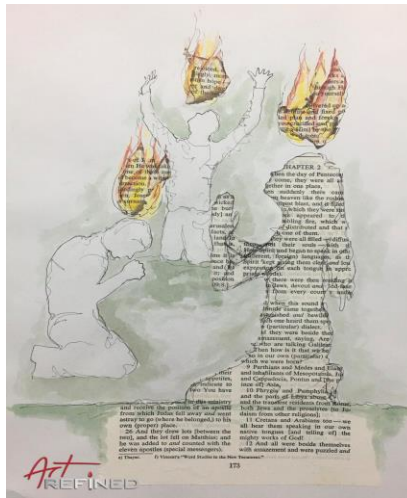


WHERE'S THE EVIDENCE



"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you."

John 14

Many of us claim that we have received this gift.

The Holy Spirit has come to us.

The Spirit lives in us, guides us, empowers us.

This is our claim.

But where's the evidence?

There are those who say that the evidence we have received this gift is that we speak in tongues.

But we all know that tongues can be faked.

The Apostle Paul asks, "Do all speak in tongues?"

God alone knows for sure who has actually received the Spirit.

We cannot see into the heart of a sister or brother.

But we can look into *our own hearts* for unmistakable evidence that we have received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Speaking the truth.

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

John 16

The simple and clear evidence that we have received this gift is that the Spirit exactly requires us to speak the truth.

When we embellish the truth,

When we put a twist on the truth,

If we remain silent when the truth needs to be spoken...

...the Spirit deals with us with holy severity, even up to the way he dealt with Ananias and Sapphira.

If we are still able to play games with the truth it's time to ask,

“Is the Holy Spirit going easy on me, or have I driven him away?”

Walking in love.

Another evidence that we have received the gift of the Spirit is that the love of God actually rules our daily life..

More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

Romans 5

If God's love is being poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, what happens when that love grows cold?

When grudges accumulate?

When bitterness rises.

When our words have taken on a hard edge?



The Holy Spirit is not a gift we can put in our pocket and pull out when needed.

The Holy Spirit is either Lord of our lives or he is gone.

So the evidence that the gift of the Holy Spirit is actually in charge of our lives is twofold:

The Holy Spirit requires us to speak and live the truth.

The Holy Spirit causes God's love to rule our hearts as we move among the wandering sheep out there, and as we work together with each other.

The Holy Spirit is given to be with us forever.

And he indeed remains with us forever, provided he stays on the throne of our hearts.

If we take over the throne and merely call on the Spirit at our convenience, we put ourselves under his judgment. Never presume on the Spirit's grace.

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And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you."



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Prayer: Lord forgive us for the times we do not keep your commandments, for when we drive the Spirit away. Forgive us for desiring your Spirit for our own ends, without yielding to the call of the Spirit. We repent of and mourn for times our lives lack the evidence that we are led by your precious Holy Spirit. May we be convicted by your Spirit when we stray, when our love grows cold, when our words wound others, when we fail to speak and live the truth. Help us to turn again and place you on the throne of our hearts, to be led by your Spirit. May our lives be living evidence of your power over us which is your love ruling our lives in every way. Amen.

Maranatha Mirror

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THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN