



Experiencing
the Manifested Presence of God

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"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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W.D. Furioso, Writer ~ Frances Furioso, Editor

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“You are not in the flesh but **in the Spirit**,
if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.” Romans 8:9

“Being in the Spirit”

The phrase, “being in the spirit” is mentioned by the apostles Peter (Acts 10:10), Paul (Acts 22:17; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4), and John (Revelation 1:10, 4:2, 17:3, 21:10). The perspective of “being in the spirit” is grounded in receiving the promised “gift of the Spirit” which is mentioned by both Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles.¹ But it is the explanation given by Jesus Himself which gives us essential understanding of what it means to “be in the spirit” – specifically with regards to “being in the manifested presence of God”:

¹⁶“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, so that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷**the Comforter is the Spirit of Reality**, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know *Him*; *but* you know Him because **He remains with you and will be in you.** ¹⁸“I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you. ¹⁹After a little while, the world no longer is going to see Me, but you are going to see Me; because I live, you also will live.... ²³“If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word;

¹ Isaiah 32:5; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Joel 2:28; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:13 & 33, 3:3 & 6, 7:38-39 ; Acts 1:5, 2:1-4, 17 & 38-39, 10:44-48; Cf. Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:14; Titus 3:5-6.

and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and **make Our dwelling with him.**" John 14:16-19, 23

In this passage, Jesus promises that He and the Father will send the Comforter – the Spirit of Truth (Reality)², to His followers – those who love Him - namely, those who “follow His word”. The promise is that by His Spirit, He will come to them, be with them, be in them, “make His dwelling with them”. **Essentially, this is a promise of the manifested presence of God.** (And since Jesus of Nazareth is “going away”,³ all of this will take place in the spiritual dimension.) Therefore, a little over fifty days later, we find Peter exhorting God’s people to “repent and return”, so that “seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord”.

(Acts 3:19-21)

Spiritual Perception

In what way do we experience the Manifested Presence of God? As fleshly human beings, we experience things through our five senses. The five senses are sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch:

² Greek: *aletheia*, Strong’s # G225, “(from [227](#) /*alēthēs*, “true to fact”) – properly, *truth* (true to fact), *reality*. [In ancient Greek culture, [225](#) (*alētheia*) was synonymous for “reality” as the *opposite of illusion*, i.e. *fact*.]”, Gary Hill and Archer L. Gleason, *Emphatic Language Pointer System* (Synonym Glossary, Discovery Bible, NASB New Testament) Moody Press (1987)

³ Cf. John 14-17

- Sight: Perceived through the eyes
- Smell: Perceived through the nose
- Hearing: Perceived through the ears
- Taste: Perceived through the tongue and nose
- Touch: Perceived through the skin

But those born of the Spirit, having received the Spirit⁴, acquire an additional sense – **spiritual perception**, *which is a facility of a regenerated spirit*. “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit.” (Romans 8:16) “Deep calls to deep.” (Psalm 42:7) There is an interesting verse regarding Paul’s **spiritual perception**: “So Paul advised them, ‘Men, I **perceive** that the voyage will certainly be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.’” (Acts 27:10) The Greek word, *theoreō*⁵, translated here as “perceive” can also be translated as “observe” or “discern”. How did Paul “perceive” there would be a storm? Did he arrive at the forecast by consulting meteorological tools? No. He “perceived” “in the spirit”. This is a facility of a regenerated spirit. And the spiritually mature have “because of practice have trained their ‘senses’ to discern good and evil”.

Hebrews 5:14

⁴ Cf. Romans 8:9-10

⁵ Strong’s # G2334

“Under the Influence”

Jesus said that Eternal Life is “to know the one true God and Him Whom He has sent”⁶; and I believe God desires our “knowing”⁷ to be both doctrinal and experiential. A case in point: God intends for us to experience the doctrine which says He “raised us up with Him and seated us with Him **in the heavenly places** in Christ Jesus”.⁸ “Places” is not in the Greek text, so a literal rendering would be “raised us up with Him and seated us with Him **in the heavenlies**”. The Greek word means literally “above the sky”⁹. Scholars agree this is what the apostle Paul was referring to when he said he didn’t know if he was in or out of his body, but he was lifted up to the “third heaven” - that is, above the clouds and sky.¹⁰ Whether we describe it as Paul did, or as “a parallel universe at the center of a black hole”, et. al., this “**heavenly place**” he experienced was “**in the spirit**”. Of course, we also see throughout the Book of Revelation that the apostle John experienced the same phenomenon which he described as being “**in the spirit**”¹¹.

⁶ John 17:3

⁷ Greek: *epignosis*, Strong’s # 1922

⁸ Ephesians 2:6

⁹ Greek: *epouranios*, epi = above, *ouranos* = sky

¹⁰ 2 Corinthians 12:2

¹¹ Revelation 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10.

This is not to say that this phenomenon of the manifested presence of God always results in “visions” of heaven. In fact, I believe the experience of being “in the spirit” can more often be explained as being *“under the influence of the Spirit”*. That is both biblical language and a biblical experience: On the Day of Pentecost, when the disciples were gathered in the upper room, the Book of Acts tells us that “a noise like a violent, rushing wind **filled** the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues (flames) as of fire.”¹² The Greek word, *pleroo*¹³, means to fill up a physical space. And the manifested presence of God – the Shekinah Glory – which **came down upon them** was in the form of fire, reminiscent of the pillar of fire in the wilderness tabernacle. The disciples were experiencing the ending of the Old Covenant, where the Shekinah Glory came down in a physical form; and they were about to experience the beginning of the New Covenant.

Next, having just received the gift of the Holy Spirit, it says that the disciples were “filled” with the Holy Spirit. This different Greek word, *pletho*¹⁴, means “filled” in a different sense - that is, “filled” as in *“under the influence of.” I offer this as a prototype experience in New Covenant “worship in spirit and truth”, where*

¹² Acts 2:2

¹³ Strong’s # 4137

¹⁴ Strong’s # 4130

they experienced the manifested presence of God and Shekinah Glory as being **raised up and seated with Christ in the heavenlies**, and the effect upon their souls was ecstatic and bold uttering of “the mighty deeds of God”.¹⁵ Make no mistake; this was not a one-time experience for the disciples. They would experience this manifested presence of God and Shekinah Glory many times again. The same language for the same experience is used in the Book of Acts on six occasions.¹⁶

“Tasting”

“Tasting” is experiential, and I believe it is this experience which is referred to when the writer to the Hebrews speaks of “**tasting** the powers of the age to come”¹⁷, and when Peter refers to “**tasting** that the Lord is good”¹⁸. But obviously, this is not referring to a “tasting” which is perceived through the tongue and nose.

When Paul, who experienced being filled with the Holy Spirit¹⁹, writes of the doctrine of “the sealing of the Holy Spirit” – that is, the Spirit being “given as a down payment”²⁰, I believe this is also

¹⁵ Acts 2:4, 11

¹⁶ Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9, 52

¹⁷ Hebrews 6:5

¹⁸ 1 Peter 2:3

¹⁹ Acts 9:17. “Filled”, *pletho*, Strong’s # 4130

²⁰ 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:14

a doctrine that is to be experienced. A financial down payment is not the full amount; but neither is it a mere pledge in words. While it is not the full amount, it is *rea/funds*. Likewise, this experience is not imaginary nor merely theoretical, to be believed “by faith”. It is a *rea/taste* of heaven. And, during times of fellowship with God, He would have His people experience His manifested presence and Shekinah Glory by being raised up, as it were, into the realm of the spirit to receive advanced tastes of heaven.

In another sense, there is even more than “a tasting” which is going on. When we pray “in the spirit”, Scripture tells us that we are “coming to the heavenly Jerusalem” and joining in adoration with “myriads of angels, the general assembly, the church of the first-born who are enrolled **in heaven**”²¹, as well as coming to the Father Who is *seeking such worshipers*²².



This article, along with [“Worship, Prayer & Music”](#), [“Defining the Presence of the Lord”](#), [“The Shekinah”](#), and [“The Presence of God In Light of the New Covenant”](#), are all excerpts from my eBook, [“The Manifested Presence of God”](#).

²¹ Hebrews 12:22-23

²² John 4:23

Bill & Frances Furioso
~ At Christ's Table ~



Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, discipled many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet... www.AtChristsTable.org

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