

DIRECT OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FATAL ERROR

by Tom Wacaster

There has been a considerable amount of material written exposing Mac Deaver's position on the Holy Spirit. It would appear that brother Deaver is not content to keep his doctrine to himself, but seeks to spread his doctrine as far and wide as humanly possible. The truly disturbing thing about Mac's actions is that he is willing to push his doctrine even to the division of churches. More recently the churches in this area have received material from Mac that is nothing more than a continual barrage of his human wisdom, destructive as it may be.

Immeasurable damage has been done to the body of Christ because of a misunderstanding of the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. Men who once stood foursquare for the truth have erred concerning the work of the Holy Spirit and have taught things that they would have opposed only a few short years ago. When men get sidetracked concerning the Holy Spirit, their thinking becomes clouded. Unfortunately, in recent years the body of Christ has become divided over the mode of the Holy Spirit's operation upon the child of God. Fellow Christians, many whom I have known for years, have come down on opposite sides of this issue. Fellowship has been severed. Volumes of material have been written on whether or not the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the heart of the child of God in order to provide strength, wisdom, and sanctification to the Christian. Over the last five to six years this author has read a considerable amount of material on both sides. He has read and studied in depth one written debate, viewed a video of a second debate, and attended personally a third debate, all of which discussed this issue. In each of these debates brother Mac Deaver affirmed a proposition upholding the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart of the child of God. He has, in the past decade or so, preached, promoted, proclaimed, and pushed this doctrine to the division of a number of congregations, at least two of which this author is personally familiar.

That being said, I thought it might be helpful to set forth in as few words as possible, what I perceive to be the fatal element in Mac's teaching. By the very nature of the case it would be difficult to boil the whole issue down to one or two pages. But we will do the best we can to confine our comments to as few articles as possible. These will be "Extra's" to Tom's Weekly Pen. Please feel free to distribute this material as far as possible.

It is important that we realize that just because one holds to some erroneous position that this is not necessarily grounds for withdrawal of fellowship. Not all false doctrine can be classified as "fatal false doctrine." While it is not within the scope of this lecture, it should be noted here that there is a distinction in the New Testament between matters of doctrine, judgment, and opinion. When it comes to matters of opinion and/or judgment, each person is free to make the choice which best suits the situation and/or his preference. What color carpet shall we put in the building? Where shall we baptize? Shall we rent or purchase a place for worship and study? The matter of precisely how the Holy Spirit operates in the life of a Christian is not a matter of judgment, nor does it fall in the realm of expediency. What we are discussing here has to do with specific teaching in the New Testament. But is it the case that any misunderstanding on a particular teaching of the New Testament constitutes grounds for withdrawal of fellowship? Consider, as an example, the question of the "mode" of the indwelling of the Spirit. This student recalls

with fond memory those occasions at the Freed-Hardeman Lectures when Guy N. Woods and Gus Nichols would argue their particular position on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Both believed they were right; but both, by the very nature of truth, could not be right. Either brother Woods, or brother Nichols, or both, were teaching error. Why, then, was fellowship maintained between these two great and godly men? On the other hand, the present controversy on the operation of the Holy Spirit has brought about severance in fellowship. Why? What makes a false doctrine a "fatal false doctrine"? May we suggest the following:

First, any doctrine that causes a person to sin is a doctrine that is fatal. Take, for example, a false doctrine regarding baptism. An erroneous doctrine on this vital subject will cause a man to fail to be baptized, fail to respect the only authorized action (immersion, pouring, etc.), and/or fail to respect the purpose and importance of this act of obedience.

Second, if the doctrine violates either specific or general authority in the "thing" being done, then it is a fatal false doctrine. God authorizes "singing" in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Instrumental music violates the authority regarding the "thing" being done for the simple reason that there is no authority for it.

Third, if the doctrine changes the nature and/or structure of the church, then it is a fatal false doctrine. Premillennialism is a fatal false doctrine because it changes the nature of the church, viewing it as some "accident" or "afterthought" in the mind of God.

Fourth, any doctrine that causes a person to commit a moral or unethical act is a fatal false doctrine. Jude spoke of "certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). It is difficult to imagine someone upholding a vile, immoral practice and doing such in the name of religion. To our amazement there are just such so-called "Christian" teachers who uphold homosexuality, gambling, and imbibing alcoholic beverages, to name just a few.

Fifth, any doctrine that denigrates the nature of God is a fatal false doctrine. Such error was evident among the gentiles in the first century: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen" (Rom. 1:22-25). When men teach that Jesus Christ is not divine, or that there is only one member of the "godhead," they have taught fatal false doctrine.

Sixth, if the doctrine denigrates, de-emphasizes, or seeks to substitute God's word with something more, or less, than what has been revealed, it is a fatal false doctrine. This is because of the repeated emphasis in the Bible with regard to the importance of, power of, and sufficiency of the divinely revealed word (2 Pet. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 1:16-17). The very first sin in the history of mankind began with a de-emphasis upon the word of God. The devil, in the form of the subtle serpent, first asked Eve, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Gen. 3:1). He sought to put a doubt in her mind

with regard to God's clear command. Then the devil denied God's word and told Eve, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). Today men de-emphasize the importance of God's word by teaching modern day revelation. This would substitute God's word with the teaching of men. Others would seek to rob the word of its God-given power. The author of Hebrews upheld the power of God's word: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12). Paul declared the power of the gospel: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). Paul declared the all-sufficiency of the gospel: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Peter likewise addressed the all sufficiency of a knowledge of God's word to provide "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). Any doctrine that seeks to rob the word of its power and authority is a fatal doctrine. As we shall see in this lecture, it is **at this precise point where the doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the Christian becomes a fellowship issue.**

Part 2

If you have not read part one let me strongly encourage you to visit my website and download that article for consideration [you can access my site by clicking on the "archives" link above, then locate "Deaver's Doctrine is Fatal Error" (part 1). We pick up here where that article left off. In order to understand the full impact of the danger of Mac Deaver's doctrine it is important to understand what the Bible teaches about the heart of man. I think we all understand that it is the heart of man that is changed in the process of conversion and sanctification. When the heart is brought into submission to God's will, the actions follow, for it is "out of the abundance of the heart that the man speaketh." It is not the physical man that is changed at the point of obedience to the gospel, but the heart. The physical is merely a shell, a "tabernacle" of the man himself (2 Cor. 5:1-3). Not one man or woman, when converted by the gospel, has ever had a change in his/her physical appearance. Let it be emphasized here that the body is not the subject of the gospel message, except where the behavior manifested by the physical body is changed. It is important, therefore, to define the "heart" of man that is in need of conversion and sanctification. Admittedly, the word "heart" is sometimes used in the Old Testament to refer to the physical organ. Nabal's "heart died within him and he became a stone" (1 Sam. 25:37).

"And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and smote Joram between his arms; and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot" (2 Kings 9:24). Sometimes the word is used to refer to the innermost or hidden part of a thing. Thus, we read of the "heart of the seas" (Psa. 46:2, ASV). Sometimes the word refers to the physical man. In the New Testament it is said that the fruitful seasons can fill "hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). But like other anthropological terms in the Bible, the word "heart" is frequently used to refer to the center of focus of a man's inner personal life. The heart is the source, or spring of motives; the seat of passions; the center of the thought processes; the spring of conscience. Consequently, the Bible describes human depravity as existing in the "heart," because sin has its seat in the center of man's inward life. When the "heart" is defiled, it defiles the man's actions (Matt. 15:19-20). The "heart" is the

“hidden man” (1 Pet. 3:4), that area where the works of God’s law are said to be “written” (Rom. 2:15), and the part of man that is cleansed by faith (Acts 15:9). Hence, the Bible warns that we are to “keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Pro. 4:23). Consider these passages, all of which speak of this “inner man” known as the “heart”: Psalms 15:1-2: “Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, And speaketh truth in his heart.” Psalms 19:14: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in thy sight, O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer.” Psalms 32:11: “Be glad in Jehovah, and rejoice, ye righteous; And shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.” Psalms 34:18: “Jehovah is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, And saveth such as are of a contrite spirit.” Psalms 37:30-31: “The mouth of the righteous talketh of wisdom, And his tongue speaketh justice. The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide.” Psalms 51:10, 17: “Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me...The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” Psalms 73:1: “Surely God is good to Israel, Even to such as are pure in heart.” Psalms 90:12: “So teach us to number our days, That we may get us a heart of wisdom.” Psalms 95:8: “Harden not your heart, as at Meribah, As in the day of Massah in the wilderness.” Psalms 119:11, 36: “Thy word have I laid up in my heart, That I might not sin against thee. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, And not to covetousness.” Proverbs 3:1, 5: “My son, forget not my law; But let thy heart keep my commandments. Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart, And lean not upon thine own understanding.” Jeremiah 17:9: “The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?” It is abundantly clear, therefore, that if the “heart” of man is changed, then his actions will change (Matt. 12:34; 15:18-19; Mark 7:21; Luke 6:45). A corollary would be: Where the actions of a man have changed, his heart has changed. It is imperative, therefore, that we take a closer look at this part of man that the Bible calls the “heart.” Since the heart is the seat of man’s emotions and the source of all of man’s outward actions, if the sinner is going to be converted, the heart must be changed. By the same token, if the saint is going to be strengthened, it is his heart that that must be affected. So, let us take a closer look at the heart of man.

Consider the Heart and the Mind

The following passages show that the “mind” or “intellect” of man is sometimes used in the same way that “heart” is used (all bold emphasis is mine): Romans 1:28: “And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting.” Ephesians 4:17-18: “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” Genesis 6:5: “And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Mark 2:8: “And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?” Matthew 13:15: “For this people’s heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed; Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And should turn again, And I should heal them.” In addition, the heart can be enlightened (Eph. 1:18-19), can reason (Mark 2:6-8), can think (Matt. 9:4; Luke 2:35), can counsel (1 Cor. 4:5), can believe (Rom. 10:9-10), can be senseless and darkened

(Rom. 1:21), and can be deceived (Jas. 1:26). It can be readily seen from these passages that at least one aspect of the “heart” has to do with the “intellect” of man.

Consider next the Heart and Man’s Will

In addition to the intellect, the Bible often uses the word “heart” to refer to man’s will, or determination. Although the word “will” is not specifically used with reference to the heart, we do read of the “intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). We also know that a man can “purpose in his heart” (2 Cor. 9:7), “obey from the heart” (Rom. 6:17), and with “purpose of heart...cleave unto the Lord” (Acts 4:12). The heart can be “proud” (Psa. 101:5), haughty (Prov. 18:12), stubborn and froward, or perverse (Jer. 5:23; Psa 101:4), and unbelieving and impenitent (Mark 16:14). There are hearts that allow Satan to enter in and snatch the word of God away lest they believe and be saved (Matt. 13:19; Luke 8:12). One case example is that of Ananias and Sapphira. Peter asked, “How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God” (Acts 5:3-4). The Bible also speaks of the hardening of the heart so as to bring about a rebellious and disobedient disposition. When Israel came out of Egypt, though they witnessed many miracles and enjoyed abundant blessings, their hearts became hardened and they made trial of God (1 Cor. 10:14). The Hebrews to whom the unknown author wrote were warned not to “harden their hearts as in the provocation” (Heb. 3:8-11, 15; 4:3-7). When the heart becomes hardened it has lost all sensation and sensitivity to the word of God. The individual is in a state of open rebellion; his will and determination is to disobey God. Thus, when we speak of the “heart” of man, we are addressing, at least in part, the will of man.

Consider the Heart and Emotions

The heart is also said to be the seat of emotions. The heart can be “heavy” (Prov. 12:25), bitter (Prov. 14:10), sorrowful (Prov. 14:13; John 16:6), glad (Prov. 15:13), pained (Rom. 9:2), pricked (Acts 2:37), encouraged (1 Thess. 5:14), and comforted (Col. 2:2; 4:8). Paul speaks of his “heart’s desire” (Rom. 10:1-2), and Jesus told us we are to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Matt. 22:37-38). The Proverb writer also instructed us to “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart” (Prov. 3:5).

Thus we see that the Bible uses the word “heart” to refer to man’s intellect, will, and emotions. If there is some other aspect, or some other part of the “heart” of man in addition to the mind, the will, and/or the emotions, let those who so contend produce the evidence. In addition, if the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the heart of man, let the proponents of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit tell us which part of man’s heart the Holy Spirit directly affects. Does it touch the intellect? Is it the emotions of man that are directly affected by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit? Is it the will that is affected? And if the Holy Spirit touches none of these aspects of the heart, then what it is about the heart of man that is affected by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit? Herein, brethren, lies the danger of this fatal false doctrine! It suggests there is some part of the heart of man that cannot and has not been affected by the word. It is, in my estimation, an addition to the clear teaching of God’s word. (more to come)

If you have not yet read the first two installments, let me suggest that you go to my website (<http://www.churchsoftwareplus.com/archivesindex.html>), and locate “Deaver’s Doctrine is Fatal Error” (part 1 & 2). We pick up where part two left off. In order to understand why some are claiming that Mac Deaver’s teaching on the Holy Spirit is neo-Calvinism, one needs to understand how God, through the gospel, impacts the heart of the non-Christian, and how Calvinism is at odds with the truth on this matter. The Bible clearly teaches that God’s word is more than just so much ink printed on a page. Some are unaware of the power contained in the word, whether spoken or written. Please give serious consideration to the words of Paul: “But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.” (2 Cor. 5:18-20). There are several points of interest in this verse. First, the very work of Christ is defined as a “ministry of reconciliation.” Second, the process of reconciliation was achieved through the “word of reconciliation.” Paul is stating in no uncertain terms that the power of reconciliation is contained in the word of God. Third, do not overlook the responsibility of the individual to “be ye reconciled to God.” It should also be pointed out that the word contains the power to save a man. We hear words “whereby we shall be saved” (Acts 11:14; 13:26). No wonder Paul emphasized the importance of preaching (2 Tim. 4:1-2). But what is it about the word of God that produces salvation? It is this: the word of God fully and adequately touches the heart of man in each of the three areas discussed in the previous two articles, so as to bring about a change in a man’s heart and thus produce full and complete salvation. In other words, the inspired word makes an impact upon the heart of the non-Christian with regard to his “intellect,” his “will” and his “emotions.” Please consider the following.

First, the gospel contains facts to be believed. These facts inform and challenge the intellect. The gospel consists of the “death,” the “burial” and the “resurrection” of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). The gospel tells us about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Heaven, Hell, the church, and salvation. These “facts” appeal to man’s intellect.

Second, the gospel contains commands to be obeyed. By the very nature of the case, you cannot obey facts. You believe facts; you obey commands. Consequently, the gospel contains commands, all of which challenge the will of man. “Repent and be baptized” (Acts 2:38), “confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus” (Rom. 10:9-10), “believe on the Lord Jesus” (Acts 16:31). The sinner, in order to be reconciled to God, must believe the facts, and obey the commands.

Third, the gospel contains promises to be received. These promises are both positive and negative in their nature. Hence we read of “honor and incorruption” for those who believe and obey, as opposed to the “tribulation and anguish” for those who “worketh evil” (Rom. 2:6-8). We read of the “goodness and severity of God” (Rom. 11:22). The Bible speaks of heaven (Rev. 21:1 ff) and hell (Matt. 25:41); of eternal life and eternal punishment and eternal life (Matt. 25:46). These promises (and threats) are designed to appeal to the emotions of man and motivate him to obedience. It should be pointed out here that every part of the heart of the non-Christian – whether it be the intellect, the will, or the emotions – is effectively changed by the gospel without some sort of direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of man. In order for the direct operation of the

Holy Spirit upon the non-Christian to be correct, it must be assumed that there is some part of man's heart other than the intellect, will, or emotion that needs to be "touched" or changed. Let it be emphasized that we are not accusing brother Deaver, or others who hold to the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the Christian for sanctification, of teaching the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the non-Christian. But let it also be emphasized that the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the Christian de-emphasizes the power of the word of God at precisely the same point as does John Calvin's doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the non-Christian. This cannot be over emphasized.

This naturally leads us to our next point Calvinism claims that there must be a "direct operation" upon the heart of the sinner for conversion and sanctification. Hence, per Calvinism, the "intellect" is changed by direct "enlightenment," the will is subjected to God's "irresistible grace," and the emotions are stirred by some "better felt than told" religious "experience." Please note that John Calvin's "system" actually addresses each part of the heart of the non-Christian – the "intellect," the "will" and the "emotions" of man. Now please note this important point: if John Calvin is correct then why do we need the word? This is where Calvinism is at odds with the truth. His doctrine robs the word of its power to affect the heart of man "intellectually," "emotionally," and with regard to his "will." In our next article we will address where brother Deaver's doctrine makes the same fatal error as Calvinism.

Part 4

In this installment on our series I want us to consider the subject of "sanctification" and the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart of the Christian. It is at this point that the doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit becomes an issue. Let the reader keep in mind that change in the life of a Christian, his spiritual growth, maturity, strength, wisdom, as well as any other Christian virtue, is achieved by a change in the individual's heart. Consider these passages, all of which warn the Christian of the importance of watching and guarding his heart [all emphasis are mine, TW]: Hebrews 13:9: "Be not carried away by divers and strange teachings: for it is good that **the heart be established by grace**; not by meats, wherein they that occupied themselves were not profited." Hebrews 10:22: "let us **draw near with a true heart** in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience: and having our body washed with pure water." Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and **quick to discern** the thoughts and **intents of the heart.**" Hebrews 3:12: "Take heed, brethren, **lest haply there shall be in any one** of you **an evil heart** of unbelief, in falling away from the living God." 2 Timothy 2:22: "But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with **them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**" Colossians 3:22: "Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but **in singleness of heart**, fearing the Lord." Colossians 3:12: "**Put on** therefore, **as God's elect**, holy and beloved, **a heart of compassion**, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering." Ephesians 6:6: "not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, **doing the will of God from the heart.**" Ephesians 1:18: "having the **eyes of your heart enlightened**, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy

wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps **the thought of thy heart** shall be forgiven thee.”

All of these passages show that the heart plays a vital part in our faithfulness to God after we become Christians as much as it did before we became a Christian. Some (including brother Deaver) are now suggesting that the word of God is all-sufficient only “informationally.” Those who are using such language are implying, if not stating directly, that the Bible has no value other than that of providing information to the Christian and non-Christian. According to this new doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the child of God, more is needed for the child of God than just the word. The implication is that while the Bible provides us the information necessary to make adequate decisions and to know what God wants us to do, the Holy Spirit must impact our spirit to provide wisdom, strength, and courage to make the correct decisions.

First, while it is true that the word of God is “all-sufficient informationally,” it is not the case that the Bible is “all sufficient only informationally.” There is a difference in these two statements. When we speak of “information” we are speaking of that which appeals to, and impacts, the intellect. Does the Bible contain all the facts that we need to know in order to impact the heart? Indeed it does! But let us remind ourselves that there is more to the “heart” of man than just the intellect. Since the heart of man is made up of “intellect,” “will,” and “emotions,” then to say that the word of God is all “sufficient only informationally,” is equivalent to saying it is not all-sufficient to bring about a change in a person’s will, nor is it all-sufficient, with all of its promises (both positive and negative) to motivate a person to obedience. Brother Deaver argues: “If it’s all sufficient motivationally, we don’t need edification from each other, we don’t need worship, we don’t need power from each other, we don’t need stirring up from each other.” But brethren, let us ask an important question. When brethren “stir us up,” or “edify us,” or when we attend worship and hear the word, is it not still true that the **word of God is still the agency by which we are motivated to action?** Indeed it is. The Scriptures are still the “instrument” by which the church helps to edify and motivate one another to action.

Second, such a doctrine implies that the Bible, so far as the Christian is concerned, no longer has the power, in and of itself, to motivate the child of God unto obedience, once he has become a child of God. According to this doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, if the child of God wants strength, he must have a combination of the “information” the Bible provides plus an operation upon the heart “in conjunction with the word” so as to motivate that child of God to obey. Let us ask, “Is the word of God all sufficient to motivate the non-Christian to obedience?” Yes! This is because the word of God “impacts” the will of man, and motivates him to action by the promises contained therein. But if it takes something in addition to the word of God to give a man the strength necessary to overcome temptation, then the word is no longer “all-sufficient” to motivate.

Third, if the word of God is “all-sufficient” to impact the will and emotions of a man before he becomes a Christian, at what point does the word lose that capability after a man becomes a child of God? Herein, in this author’s estimation, lies one of the great dangers of this doctrine. This doctrine of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart of a Christian is an underhanded attempt on the part of Satan to undermine the word of God in the life of the child of God. It is unfortunate that some have fallen prey to

this “device” of Satan. Once a person accepts a doctrine that implies the word of God is incapable of impacting the will or disposition of a person, and/or the inability of the word to motivate this person to obey, it is an easy step to full blown Calvinism.

Thus, when we say the Bible is “all-sufficient” we are saying that the Bible contains everything necessary for man to **know** what God’s will is, that it contains all that is necessary to tell man what to **do**, and that it contains all promises necessary to **motivate** man to obey his God. If there is some other feature of the spiritual “heart” other than man’s intellect, will power, and emotions, let someone produce the evidence. These three areas are the only three areas where the word touches the life of man, and they are the only three areas of man that are necessary to BE IMPACTED in order for change to take place.

Now brethren please watch this carefully. If the Holy Spirit operates directly upon the heart of man, he MUST operate in one of the three theaters of man’s heart – the intellect, the will, or the emotions. If He operates upon the intellect you have divine illumination; if He operates upon the will of man you have the equivalent of Calvin’s irresistible grace; if He operates directly upon the emotions, you have a “better-felt-than-told” religious experience so as to provide assurance to the child of God.

We will close this installment with an observation that has been made by a number of brethren over a lengthy period of time that this issue has now been troubling the church. Mac does not argue that the Holy Spirit operates upon the non-Christian to help him understand the Scriptures. This he readily admits. He will tell us that the non-Christian does not have the aid of the Holy Spirit whatsoever. If the non-Christian is to understand the word of God he is on his own, without any direct operation from the Spirit to enlighten him. Mac knows and understands that the word of God is “all sufficient” informationally,” and “motivationally.” Now please watch this: If the non-Christian can understand any specific doctrine (say doctrine “a”) WITHOUT THE DIRECT OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, then the Christian should be able to understand that SAME DOCTRINE WITHOUT THE DIRECT OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. Otherwise, the non-Christian has more wisdom than the Christian in that particular area. Now, let brother Deaver name just ONE DOCTRINE that ONLY the child of God has come to understand to the exclusion of every NON-CHRISTIAN who has ever studied that doctrine. Some of the very basic doctrines contained within God’s word, and even some of the “deeper” things have been grasped by at least some person, somewhere, who is not a Christian. If not, then let brother Deaver name that doctrine. There are denomination preachers who understand the plan of salvation correctly, but fall short in worship. There are others who have an amazing understanding of why instrumental music is wrong, but have fallen short when it comes to the plan of salvation and the relationship of faith and obedience. There are others who understand the importance of partaking of the Lord’s Supper regularly, but fall short when it comes to other matters in worship. As one brother has aptly pointed out, “Unless one can set forth some doctrine that is only understood by Christians, there is no evidence that a direct operation to illuminate the Scriptures is necessary” (Fox, page 200, Volume II, Work of the Holy Spirit).