

Seeming Objections to the Truth about God

Father, Son and Holy Spirit Gave Themselves...

AUCR 04-01-01.

The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves** to the **working out** of the plan of redemption. In order to **fully carry out** this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? par. 10

The **inhabitants of the heavenly universe** are appointed to go forth to come into close touch with **human instrumentalities** who act as God's helping hand. In the performance of this mission of love, angels mingle with the fallen race, ministering to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Divine and human agencies unite in the work of restoring the image of God in man. **All who partake of the divine nature are appointed of God to unite with the angels in carrying forward with untiring zeal the plan of redemption.** Par 16

Shall we not as a people awaken to our responsibility? Shall we not manifest our love for God and our fellow-men by giving of our means to **carry forward** the work for this time, while the way is still open for work to be done? par. 17

(Portions appear also in: CH 222; Needs of the Cause in Australia 7-4-03; RH 5-2-12; PH 148.03; AG 190; 7ABC 442.01)

Firstly, when reading this statement, some may conclude that three divine beings were involved in planning our redemption. This cannot be the intention of the author for, in the following references, she clearly teaches that only two, the Father and the Son were involved in planning our salvation.

Two Divine Beings involved in planning for our Redemption

Zechariah 6:13 Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the **counsel of peace shall be between them both.**

Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the **Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man** if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. {E. G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 834}

The **plan of redemption was arranged in the councils between the Father and the Son.** {RH, May 28, 1908 par. 12}

“The **plan of salvation devised by the Father and the Son** will be a grand success.” {E. G. White, Signs of the Times, June 17, 1903 par. 2}

Working out means to carry out in this context

So what does it mean that “The **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves** to the **working out** of the plan of redemption”?

Though it is possible for this phrase, “working out”, to mean “planning, it can also refer to the carrying out or carrying forward of the plan, rather than to the planning, and that I believe is the case here. The reason is Threefold. 1. The very next sentence uses the words “carry out”, and two of the paragraphs closely following use the words “carry out” in reference to the same subject (see the context quoted above). 2. Ellen White often used this phrase, “working out”, in her other writings, to mean carrying out (see the “clarifying statements” below). 3. The same author elsewhere speaks of only two divine beings involved in the planning of our redemption (see quotes above). If this statement referred to the planning, it would contradict the author’s numerous other statements.

Ellen White's Use of the Term "Working Out", to mean “carrying out”.

- CD 35.3 "Circumstances cannot work reforms. Christianity proposes a reformation in the heart. What Christ works within, will be **worked out** under the dictation of a converted intellect.
- Mar 155.1 "In the work in which my husband and I were called by the providence of God to act a part, even from its very beginning in 1843 and 1844, we have had the Lord to devise and plan for us, and He has **worked out** His plans through His living agents."
- PCP 11.5 Are their children preparing to enter with them? If the parents have **worked out** their own salvation with fear and trembling, if they have in the fear of God tried to help their children, their work will be accepted."
- BTS 08-01-03.3 "Christ desires all to become His students. He says, Yield yourselves to my training; submit your souls unto me. I will not extinguish you, but will **work out** for you such a character that you shall be transferred from the lower school to the higher grade. Submit all things to Me. Let My life, My patience, My longsuffering, My forbearance, My meekness, My lowliness, be **worked out** in your character, as one that abides in Me and I in him. Then you have the promise not only "I will give," but "Ye shall find rest to your souls."
- ST 12-09-97 .12 "Christ **worked out** before his disciples and before the world a perfect example of true religion.
- 1MR 238 .2 - 239 When man places himself in this attitude, and realizes that he is **working out** God's plan, and that God is **working out** His plan

through him, he is in possession of divine power, which knows nothing of defeat.

Putting the Pieces of the Puzzle Together

If the Holy Spirit were a third separate divine being, it would be logical for Him to be in the counsel and have a part in devising the plan of salvation. But the Bible and Sister White are clear, that there were only two divine beings involved in devising the plan of redemption. Therefore we have concluded that this quotation is speaking of carrying out and not devising the plan of redemption. This is in alignment with Ellen White's usage of the word elsewhere (shown above) and in perfect harmony with the context which mentions a variant of "carry out" at least three times in the context.

Having shown that "working out" is synonymous with "carry out" or "carry forward" we just need to look at the context and see who has the work to carry out the plan of redemption and we will know who or what is being referred to as the Holy Spirit which works with the Father and Son to carry forward the work of the plan of redemption. The statement in question is in paragraph 10, I will quote from paragraphs 16, and 17.

The ***inhabitants of the heavenly universe*** are appointed to go forth to come into close touch with ***human instrumentalities*** who act as God's helping hand. In the performance of this mission of love, angels mingle with the fallen race, ministering to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Divine and human agencies unite in the work of restoring the image of God in man. **All who partake of the divine nature are appointed of God to unite with the angels in carrying forward with untiring zeal the plan of redemption.** Par 16

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Men and angels are the beings commissioned with carrying the gospel to the world. Contextually, they are the ones "working out", or "carrying out" the plan of redemption along with the Father and Son. Notice this is also seen in the following quotations.

The church of Christ, every **individual disciple** of the Master, is heaven's appointed **channel** for the revelation of God to men. **Angels** of glory wait to **communicate** through you heaven's **light** and **power** to souls that are ready to perish. Shall the **human agent** fail of **accomplishing** his appointed work? Oh, then to that degree is the world robbed of the promised **influence** of the **Holy Spirit!** MB 40.2

The **heavenly angels** are waiting to unite with the **human agent**,

that many souls may hear and be **impressed** by the **Holy Spirit**, and be converted. RH, May 16, 1893 par. 11

Christ, our Mediator, is the one who gives the **Holy Spirit**... A **measure** of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. **Through** the ministry of the **angels**, the **Holy Spirit** is enabled to work upon the **mind** and **heart** of the **human agent**... Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, man becomes the agent through which souls are brought into the kingdom of heaven. YI, July 5, 1894 par. 5, 6

The Sum

All the human capabilities are to be henceforth consecrated powers to do service for God in representing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost upon whom they depend. **All heaven** is represented by these three in covenant relation with the new life. —Ms 45, 1904, pp. 9, 10.

In the statement just quoted, it tells us that all heaven is represented by these three. "All Heaven" must include angels. It is not right to think of angels being represented by the Father or Son, so it must be that the term "Holy Ghost", represents the angels.

The **Father, the Son, and the holy angels** will be present with you to behold your faith, your steadfast principle, and there you will have of the outpouring of **God's Holy Spirit**. ... {ST, February 10, 1890 par. 4}

This statement is clear that the Holy Spirit is not a separate entity, but its presence is realized when we have the presence of the Father, Son and angels.

Are we concluding that the Holy Spirit is the angels or men? No! But clearly in the statement quoted above, the angels are able to bring us the presence of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ. How is that possible if they are not the Holy Spirit? They are channels. This is easier to understand if you understand what the Spirit is. See this author's study entitled, "Abiding in Christ".

Conclusion

In the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, "Holy Ghost/Spirit", very often refers to the "office" of the Holy Spirit (see this author's study on the "Office of the Holy Spirit") where the agency or channel may be included in the appellation. Here is one more example:

By night the angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and said to the disciples, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." {AA 80.1}

The same author refers to this incident of the *angel* speaking to the disciples, as the command of the *Holy Spirit*.

The command given by the Holy Spirit, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life," was obeyed by the

apostles; "they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. {TM 71.1}

The office of the president is all about the president, would not exist were it not for the president. It serves the president and represents the president, yet, it involves numerous agencies all carrying out the presidents wishes. The "Holy Spirit" is the Spirit of Christ, and often refers to that office of Christ which involves His work in us by His spirit, through various agencies, while He serves in the office of priest in a physical way in the sanctuary of heaven. It too is all about Christ and exists because of Christ, but involves countless human and divine agencies which are to be channels to be used by Christ in the carrying forward of the plan of redemption.

Therefore, to be consistent with all the facts pointed out in this study, it is our conclusion that the term "Holy Spirit", in the statement in question refers to the *office of the Holy Spirit*, referencing the divine and human agencies that, with the Father and Son, give themselves to "work out", or carry forward the plan of redemption.