

Fee's Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God

Chapter 15: Where to Next?

1. Read the first three paragraphs of the section "The Spirit in the Later Church: A Contrast," beginning on page 184, focusing especially on the 3th. Fee appears to be contrasting the experience of the Spirit in conversion (or spiritual growth) on the part of first- and second generation believers. However, if Fee were just contrasting adult converts with those born in the church, as it at first appears, he would have the same problem with those born into modern charismatic churches. What *is* Fee trying to say?
2. What are Fee's three dimensions to "recapturing Paul's perspective of Christian life as essentially the life of the Spirit, dynamically experienced and eschatologically oriented"? (See pp. 187-189.) Are these three dimensions observed in (a) the holiness movement of 19th century; (b) modern charismatic movements; (c) third-wave pentecostalism? I.e., has anyone done it right, by Fee's criteria?
3. On pp. 189-190, Fee answers the question, "How do I foster such a life of the Spirit within my church?" He begins with three suggestions for the leadership of the church. What does he mean in his second point (190, first par.) about being "God's eschatological people"? Is this something we are already doing at RCRC, or is this something we need to pay attention to?
4. In his third suggestion for the leadership (190, 2nd par.), Fee advocates for "a setting and atmosphere in which people can practice," take risks, and "let the *charismata* build up the people of God." Fee made the point in previous chapters that these are to be done in the context of worship, for the building up of the body. Given the Reformed model for worship, that context is apparently not an option. Is it possible instead to pursue these in the context of small groups or adult-ed classes? And is it possible to pursue the *charismata* without ever praying for them?
5. As Fee points out (190, 2nd par.), "... 'seek earnestly the better gifts' for the edification of the body is an imperative, not a polite invitation." If we are take seriously this injunction, what *context* would be most suitable?
6. What advice does Fee give to individuals (190, 3rd par.-191, 2nd par.)? How does he suggest we go about being more open to the movement of the Spirit?
7. Question from the appendix
8. Richard Foster, in his *Streams of Living Water* (ch. 4) gives this advice (paraphrased) for those who are seeking a more experiential relationship with the Spirit:
 - a) Draw near to and learn from those who have more history and experience in this area.
 - b) Don't hold back out of fear that some of what you are doing is in the flesh. It will be, but God can still use our fumbling ways to teach us more.
 - c) Follow your leadings without fear of being misled. If your spirit is teachable, God will show you the way. Have a kind of dissatisfied satisfaction, glad for what God has given you but longing for more.
 - d) Test your leadings and experiences in the Spirit with those you trust.

Given the centrality of the Spirit for NT Christian life, and armed with Fee's and Foster's advice, what can or should we do to deepen our experience of the power of the Spirit?