

# The Old Paths

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## “36,000 Scripture Quotations”

Jarrold Jacobs

**R**ecently, I came across some facts that amazed and humbled me. While doing some research concerning Christians from the first through fourth centuries, I learned that the writings of these men were very Bible-centered, focusing most of the content of their writings on the New Testament. Men like J. Harold Greenlee, and Bruce Metzger have stated that we could reconstruct the New Testament from the writings of these men. Imagine that! The writings of these men were so focused upon the gospel of Christ that one could reconstruct the New Testament from what they wrote! In fact, those who have studied these writings have counted no less than 36,000 Scripture quotations from the various writers! \*

Concerning specific writers, I have found that **Irenaeus** (student of Polycarp, who was a student of the apostle John, lived 120-205 A.D.) recorded some 1,819 quotations from the New Testament. These included quotes from Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, I Corinthians, I Peter, Hebrews, and Titus. **Ignatius** (50-110? A.D.) quotes from Matthew, John, Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Galatians, Colossians, James, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy and I Peter. **Clement of Alexandria** (150-212 A.D.) quoted from the New Testament some 2,406

times! His works include quotations from 24 books of the New Testament! **Cyprian** (died in 258 A.D.) cited about 740 Old Testament passages, and 1,030 New Testament passages in his works. These are but a few of the examples of early writers who, when they wrote, quoted from the Bible in their various works. \*

Doesn't such facts as these fill us with amazement? Don't they also humble us? When I read such facts as the above, I realized that there were such a large number of Bible quotations in those men's writings because this is what they were teaching! They were not teaching and spreading the thoughts of men, but were teaching the word of God to people. The best way to do this is to include quotations and citations of Scripture to the people. Is there any wonder why the Ephesian letter says, "*Whereby when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ*" (Eph. 3:4)?

When I learned those facts about the men named above, it made me want to re-examine my preaching and writing. Am I quoting Scripture in my preaching and writing? Am I making sure folks know that when I preach, write and talk with them, that I am putting the Lord's word and will first above all else (Matt. 6:33; Col. 3:17)? In addition to this, it makes me look around and notice what "others" are doing. Brethren, are we seeing a trend moving us toward more Scripture in our lives, or less? We know Satan and the

world wants less Scripture (even none), but what about those of us who are called out of the world? What about those of us who are a part of the "*royal priesthood*" (I Pet. 2:9)? What did those men of the first, second, third, and fourth centuries see that those of us in the twenty-first century are not seeing? Are we treating the Bible lightly? Are we taking the Bible knowledge of the population for granted, and assuming folks know more than they really do? Is it that "we" have become embarrassed by the gospel? Timothy was told, "*be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord*" (II Tim. 1:8). The apostle Paul said, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ ...*" (Rom. 1:16). Are we ashamed? Or, is it that we are ashamed to reveal our ignorance of the Scriptures (Hos. 4:6)? Either way, let us repent and let us be a people whose hearts and lives are filled with Scripture!

It is evident that this article is not merely a call to memorize Scripture with no application. Rather, "*let the word of Christ dwell in (us) richly in all wisdom ...*" (Col. 3:16) so that we may obey God! Of course, such a way of life happens by spending *more* time in God's word, not less! Let us therefore demand God's word be quoted and taught in our preaching, writing, and in all aspects of our lives. Peter said, "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ...*" (I Pet. 4:11). God's people were once called "walking Bibles". Can anyone venture a guess as to why that was? How might God's people be described today? What are we teaching people?

### \*Sources:

- 1) McDowell, Josh, Evidence That Demands A Verdict, p. 50-52.
- 2) Bercot, David, Will The Real Heretics Please Stand Up

*“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.” (Jer. 6:16)*

## What Is The Gift Of The Holy Spirit?

Jarrold Jacobs

On occasion, this author has a chance to answer different Bible questions. This article is written with the hope that it will help others who are asked similar questions concerning the Bible and salvation (I Pet. 3:15).

**T**he “gift of the Holy Spirit” is discussed in Acts 2. It is there on the day of Pentecost, that Peter and “the eleven” (v. 14) stood and preached the gospel to the Jews that had gathered that day (v. 5). As he summarized the points he had made at that point, the record states: “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:37-39).

One thing that ought to be understood as we study this subject is that there is a difference between the “gift” of the Holy Spirit, and the “gifts” of the Holy Spirit. The “gifts” of the Holy Spirit are named for us in I Corinthians 12:4, 8-10. These were gifts bestowed upon certain ones during the time when God’s written word was not in its completed form. Chapter twelve of I Corinthians enumerates these gifts, and chapter thirteen tells us

the duration of such gifts (v. 8-10). Yet, the “gift of the Holy Spirit” discussed in Acts 2 is different, for this is something that people receive after they have repented and have been baptized as Peter said on this occasion.

What is “the gift of the Holy Spirit”? It encompasses all the spiritual blessings which belong to those who are in Christ (Eph. 1:3). Acts 3:19 is a parallel passage to Acts 2:38 wherein Peter speaks to the crowd gathered after they had healed the lame man. To this crowd, he tells them, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” Therefore, the “times of refreshing” of 3:19 correspond with “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in 2:38.

Sometimes, people say “the gift of the Holy Spirit” is the Holy Spirit. I disagree with this. The gift of the Holy Spirit is not the person of the Holy Spirit, but it is the Holy Spirit’s gift! This is what is being promised. If one repents and is baptized for the remission of sins, he/ she receives the Holy Spirit’s gift (“times of refreshing from the Lord,” salvation from sins, spiritual blessings in Christ, hope of Heaven, etc.)

## What We Know Is Right

Benjamin Franklin (1812-1878)

**W**e know it is right to “Let the word of Christ dwell in us rightly; and with all wisdom *teach* and *admonish* each other by *psalms* and *hymns* and *spiritual songs*; *singing* with gratitude in our hearts to the Lord” — to be “filled with the Spirit; *speaking* to one another in *psalms* and *hymns* and *spiritual songs*; *singing* and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.” This *can* be done, and *we know* it is right; but that a man can make melody in his heart to the Lord “with an organ,” a fiddle, banjo, clarinet, lute, fife, or jew’s-harp, we do not know, nor do we believe it. We want to do what is written, and enjoin it on others, to do it. What is not written we do not want to do. When the Lord so minutely describes *how* we are to do anything, we want to do it in that *way*. The *way* he prescribes will do the thing commanded; some other *way* might not do what is commanded at all.

(From: Book of Gems, p. 107)

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