

THE ANOINTING OF THE CHURCH

**"The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you."
– 1 John 2:27.**

UNDER the Divine arrangement with the nation of Israel their high priests, who represented the entire priesthood, were inducted into office by an anointing with a peculiar kind of rich perfume called the holy anointing oil. This oil was made according to a special prescription, and the people were not permitted to use it, upon penalty of death. After Israel had become a kingdom, the kings were also anointed with this holy anointing oil.

These two offices of priest and king were afterwards shown to be typical of a united service which would find its antitype in One who was to be a Priest upon His Throne – a Royal Priest, a Priestly King. The Scriptures give us a type of this united office in the person of Melchizedek, of whom it is written that he was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. (Genesis 14:18-20; Hebrews 7:1-17.) By thus comparing Scripture with Scripture we learn that Messiah, who is to accomplish the great work of blessing the world, is to be the One who will combine the offices of both king and priest.

Examining the type closely, we find that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of the high priest only at the time of his induction into office. Poured liberally upon his head, the oil ran down to the very skirts of his priestly robes of office. As we shall see later, this circumstance was also typical.

Looking forward from the type to the antitype, we perceive the Scriptures to teach that there is to be established in the earth a great Messianic Kingdom, which will bind Satan, restrain all evil influences and give the whole world of mankind a full opportunity

of reconciliation with God. We also understand that there will be done a great priestly work in connection with this Kingdom. This also will be a part of Messiah's great work, which is thus shown to be twofold; as King He will rule mankind with a rod of iron for their blessing, and as Priest He will instruct, uplift, heal their diseases and awaken the dead.

"CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY"

The nation of Israel well understood that their Messiah was to be the promised Seed of Abraham, who was to bless all the families of the earth; but not until the time of our Lord's First Advent was it due to be understood that this Seed was to consist of more than one individual. The Apostle Paul calls our attention to this fact and declares that this was the Mystery hidden from previous dispensations – that the Messiah was to be, not an individual, but a company under one Headship. (Ephesians 3:2-7; Colossians 1:25-27.) Furthermore, this Messiah is not only to be multitudinous, but is to be gathered from amongst many nations.

Only a few can understand this Mystery; many do not comprehend it yet; in fact, it is to be understood only by a special class, for whom it is designed. The Scriptures show us that the Gospel Age is set aside for the selection of this great antitypical King, greater than Solomon; this great antitypical Royal Priest, represented by Melchizedek. The call of this Age is for those who shall become members of this company, the antitypical Priest and King.

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All who would become members of this Kingdom class must look to our Lord Jesus as the One through whom the favor of God is to come to them. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under Heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." Since the death and resurrection of Christ a new

way to life has been opened up. Christ will be the Head of the Church which is His Body; and the entire Church will complete the great antitypical Prophet, Priest and King – the long expected Seed of Abraham. – Galatians 3:8,16,29. [R5549 : page 298]

Therefore let all who have offered themselves to God in consecration take up the cross and follow the Master; let them live as nearly as possible the life that He lived, walking in His steps. While we cannot be perfect according to the flesh, and while God cannot approve anything imperfect, yet our perfection is to be that of intention, of will; and thus through the Redeemer shall we approve ourselves unto Him.

Reverting to the typical picture of the anointing of the Jewish high priest at the time of his induction into office and comparing it with the antitype, we perceive that the great antitypical Priest was anointed at Jordan. There our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Christ company, received the Holy Spirit without measure. At Pentecost the antitypical anointing oil began to flow down to the Church. As in the type the oil poured upon the head of the high priest flowed down to the very skirts of his garment, so the Holy Spirit has come down from the Head of the Church even to the last members of the anointed Body of Christ. – Psalm 133:1-3.

THE ENTIRE CHRIST COMPANY ANOINTED

We receive this anointing from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. All things are of the Father and all things are by the Son. (1 Corinthians 8:6.) The Father bestowed the Holy Spirit upon the Son, and authorized Him to bestow it upon His Body. This granting of the Holy Spirit was designed to be an anointing for the whole Body; for the Father recognized the Body when He recognized the Head. When Christ made imputation of His merit to cover the blemishes of the Church, He made us acceptable to the Father; and this acceptance was outwardly manifested by the tongues of fire, etc., which came upon the Apostles at Pentecost.

This outward manifestation was not the most important thing, however; for the Apostles might have received the Holy Spirit without any special manifestation of Divine Power.

The tongues of fire which descended at Pentecost, like the dove which lighted upon our Lord at His baptism, did not continue to be seen. Both the dove and the flame of light were merely outward representations for the purpose of convincing the beholders that the promised blessing and power had come.

When Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the anointed company, there was another manifestation of the fact that the Holy Spirit had been given to the followers of Jesus. So there might be many manifestations of any fact. Even now God might give a manifestation to show that He had bestowed the Holy Spirit; but by so doing He would merely be *indicating* the fact – the holy Spirit was *already there*. The anointing which the Church received at Pentecost was the Divine sanction, the Divine recognition, of those consecrated to follow in the footsteps of our Lord. God thus gave outward demonstration of the fact that there was to be a Church.

Since Pentecost the same Gospel call has gone forth throughout all the world – to as many as the Lord our God doth call. (Acts 2:39.) Those who accept the terms and conditions of that call come into the anointed company. When we come into Christ, we come into this anointing. We do not get into the Body of *Jesus*, but we come into this symbolical Body of the Anointed – *The Christ*. We enter into this condition in which we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" Jesus our Lord. Throughout this Gospel Age this anointing has continued in the Church. "The anointing which ye have received abideth in you"; it continues in you. Those who never come into this anointing will never be of the Church.

ANOINTING AND BEGETTING

As to how we may know that we have been begotten is another phase of the matter. At Pentecost when the Church began, there were outward signs by which this anointing was demonstrated – gifts of the Spirit, gifts of tongues, etc. These were merely outward gifts, the Apostle tells us, and might mean no more than tinkling cymbals or sounding brass. (1 Corinthians 13:1-3.) It might be that those having the gifts had merely come into relationship with God in an outward, formal way, and had made no real progress in spiritual things.

God's arrangement seems to be that after we have come into this anointed company and thus may from the very beginning speak and think of ourselves as the anointed class, there will by and by come a manifestation that we have really entered into this class. This evidence will not be by our speaking with tongues, etc., but by the appearance of the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit – meekness, patience, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. The manifestation of these fruits would [R5550 : page 298] seem to mean that we were becoming more and more actuated by the Spirit of Christ.

But even here we must discriminate between the natural disposition and that acquired by growth in grace. For instance, there are those who have a great deal of patience – too much, in fact; they are indolent. Their patience, therefore, is not a fruit of the Spirit. In order to distinguish between natural traits and acquired graces we are to compare the person's natural disposition with his growth in grace and in the fruits of the Spirit.

The anointing of the Spirit is not altogether the same as the begetting of the Spirit. The anointing relates merely to the recognition as a *member of a class* called to a special work in the Messianic Kingdom. When we become related to God through Christ we become members of the anointed company. But while the

anointing is represented of the whole Church *collectively*, the begetting of the Holy Spirit is an *individual* matter. In various ways the Scriptures explain to us that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit by and through the Word of Truth.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE WORD OF TRUTH

In other words, no one can receive the Holy Spirit except he has received the Truth. As an illustration, Cornelius was a good man, who prayed much and gave alms liberally; all this, however, did not give him the Holy Spirit. But when the appropriate time came – the end of the seventy weeks of favor to the Jews – Cornelius was directed to one who would tell him what he ought to do. He was instructed by a holy angel to send for St. Peter to come to his house and to tell him *words*. (Acts 10:22.) Words were necessary.

In order to become members of the Church of Christ, there must be intelligent action on our part – it is not something of a hocus-pocus. We may know, therefore, that no heathen, however noble by nature, could possibly be of the Church class; and the same is true of people who are civilized. Whoever is to be of the anointed company must have a knowledge of the privilege of coming into relationship with God through Christ. If any one has not had this information, he cannot possibly be of the Church class.

It is the Word of God, the Gospel Message, that will bring people into relationship with God. So whoever will receive the Holy Spirit must first receive the knowledge of the Truth; and then this Truth will operate upon him. First he must take his stand for righteousness; next he must receive Christ as his Redeemer. Then, after having accepted Christ as his Savior, he must go forward and **[R5550 : page 299]** make a consecration of himself to walk in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus. If he merely understood that this is the will of God, we believe that he would be received of the Lord – begotten of the Holy Spirit. Then it would be God's order that he

receive more instruction, because he had taken the proper steps thus far.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ANOINTING

How much of this is done automatically we may not surely know. As the skilful human being operates largely along automatic lines, so the great Creator would doubtless have automatic lines along which to work; and one step would lead on to one result, and another step to another result, etc. Our supposition is that God has some great principle operating automatically by which, under Christ, all whom He would accept would receive certain blessings individually. As soon as the individual would take the required steps, he would realize the Divine blessing and guidance in his affairs.

All of the anointed have the mind of the great Head of the Church. So we are to seek to abide in Christ individually as well as collectively; for as we have come into the anointed class, so it is possible for us to go out of that class. To abide in Christ, we must, as New Creatures, grow in grace, in knowledge and in love; for as New Creatures we shall, if faithful to the end of our course, be perfected in the First Resurrection, and sit in the Throne with our Lord and King. – Revelation 3:21.

=====