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— AND THE —
HOLY
SPIRIT

A SCHOLARLY INVESTIGATION
OF A CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE
FROM A PENTECOSTAL PERSPECTIVE

DAVID K. BERNARD

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Justification and the Holy Spirit

by David K. Bernard

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Preface

This book takes a fresh look at the important biblical doctrine of justification and particularly focuses on the work of the Holy Spirit in justification. The goal is to develop a distinctly Pentecostal perspective of the subject.

My investigation employs an Apostolic hermeneutic as described in my book *Understanding God's Word: An Apostolic Approach to Interpreting the Bible* (2005). I first dealt with some of these ideas on justification in my books *The New Birth* (1984) and *The Message of Romans* (1987), but the concepts have been further developed and expanded.

I wrote this work as a thesis or mini-dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Theology in the subject of New Testament at the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Professor J. N. Vorster. His guidance and assistance were invaluable. For instance, his suggestions led to the development of chapter 4.

The thesis was submitted in February 2005 under the title "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Justification according to Romans," and it was approved in February 2006. UNISA subsequently granted permission for publication. In accordance with this approval, the content is essentially unchanged.

As an academic thesis written for a secular university, this work is significantly different from other books published by Word Aflame Press. On matters of style,

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including citations of Scripture and other sources, I followed the *SBL Handbook of Style* (Society of Biblical Literature), which is the standard for scholarly publications in biblical studies, instead of Word Aflame Press house rules. For biblical quotations it was necessary to use the NRSV for the original thesis, but the policy of Word Aflame Press is to use the KJV or NKJV as the primary text, so the latter has been chosen for this publication. For the quoted passages there is no significant difference in doctrinal meaning among these translations.

Following academic practice, I interacted with a wide range of scholars, including some with whom I disagree; and I discussed biblical statements descriptively and historically, without assuming that readers would necessarily accept the inspiration and authority of the Bible. When chapter 2 speaks of constructing a contemporary theology, the purpose is not to alter biblical teaching, but to understand it more clearly, examine it in a coherent way, and relate it to the contemporary context. For my views concerning the inspiration, authority, infallibility, text, and translation of Scripture, see my book *God's Infallible Word* (1992).

I sought to engage the interests of a broad range of biblical scholarship, yet in a way that would advance the discussion of Apostolic Pentecostal theology both inside and outside the movement. As noted in chapter 6, I seek to integrate Christian initiation as discussed in Acts (repentance, water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, the baptism of the Holy Spirit) with justification as discussed in Romans. My conclusion is that the biblical doctrine of justification supremely involves the life-giving, transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

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INTRODUCTION



The doctrine of justification lies at the heart of great debates in Christian theology, and the Letter to the Romans lies at the heart of the discussion of justification. To a great extent, the classic confrontation between Protestants and Roman Catholics centers on justification, with Protestants defining justification as being counted righteous by faith alone and Catholics defining justification as being made righteous by faith and works (Dunn 1988a, 41, 187). The doctrine of justification is also a potential source of tension between Christians and Jews (Stendahl 1993, 41-44). In the past thirty years or so, there has been a reappraisal of this doctrine as expressed in the writings of Paul, with scholars seeking to give full credit to the original first-century context and the diversity of thought in that time (Sanders 1977; Dunn 1988a,b, 1998b; Stendahl 1993; Wright 1991).

To this point, however, less attention has been given to the role of the Holy Spirit in justification. Since, as we shall see, Paul himself closely associated justification with the work of the Spirit, particularly in his foremost