

R.T. Kendall: What is Holy Spirit Religion?

What is “Holy Spirit religion”? How would an authentic anointing be recognized? How would we know that the Dove and not the *pigeon* has come down on the preacher? It is not always so clear—at least at first.

What then would true religion look like? How would one recognize pigeon religion versus Dove religion? Here are the six cardinal issues for which we must be prepared to go to the stake:

1. The need to be saved or one will be eternally lost. This is the main thing. As the old cliché goes: the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. The Bible in a nutshell is this: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him *should not perish* [be eternally lost], but have eternal life” (John 3:16, emphasis added).

At the end of the day, the most important article of faith in Christian theology is the need for all people to be saved. Once this belief is deleted, Christianity is no longer Christianity. For this reason, our preaching must consistently proclaim the gospel. A ministry that does not keep this central has allowed pigeon religion to creep in. Pigeon religion is the emphasis upon the things of the Holy Spirit without the gospel. It is also an emphasis on the gospel without the Holy Spirit.

2. The way to be saved. This too is the main thing: Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. “There is no salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts. 4:12). Salvation is found in no other. There are three things to be clear about

here:

First, who Jesus is. He is the God-man. Jesus was and is God as though He were not man, and was and is man as though He were not God (John 1:1, 14).

Second, what Jesus did. He fulfilled the Law (Matt. 5:17), doing everything by His sinless life that is required for us to do, and died in our place. His shed blood turned the Father's wrath away (Is. 53:6). God punished Jesus for what we did. He was punished for our sins.

Third, faith. All that Jesus did and suffered for the salvation of the human race is of no value unless we believe.

3. The need for the Holy Spirit to bring us to Christ in faith. Jesus said, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who has sent Me draws him" (John 6:44, emphasis added). Why is this particular teaching important? It will stop us from twisting people's arms to come to Christ. You can get them to the altar, but you cannot get them to Christ. You can lead a horse to the water, but you can't make him drink. Pigeon religion will get thousands to walk forward; only Dove religion will bring people to the foot of the cross.

4. Being filled with the Holy Spirit. "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). If all Christians are already filled with the Holy Spirit merely because they are saved, Paul's words about being filled with the Spirit make no sense. All Christians have the Holy Spirit, yes (Rom. 8:9); one cannot come to the Lord Jesus apart from the Spirit (John 6:44).

But there is more. Call it what you will—baptism with the Spirit, sealing of the Spirit or being filled with the Spirit—we all need *more* than what comes with conversion. Hence the question Paul put to the Ephesians: "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" (Acts 19:2). The answer: no. "Receiving the Spirit" was a phrase used to denote a conscious experience. They knew they had not received the Spirit.

5. The pursuit of holiness. The way to walk in holiness is by living by the same Holy Spirit that enabled us to believe the gospel. But what happens after we have believed? “This is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess. 4:3). The pursuit of holiness includes sexual purity, walking in total forgiveness and refusing to settle for anything less than a closer walk with God. Never forget that you are not your own. “You were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s (1 Cor. 6:20).

6. The infallibility of the Bible. All Scripture is inspired by God (2 Tim. 3:16). Holy men of old wrote as they were borne along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20-21). This means that the Bible is infallible and reliable. Would you die for your faith in the infallibility of the Word of God? I would.

I have been a Christian for seventy-four years. At the age of eighty, I believe in the infallibility and reliability of the Bible more than ever.

There is of course more to the Christian faith than these six principles. But these are what I believe most strongly. I would go to the stake for these. I have outlined what I believe are the essentials of the faith for which I am willing to die.

Let’s be sure that what we believe is what we would die for. And if it is good enough to die for, it is good enough to live for.

✖ *Adapted from Pigeon Religion: Holy Spirit is That You? by R. T. Kendall, copyright 2016; published by Charisma House. How can you discern when the Holy Spirit is authentically moving, or when a counterfeit spirit is producing manipulation? If the dove is the symbol of the authentic Holy Spirit, then the pigeon is a symbol of the counterfeit spirit. In this book, Dr. Kendall shows nineteen main differences between the Dove and the pigeon, and applies it to our*

relationship with the Holy Spirit. To order this invaluable book [click here](#).

Prayer Power for the Week of June 19, 2016

Please remember to pray for the families of the victims of the recent terror attack in Orlando, and for the wounded. Pray for God's redemption and healing for all. Ask the Lord this week to increase your awareness of what is true and what is not, fill you anew with His Holy Spirit, and saturate you with greater understanding of His Word. Determine by His grace to stand for His truth, as well as live and die for it. Continue to pray for our nation, especially during these turbulent times, and pray the Lord's will concerning the upcoming elections. Remember our allies, our military and their families, and our spiritual, civic and national leaders. Ask the Lord for opportunities to share His love and spread the gospel (1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 5:18; John 3:16). {eoa}