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# **When the Holy Ghost is Come**

Col. S. L. Brengle

# Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Col. S. L. Brengle  
Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)  
ISBN: 978-3-8495-0789-3

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## **Foreword.**

The Salvation Army, contrary to what has often been thought by surface observers, has owed its existence, its strength, and its success chiefly to our careful attention to the profoundest questions of the soul.

And still, as always, we wish to urge upon all the study of those great practical truths, without the proclamation of which our work for men would cease to have any abiding value. We glory in the knowledge of Christ as a perfect Saviour just as much for this, our own time, as for any past generation, or for any generation yet to come. The pretence that this age has reached some superior development, whether mental or moral, for which a new kind of Saviour is needed, seems to us absurd. And we do not believe it can long endure where Christ is really known.

To the most thoughtful, therefore, as well as to those who have the least time for thought, I earnestly commend the words of devout and practical men upon those great questions, which I hope to see reproduced in the series of which the present volume is the first. Prayerful reading of their messages cannot but lead to immediate action, to a complete self-abandonment to God, and to a realizing faith in His power to use every one of His sons and daughters for the healing of the world's open sores and the triumph of His Rule.

BRAMWELL BOOTH. LONDON, January, 1909.



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## **Preface.**

It is no small pleasure to me to commend this book to all who love God, and in particular to those who are labouring to serve Him in the ranks of The Salvation Army. I believe that it will prove useful in the most important ways—in its bearing, that is, upon many of the practical difficulties and problems of daily life.

The writer, Colonel Brengle, gives us not only of the fruit of an orderly and well-stored mind on the great subject before us, but—and this is the more important—he tells us of the actual work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of ordinary men and women, as he has witnessed the results of that work amidst his many labours for the Salvation and Holiness of the people. It is for them he writes. It is to them, living the common life, bound to others by the obligations of ordinary social intercourse, toiling at their secular occupations, and rubbing shoulders with the multitude in the market-place, that his message comes. I venture to hope that his words will make it plain to some of them that the highest intercourse with the Divine is their privilege; that the special province of the Holy Ghost is to lead men into the truest devotion to God, and to the advancement of His Kingdom on earth, even while they are carrying on the common avocations associated with earning their daily bread.

The only purpose of God having a practical bearing on our lives is His purpose to save men from sin and its awful consequences, and make them conform to His will in this world as in the next. The work of the Holy Spirit is to help us to achieve that purpose. Without His help we are unable to overcome the difficulties that are in the way, whether we consider them from the standpoint of the world or of the individual. If anyone could have looked at the state of the world at the time of our Lord's death he would surely have regarded the work which the Apostles were commissioned to attempt as the most utterly wild and impracticable enterprise that the human mind could conceive. And it was so, but for one fact. That fact was the promise of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, to be the great Helper in the undertaking.

And equally in the work of uniting the individual soul with God's purpose that Spirit is our Helper. In the work of righteousness He is a Partner with us. In the life of faith and prayer He is our

unwavering Prompter and Guide. In the submission of our wills to God and the chastening of our spirits He is the great Co-worker with us. In the bearing of burdens and the enduring of trial and sorrow He joins hands with us to lead us on. In the purifying of every power from the taint of sin He is our Sanctifier.

All this is practical. It has to do with to-day – with every bit of to-day. In fact, so far from the sphere of the Holy Spirit being limited to the pulpit or the platform, or to the inward experiences of the religious life, He is just as truly and properly concerned with the affairs of the shop and the street, the nursery and the kitchen, the chamber of suffering and the home of penury, as with preaching the Gospel or healing the sick.

Now it is to lead its readers to a personal experience of all this that this book has been written. No mere intellectual assent to the truth it sets forth can satisfy its author, any more than it can benefit his readers. What he seeks, and what I join him in devoutly asking of God, is that you, dear friend, who may take this little volume into your hands, may see what an infinite privilege is yours, and may begin to act with God the Holy Ghost, and to open your whole being to Him, that He may work with you.

*Bramwell Booth.*

*London, January, 1909.*

## I.

### **Who Is He?**

“Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.”

On that last eventful evening in the upper room, just after the Passover feast, Jesus spoke to His disciples about His departure, and, having commanded them to love one another, He besought them not to be troubled in heart, but to hold fast their faith in Him, assuring them that, though He was to die and leave them, He was but going to the Father’s many-mansioned house to prepare a place for them.

But already they were troubled, for what could this death and departure mean but the destruction of all their hopes, of all their cherished plans? Jesus had drawn them away from their fishing-boats, their places of custom and daily employment, and inspired them with high personal and patriotic ambitions, and encouraged them to believe that He was the Seed of David, the promised Messiah; and they hoped that He would cast out Pilate and his hated Roman garrison, restore the kingdom to Israel, and sit on David’s throne, a King, reigning in righteousness and undisputed power and majesty for ever. And then, were they not to be His Ministers of State and chief men in His Kingdom?

He was their Leader, directing their labours; their Teacher, instructing their ignorance and solving their doubts and all their puzzling problems; their Defence, stilling the stormy sea and answering for them when questioned by wise and wily enemies.

They were poor and unlearned and weak. In Him was all their help, and what would they do, what could they do, without Him? They were without social standing, without financial prestige, without learning or intellectual equipment, without political or military power. He was their All, and without Him they were as helpless as little children, as defenceless as lambs in the midst of wolves. How could their poor hearts be otherwise than troubled?

But then He gave them a strange, wonderful, reassuring promise: He said, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever" (John xiv. 15, 16). I am going away, but Another shall come, who will fill My place. He shall not go away, but abide with you for ever, and He "shall be in you." And later He added: "It is expedient for you" – that is, better for you – "that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come."

Who is this other One – this Comforter? He must be some august Divine Person, and not a mere influence or impersonal force, for how else could He take and fill the place of Jesus? How else could it be said that it was better to have Him than to have Jesus remaining in the flesh? He must be strong and wise, and tender and true, to take the place of the Blessed One who is to die and depart. Who is He?

John, writing in the Greek language, calls Him "Paraclete," but we in English call Him Comforter. But Paraclete means more, much more than Comforter. It means "one called in to help: an advocate, a helper." The same word is used of Jesus in i John ii. i: "We have an Advocate," a Paraclete, a Helper, "with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Just as Jesus had gone to be the disciples' Advocate, their Helper in the Heavens, so this other Paraclete was to be their Advocate, their Helper on earth. He would be their Comforter when comfort was needed; but He would be more; He would be also their Teacher, Guide, Strengthener, as Jesus had been. At every point of need there would He be as an ever-present and all-wise, almighty Helper. He would meet their need with His sufficiency; their weakness with His strength; their foolishness with His wisdom; their ignorance with His knowledge; their blindness and shortsightedness with His perfect, all-embracing vision. Hallelujah! What a Comforter! Why should they be troubled?

They were weak, but He would strengthen them with might in the inner man (Eph. iii. 16). They were to give the world the words of Jesus, and teach all nations (Matthew xxviii. 19, 20); and He would teach them all things, and bring to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said to them (John xiv. 26).

They were to guide their converts in the right way, and He was to guide them into all truth (John xvi. 13). They were to attack hoary systems of evil, and inbred and actively entrenched sin, in every human heart; but He was to go before them, preparing the way for conquest, by convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John xvi. 8). They were to bear heavy burdens and face superhuman tasks, but He was to give them power (Acts i. 8). Indeed, He was to be a Comforter, a Strengthened, a Helper.

Jesus had been external to them. Often they missed Him. Sometimes He was asleep when they felt they sorely needed Him. Sometimes He was on the mountains, while they were in the valley vainly trying to cast out stubborn devils, or wearily toiling on the tumultuous, wind-tossed sea. Sometimes He was surrounded by vast crowds, and He entered into high disputes with the doctors of the law, and they had to wait till He was alone to seek explanations of His teachings. But they were never to lose this other Helper in the crowd, nor be separated for an instant from Him, for no human being, nor untoward circumstance, nor physical necessity, could ever come between Him and them, for, said Jesus, "He shall be in you."

From the words used to declare the sayings, the doings, the offices and works of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, we are forced to conclude that He is a Divine Person. Out of the multitude of Scriptures which might be quoted, note this passage, which, as nearly as is possible with human language, reveals to us His personality: "Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers... As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed into Seleucia" (Acts xiii. 1-4).

Further on we read that they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia"; and when they would have gone into Bithynia, "the Spirit suffered them not" (Acts xvi. 6, 7).

Again, when the messengers of Cornelius, the Roman centurion, were seeking Peter, "the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men

seek thee. Arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them" (Acts x. 19, 20).

These are but a few of the passages of Scripture that might be quoted to establish the fact of His personality—His power to think, to will, to act, to speak; and if His personality is not made plain in these Scriptures, then it is impossible for human language to make it so.

Indeed, I am persuaded that if an intelligent heathen, who had never seen the Bible, should for the first time read the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, he would say that the personality of the Holy Spirit is as clearly revealed in the Acts as is the personality of Jesus Christ in the Gospels. In truth, the Acts of the Apostles are in a large measure the acts of the Holy Spirit, and the disciples were not more certainly under the immediate direction of Jesus during the three years of His earthly ministry than they were under the direct leadership of the Spirit after Pentecost.

But, while there are those that admit His personality, yet in their loyalty to the Divine Unity they deny the Trinity, and maintain that the Holy Spirit is only the Father manifesting Himself as Spirit, without any distinction in personality. But this view cannot be harmonised with certain Scriptures. While the Bible and reason plainly declare that there is but one God, yet the Scriptures as clearly reveal that there are three Persons in the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The form of Paul's benediction to the Corinthians proves the doctrine:—

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

Again, it is taught in the promise of Jesus, already quoted, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter... the Spirit of Truth" (John xiv. 16, 17). Here the three Persons of the Godhead are clearly revealed. The Son prays; the Father answers; the Spirit comes.

The Holy Spirit is "another Comforter," a second Comforter succeeding the first, who was Jesus, and both were given by the Father.

Do you say, "I cannot understand it"? Neither do I. Who can understand it? God does not expect us to understand it. Nor would He have us puzzle our heads and trouble our hearts in attempting to understand it or harmonise it with our knowledge of arithmetic.

Note this: it is only the *fact* that is revealed; *how* there can be three Persons in one Godhead is not revealed.

The *how* is a mystery, and is not a matter of faith at all; but the *fact* is a matter of revelation, and therefore a matter of faith. I myself am a mysterious trinity of body, mind, and spirit. The fact I believe, but the *how* is not a thing to believe. It is at this point that many puzzle and perplex themselves needlessly.

In the ordinary affairs of life we grasp facts, and hold them fast, without puzzling ourselves over the *how* of things. Who can explain *how* food sustains life; how light reveals material objects, how sound conveys ideas to our minds? It is the fact we know and believe, but the *how* we pass by as a mystery unrevealed. What God has revealed, we believe. We cannot understand *how* Jesus turned water into wine; *how* He multiplied a few loaves and fishes and fed thousands; *how* He stilled the stormy sea; *how* He opened blind eyes, healed lepers, and raised the dead by a word. But the facts we believe. Wireless telegraphic messages are sent over the vast wastes of ocean. That is a fact, and we believe it. But *how* they go we do not know. That is not something to believe. It is a matter of pure speculation, and is unexplained.

An old servant of God has pointed out that it is the fact of the Trinity, and not the *manner* of it, which God has revealed, and made a subject for our faith.

But while the Scriptures reveal to us the fact of the personality of the Holy Spirit, and it is a subject for our faith, to those in whom He dwells this fact may become a matter of sacred knowledge, of blessed experience.

How else can we account for the positive and assured way in which the Apostles and disciples spoke of the Holy Ghost on and after the day of Pentecost, if they did not know Him? Immediately after the fiery baptism, with its blessed filling, Peter stood before the people, and said: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet

Joel: And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh"; then he exhorted the people and assured them that if they would meet certain simple conditions they should "receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He said to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" He declared to the High Priest and Council that he and his fellow-Apostles were witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus: and added, "And so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." Without any apology or explanation, or "think so" or "hope so," they speak of being "filled" (not simply with some new, strange experience or emotion, but) "with the Holy Ghost." Certainly they must have known Him. And if they knew Him, may not we?

Paul says: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (I Cor. ii. 12, 13). And if we know the words, may we not know the Teacher of the words?

John Wesley says: —

"The knowledge of the Three-One God is interwoven with all true Christian faith, with all vital religion. I do not say," he adds, "that every real Christian can say, with the Marquis de Renty, 'I bear about with me continually an experimental verity, and a fullness of the ever-blessed Trinity. I apprehend that this is not the experience of "babes," but rather "fathers in Christ."' But I know not how anyone can be a Christian believer till he 'hath the witness in himself,' till 'the Spirit of God witnesses with his spirit that he is a child of God'; that is, in effect, till God the Holy Ghost witnesses that God the Father has accepted him through the merits of God the Son.

"Not that every Christian believer adverts to this; perhaps, at first, not one in twenty; but, if you ask them a few questions, you will easily find it is implied in what he believes."

I shall never forget my joy, mingled with awe and wonder, when this dawned upon my consciousness. For several weeks I had been searching the Scriptures, ransacking my heart, humbling my soul, and crying to God almost day and night for a pure heart and the

baptism with the Holy Ghost, when one glad, sweet day (it was January 9th, 1885) this text suddenly opened to my understanding: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"; and I was enabled to believe without any doubt that the precious blood cleansed my heart, even mine, from all sin. Shortly after that, while reading these words of Jesus to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die," instantly my heart was melted like wax before fire; Jesus Christ was revealed to my spiritual consciousness, revealed in me, and my soul was filled with unutterable love. I walked in a heaven of love. Then one day, with amazement, I said to a friend: "This is the perfect love about which the Apostle John wrote; but it is beyond all I dreamed of; in it is personality; this love thinks, wills, talks with me, corrects me, instructs and teaches me." And then I knew that God the Holy Ghost was in this love, and that this love was God, for "God is love."

Oh, the rapture mingled with reverential, holy fear—for it is a rapturous, yet divinely fearful thing—to be indwelt by the Holy Ghost, to be a temple of the Living God! Great heights are always opposite great depths, and from the heights of this blessed experience many have plunged into the dark depths of fanaticism. But we must not draw back from the experience through fear. All danger will be avoided by meekness and lowliness of heart; by humble, faithful service; by esteeming others better than ourselves, and in honour preferring them before ourselves; by keeping an open, teachable spirit; in a word, by looking steadily unto Jesus, to whom the Holy Spirit continually points us: for He would not have us fix our attention exclusively upon Himself and His work *in* us, but also upon the Crucified One and His work *for* us, that we may walk in the steps of Him whose blood purchases our pardon, and makes and keeps us clean.

"Great Paraclete! to Thee we cry:  
O highest Gift of God most high!  
O Fount of life! O Fire of love!  
And sweet Anointing from above!  
"Our senses touch with light and fire;  
Our hearts with tender love inspire;

And with endurance from on high  
The weakness of our flesh supply.  
"Far back our enemy repel,  
And let Thy peace within us dwell;  
So may we, having Thee for Guide,  
Turn from each hurtful thing aside.  
"Oh, may Thy grace on us bestow  
The Father and the Son to know,  
And evermore to hold confessed  
Thyself of Each the Spirit blest."

"HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST SINCE YE BELIEVED?"

## II.

### Preparing His House

"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And Paul wrote to the Romans that, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

So it must be that every child of God, every truly converted person, has the Holy Spirit in some gracious manner and measure, else he would not be a child of God; for it is only "as many as are led by the Spirit of God" that "are the sons of God."

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin, who makes us feel how good and righteous, and just and patient God is, and how guilty we are, and how unfit for Heaven, and how near to Hell. It is the Holy Spirit who leads us to true repentance and confession and amendment of life; and when our repentance is complete, and our surrender is unconditional, it is He who reasons with us, and calms our fears, and soothes our troubled hearts, and banishes our darkness, and enables us to look to Jesus, and believe on Him for the forgiveness of all our sins and the salvation of our souls. And when we yield and trust, and are accepted of the Lord, and are saved by grace, it is He who assures us of the Father's favour, and notifies us

that we are saved. "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." He is "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

"And His that gentle voice we hear,  
Soft as the breath of even;  
That checks each thought, that calms each fear,  
And speaks of Heaven."

It is He who strengthens the new convert to fight against and overcome sin, and it is He who "begets within him a hope of fuller righteousness through faith in Christ."

"And every virtue we possess,  
And every victory won,  
And every thought of holiness,  
Are His alone."

Blessed be God for this work of the Holy Spirit within the heart of every true child of His!

But, great and gracious as is this work, it is not the fiery pentecostal baptism with the Spirit which is promised; it is not the fullness of the Holy Ghost to which we are exhorted. It is only the clear dawn of the day, and not the rising of the day-star. This is only the initial work of the Spirit. It is perfect of its kind, but it is preparatory to another and fuller work, about which I wish to write.

Jesus said to His disciples, concerning the Holy Spirit, that "the world" (the unsaved, unrepentant) "cannot receive" Him, "because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him"; because they resist Him, and will not permit Him to work in their hearts. And then Jesus added, "but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you...." He had begun His work in them, but there was more to follow, for Jesus said, "and shall be in you."

When a man is building himself a house, he is in and out of it and round about it. But we do not say he lives in it until it has been completed. And it is in that sense that Jesus said, "He dwelleth with you." But when the house is finished, the owner sweeps out all the chips and saw-dust, scrubs the floor, lays down his carpets, hangs up his pictures, arranges his furniture, and moves in with his family. Then he is in the fullest sense within it. He abides there. Now, it

is in that sense that Jesus meant that the Holy Spirit should be in them. This is fitly expressed in one of our songs:-

“Holy Spirit, come, Oh, come!  
Let Thy work in me be done!  
All that hinders shall be thrown aside;  
Make me fit to be Thy dwelling.”

Previous to Pentecost He was with them, using the searching preaching of John the Baptist, and the life, the words, the example, the sufferings, and the death and resurrection of Jesus as instruments with which to fashion their hearts for His indwelling. As the truth was declared to them in the words of Jesus, pictured to them in His doings, exemplified in His daily life, and fulfilled in His death and His rising from the dead, the Holy Spirit wrought mightily within them; but He could not yet find perfect rest in their hearts; therefore He did not yet abide within them.

They had forsaken all to follow Christ. They had been commissioned to preach the Gospel, to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to raise the dead, to cast out devils. Their names were written in Heaven. They were not of the world, even as Jesus was not of the world, for they belonged to Him and to the Father. They knew the Holy Spirit, for He was with them, working in them, but not yet living in them, for they were yet carnal; that is, they were selfish, each seeking the best place for himself. They disputed among themselves as to which should be the greatest. They were bigoted, wanting to call down fire from Heaven to consume those who would not receive Jesus, and forbidding those who would not follow them to cast out devils in His name. They were positive and loud in their professions of devotion and loyalty to Jesus when alone with Him. They declared they would die with Him. But they were fearful, timid, and false to Him when the testing time came. When the mocking crowd appeared, and danger was near, they all forsook Him, and fled; while Peter cursed and swore, and denied that he knew Him.

But the Holy Spirit did not forsake them. He still wrought within them, and, no doubt, used their very mistakes and miserable failures to perfect within them the spirit of humility and perfect self-abasement in order that they might safely be exalted. And on the