

in such a way as to contravene the former. How then shall these doctrines be framed?

Those statements that speak of the Holy Spirit as being sent, or as coming, may not be interpreted to mean that the Holy Spirit was, prior to that event, in heaven but not in the world. Such an interpretation is ruled out by three considerations: (1) The Holy Spirit is always omnipresent, being God; (2) Our Lord Himself, before this event alluded to, asserted to His disciples, "Ye know him, for he dwelleth with you." (John 14:17); (3) The Old Testament abundantly witnesses to the Spirit's manifold ministries during the Old Testament period, reaching from Creation to Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is active in creation, preservation, and providence; in revelation and inspiration; in illumination and enablement for service; and in miracles. One simply cannot hold to the idea that the Holy Spirit could not have regenerated men during the Old Testament period on the ground that He was not present and active in the world during that time.

What, then, is the solution to this seeming paradox? It would appear that the sending of the Holy Spirit into the world does not mean the sending of His presence (since He was already present); but rather the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in a special character, relationship, or ministry. In this interpretation, then, the coming of the Holy Spirit means that the Spirit who is already present is now about to be manifested in a new, special character (in this particular case the character of the Comforter and Helper) to those disciples who had experienced Christ's personal presence during His earthly ministry, but were now faced with the imminent prospect of having their Master taken from them, and of being left in sorrow, fear, and helplessness.