be communicated through these pages.

Thirdly, in an age still dedicated to the quest for spiritual experience, we need to reassert the authority of the Bible as the only arbiter of which experiences come from God, and which do not. Spiritual reality is not to be judged by the intensity of our emotion, but by the revelation of God's will. We can only recognise any experience to be of God if we know what God





## Foreword

is like and how he relates to us, and for that we are entirely dependent on the Word of God. Christianity is an experiential religion, but its experience is produced by the Word which God has spoken and continues to speak.

There is a special appropriateness in this, for it is the Holy Spirit who inspired the Word and it is still his great tool in the work of bringing people to Christ and building them up in the faith. It is still true that a great deal of our current confusion is caused by a false polarization of the Word and the Spirit. It is false because it is untrue to both. Yet how many Christians have opted in one direction or the other, as though such a “choice” was perfectly legitimate? On the one side, there is the caricature of the ‘Word’ Christians – cerebral, logical, all head and no heart. Their concern is with doctrine, truth and orthodoxy. On the other side, equally victims of caricature, are the ‘Spirit’ Christians – emotional, intuitive, warm, plenty of heart but no head. Their concern is with experience, love and excitement. Surely we cannot be content with these wooden travesties of real Christian faith and love any longer! There can be no division between Word and Spirit, truth and love, doctrine and experience, mind and heart. They all belong together, in New Testament Christianity, always. My hope and prayer is that in some small way these studies may help a new generation to repent where we have been guilty of “putting asunder” what God has joined together, and prevent us from repeating the mistakes of the past in the future.

I am very grateful to several friends and colleagues who have encouraged me to re-issue the book, in the light of something of a perceived gap in the market for basic and straightforward expository material at this level. I am equally grateful to the Trustees of the Proclamation Trust for their support and to Nancy Olsen for her skilful expertise and enthusiastic commitment to preparing the manuscript for publication. Special thanks are due to Pete Nicholas, currently working with me as my study assistant, who re-read the original





## Spirit of Truth

manuscript and who raised penetrating questions and made invaluable suggestions about how the material might relate more effectively to issues within the contemporary debate. His work provided a very valuable stimulus to my thinking. Finally, I want to thank my wife, Heather, for her help and support, as always over the thirty-five years of our marriage, in “getting the job done”, which is one way of translating the word “dunamis” – the power of the Spirit of Truth. Glory be to God!

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