

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: The Spirit

### The Spirit - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/20 10:17

God asks us to worship Him in spirit and in truth. How well do we allow the Spirit to teach us how to do this? Do we hold to doctrine mindlessly because we think that is what pleases God or are compelled to do so by the Spirit? What is the spirit that drives what we say we do for God, be it studying the bible, teaching people about God, or even praying? are we inspired by our own desires to please God or look good before man or the Holy Spirit?

### Re: The Spirit - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/3/20 21:03

Farai

That is sadly too, true. Sometimes we come with our "wonderful" ideas to the Lord and it seems that on some level we are saying, "now Lord, all I need is your signature here and this will be the most amazing thing I... I mean, *you* ever did for the kingdom. If the rest of my response appears sharp, take heart, it is directed largely towards me.

Quote:

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This is an all-important question. Lately I have been compelled to stop during my readings reading because I feel that I have touched death. There is an inexplicable feeling of "not being edified" every time I read in the wrong attitude, that is, without seeking after God and our Lord then it is an exercise in futility. It is nothing more than the desire to develop my ego (the self, especially as distinct from the world and other selves) in disguise. This is of course not an all-encompassing theology on "what is lacking in worship" but, I would have to say that self is a big hindrance. An overdeveloped ego is nothing more than pride, which is a holiness repellent in that it repels God in whom is all Holiness. If we cannot approach God in Holiness, His holiness which for us is in His Son, we cannot touch the kind of glory that produces genuine worship; where you are genuinely thinking, "WOW GOD IS REAL!". This (genuine worship) lies in sharp contrast to our use of memory to string a line of attributes of God, which we have learnt intellectually in our studies but when you have touched something real and living, praise is spontaneous and real.

I am just zeroing in on one point here, but, knowledge in itself is not bad, but an over-reliance in what we know in our heads, by deduction, and what we have come to learn from a host of other saints. This is so artificial, that it becomes "vain repetitions", a "written code", a formula by which we manipulate a God whom by our very actions (even if we do not consciously say so) we believe is reluctant to manifest Himself. It is a lack of faith in God, but faith in knowledge that has been disguised with outward prudence (1 Corinthians 1:19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?) and dedication reminiscent of the attitude of the Pharisees. We must constantly examine ourselves to see if the words which we speak carry any weight at all, for the church continues to abound in "terminologies", commentaries and translations but for all this we have seen no power (1 Corinthians 4:20 For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.)

Amassing all this knowledge is work which requires time, your time; will this work abide the fire? If not, what in God's name are we doing, other than entertaining our minds? Knowledge is so seductive and subtle. One man said, "knowledge is power". I fear that we are enticed by a demonstration of knowledge not only in ourselves but also in others. It is powerful and impressive but, a powerful intellect is a function of the unregenerate man. D.L. Mood preached the same sermons he preached before his anointing but how it that it was powerful only after the anointing. Words (in themselves) are nothing. God does not abide in the alphabet nor in our understanding of linguistics. He abides in Spirit and in truth. How then can we now take sermons and study them as if they are the source of enlightenment and not God (not that we consciously say this but let us be honest with ourselves dear people). We look upon them (sermons and scriptures) as something we can analyze as if the order of the words is the source of power and not God.

Ravenhill said this, "God pity us that after years of writing, using mountains of paper and rivers of ink, exhausting flash

y terminology about the biggest revival meetings in history, we are still faced with gross corruption in every nation, as we ll as with the most prayerless church age since Pentecost.Â”

The compilations section has a sermon, Â”Young Donald PraysÂ”. I was so impressed by this that I read up on the revival in question. The name of this young 16 year old boy came up again and, on another occasion he was called to pray with a congregation and all he said was, Â”FatherÂ” and everybody would break out and start crying under conviction of sin. One word- Father. I do not believe all the word studies in the world will reproduce this same effect in me, nor all the experience in the world. This kind of effect spoke some thing about the quality of relationship this young boy had with God. He was uncontaminated with bias silly ideas and words. Mr Campbell said, Â”As I was preaching I looked down and saw his (DonaldÂ’s) tears wet the floor, and I knew that he was closer to God than I wasÂ… and I said to Him, Donald, I find it extremely difficult to preach hear, I want you to pray.Â” Could we stand to condescend to those younger and less experienced and less knowledgeable than us? The wisdom of this world puts emphasis, on stature and knowledge, both of which are a hindrance to the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 1:29 hat no flesh should glory in his presence.)

James

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/22 2:06**

Quote:  
-----That is sadly too, true. Sometimes we come with our Â”wonderfulÂ” ideas to the Lord and it seems that on some level we are saying, Â”now Lord, all I need is your signature here and this will be the most amazing thing IÂ… I mean, you ever did for the kingdom. If the rest of my response appears sharp, take heart, it is directed largely towards me.  
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This is all because we don't do one thing, either in ignorance or just neglect. We don't seek the counsel of the spirit of God. On some levels we want to work for God but we want to do things on our own terms and therein is the problem. The work is not ours lest we mess it all up, the work belongs to God and it must be done through Him. anything else is futile and wastes time and resources that could be better spent. Through His spirit He gives life to His work, anything short of that means dead works. This is a thing which God is impressing on me to share with anyone who would listen.

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Oh how we love to prove others wrong and make ourselves appear smarter or feel better about our own shortcomings than by putting someone down. We must always examine the spirit behind what we say and do: is it God compelling me to glorify Him, or am I trying to glorify myself?

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Now while this may hurt some feelings God will not allow me to be silent on that note. We have so dissected the bible based on OUR own perception of what the inspired authors were trying to say that many are lost. God will judge us for that. The bible is not a thing to be looked upon as we would look upon a science book. It is a book that was inspired by the spirit of God and hence it requires that the same spirit gives us the proper interpretation. If i had a nickel for every time I came up with some foolish definition or read or heard one from someone else...There are many things I have told people and told myself about GOD and the bible that were not born of the Spirit but born out of my own desire to glorify myself. If there was any kind of power in all the commentaries, opinions, published studies of the bible we would be kicking Satan's butt all over this earth and beyond. This just goes to show that there is no power in that at all, it's just a bunch of hot air. There is no power in knowing the bible backwards and forwards( I'm not advocating cessation of bible studies, just screaming out we should do so according to the Spirit of God!!!) The pharisees knew their scriptures better than anyone a

nd when Christ came they were the main ones against Him when they should have been the first to recognize Him. Now how could this be? The spirit in which they interpreted scripture was one which sought to glorify them rather than God. Many of us are guilty of that. We must admit it and seek the Holy spirit to remedy this.

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This is it, this is what is causing an anger in my spirit now, and has been for some time. The lack of desire to seek God in spirit. Part of that is because for so long we have not sought the spirit that we are so divided on what the spirit will do, we're overly restrictive on how the spirit works. The spirit works in more ways than we care to imagine and we need to come to grips with that, we just don't know ALL the ways in which the spirit works and it is not necessary because the spirit will bear witness to itself as it moves.

A terrible judgement is upon us, it will come soon and when it does there will be no doubt what it is, but there will be much denial. Hold fast to the Lord and seek Him in spirit and in truth while He may be found lest you be swept away by the coming grievous whirlwind of judgement.

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/22 2:08**

Quote:  
-----He was uncontaminated with bias silly ideas and words. Mr Campbell said, "As I was preaching I looked down and saw his (Donald's) tears wet the floor, and I knew that he was closer to God than I was...and I said to Him, Donald, I find it extremely difficult to preach here, I want you to pray." Could we stand to condescend to those younger and less experienced and less knowledgeable than us? The wisdom of this world puts emphasis on stature and knowledge, both of which are a hindrance to the Spirit of God. (1 Corinthians 1:29 hat no flesh should glory in his presence.)  
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Yes indeed, it would be good to lend an ear to such but to truly listen and learn is a thing which comes only by grace.

**Re: - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/3/22 21:54**

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We have heard the term "bookworms", but what of the term "bible worms"? E.M Bounds coined the term (bible worms) in his book, "Power through Prayer". Listen to this bro:

Quote:  
----- THERE are two extreme tendencies in the ministry. The one is to shut itself out from intercourse with the people. The monk, the hermit were illustrations of this; they shut themselves out from men to be more with God. They failed, of course. Our being with God is of use only as we expend its priceless benefits on men. This age, neither with preacher nor with people, is much intent on God. Our hankering is not that way. We shut ourselves to our study, we become students, bookworms, Bible worms, sermon makers, noted for literature, thought, and sermons; but the people and God, where are they? Out of heart, out of mind. Preachers who are great thinkers, great students must be the greatest of prayers, or else they will be t

he greatest of backsliders, heartless professionals, rationalistic, less than the least of preachers in God's estimate.

The other tendency is to thoroughly popularize the ministry. He is no longer God's man, but a man of affairs, of the people. He prays not, because his mission is to the people. If he can move the people, create an interest, a sensation in favor of religion, an interest in Church work -- he is satisfied. His personal relation to God is no factor in his work. Prayer has little or no place in his plans. The disaster and ruin of such a ministry cannot be computed by earthly arithmetic. What the preacher is in prayer to God, for himself, for his people, so is his power for real good to men, so is his true fruitfulness, his true fidelity to God, to man, for time, for eternity.

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This book (Power through Prayer) is directed towards preachers but it can and, in my judgment, does apply to any minister; as many as are members of the body of Christ have a ministry of some sort. He refers to preachers in this next bit but look at it from your ministry dear friends:

Quote:  
----- The praying which makes a prayerful ministry is not a little praying put in as we put flavor to give it a pleasant smack, but the praying must be in the body, and form the blood and bones. Prayer is no petty duty, put into a corner; no piecemeal performance made out of the fragments of time which have been snatched from business and other engagements of life; but it means that the best of our time, the heart of our time and strength must be given. It does not mean the closet absorbed in the study or swallowed up in the activities of ministerial duties; but it means the closet first, the study and activities second, both study and activities freshened and made efficient by the closet. Prayer that affects one's ministry must give tone to one's life. The praying which gives color and bent to character is no pleasant, hurried pastime. It must enter as strongly into the heart and life as Christ's "strong crying and tears" did; must draw out the soul into an agony of desire as Paul's did; must be an inwrought fire and force like the "effectual, fervent prayer" of James; must be of that quality which, when put into the golden censer and incensed before God, works mighty spiritual throes and revolutions.

Talking to men for God is a great thing, but talking to God for men is greater still. He will never talk well and with real success to men for God who has not learned well how to talk to God for men. More than this, prayerless words in the pulpit and out of it are deadening words.

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Prayer, particularly prayer "in the Spirit" is simply immeasurable to us. What are the implications of the Spirit to us? To me the greatest work of the Spirit is that it is an expression of Christ in us as believers. As we are different parts of the body of Christ, the Spirit expresses itself differently in all of us. Christ and the Spirit are inseparable for it is on this basis that we as believers have any relationship at all with the Godhead. We do not bring our own "worthiness" or rather, "unworthiness" to communion with God or with other believers. Being "In Christ" and "In the Spirit" are synonymous and are the basis for everything that is of the kingdom. It is these works that will abide the fire at the judgment seat of Christ. We must be in the business of examining ourselves, not by our own eyes and deceitful bias hearts, but in the light of the Lord, in which no darkness may abide. Howbeit we do not come to such light, especially the light that is in prayer, lest "our deeds be made manifest, that they are wrought in darkness." Christ is our worthiness for being in the light and unless we lay hold of this worthiness we will not have the boldness and faith to make revolutions that produce abiding works for the kingdom. Listens to what Watchman Nee says of Christ in his book, "The Normal Christian Faith" (different to, "the Normal Christian life"):

Quote:  
----- But our faith is entirely different. From its outset, Christianity is built on the man Christ. It is not built on the doctrines and teachings of Christ. It is amazing that when you open the Bible, you will not find too many chapters of doctrines. Passages where pure doctrinal issues are expounded are rare and of less concern to people. What concerns one the most is the man Himself and what kind of person He is. All who have read the Bible know that the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth are not outstandingly voluminous. His person draws our attention. He alone is the foundation of our faith.

The word Christ came from Greek, meaning the Anointed One. According to the Chinese, when a man takes up a task, he is given a letter of employment. The Jewish equivalent of this is anointing. When God summons a person for a work, He pours oil on the person as a seal of commission. Christ is the very God who was set apart to come to earth to be a man for the manifestation of God, in order that man may know God. Christ is the Anointed One. He is commissioned to such a task.

Due to this basic distinction, Christ is different from the founders of other religions. Once He asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Over and over again He demanded that His disciples believe in Him. He said that he who believes in the Son has eternal life. Again He said, "He who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter above Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt. 10:37). Unless a man loves in this way, he is not worthy to be His disciple. Words such as these have been uttered only by Him. No other religious leader ever said anything like that. Confucius never said to Yen-weh or Tze-lu, "Believe in me," nor did he ever say, "Love me." Neither did any of the other leaders, such as Sakya Muni or Mohammed, demand of their disciples faith in them. All it takes to be their disciples is to believe in their doctrines.

Hence, the true Christian faith is based on a person. It is built on Christ and not on some doctrines. The crux of the true Christian faith is a question of who Jesus is! Is He merely a Jew? Is He only a prophet? Or is Jesus the Son of the living God? The whole matter hinges upon who Jesus of Nazareth

is. The difference between a genuine Christian and a false one lies not in the knowledge of the doctrines of Christ. Rather, it lies in the knowledge of who Jesus is!

James

#### Maturity in spirit - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/3/27 22:45

1 Corinthians 2:6-16 6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his **Spirit**: for the **Spirit** searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the **spirit** of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the **Spirit** of God. 12 Now we have received, not the **spirit** of the world, but the **spirit** which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the **Spirit** of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are **spiritually** discerned. 15 But he that is **spiritual** judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The thing I would like to bring to surface is the casing of the word *spirit*. The Holy Spirit of has, as you know, a capital S and our spirits have the lower casing of the s. Pay close attention to the casing throughout this discussion. To discern the things of the Holy Spirit we must have a quickened spirit. This is the whole meaning and purpose of being "born again":

John 3: 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

He who is "born again" is born of Spirit and that which is born of Spirit is spirit. We must be clear that the immediate purpose of being born again is that we may have the means to have communion with the His Spirit. Spiritual things cannot be discerned until we are born again. To be born of the Spirit in this way is a definite event, and it is not something vague or theoretical, our Lord himself defined this for us; that which is born of *Spirit* is *spirit*. As believers we must be aware of the health and progress of our own spirit. I am not referring to spiritual gifts here but an increased apprehension, relationship and awareness of the presence of the Holy Spirit via our own spirit. The doctrine in this respect is not quite as important as the practice. People who pray often "in the Spirit" have a mature spirit and are able to discern the leadings of the Holy Spirit. A strong spiritual life is one with which a strong spirit is in active communion with the Lord's Spirit and with the spirits of other believers. This is not spiritual gift but a function of the normal spirit of any believer who is mature in spirit. Spiritual gifts (which I am by no means denying) are totally separate from maturity in spirit. Only quality fellowship with the Lord and, secondarily, with other believers brings about such maturity. This is not "high level" Christianity even if the doctrines sounds new the practice is much more important.

In conclusion to discern whether or not we are spiritual, we must first be aware of whether or not we have been born again and if after our birth we have matured in this spirit. Not maturity in gifts (prophesying, ministering, exhorting, faith, healing, tongues, wisdom, knowledge etc) for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. An increase in any of these (gifts) areas is not necessarily spiritual maturity. A mature spirit is evident in the life, temperament, mind, peace and character of the believer

James

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/31 0:21**

Quote:  
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bible worms...mmm...it has a ring to it...It seems to me that the system in the world centers around self and the glorification thereof, and when we take that mentality into scriptures, it causes big problems. While the intent may be to learn more of God and glorify God but we end up glorifying self. Even if one doesn't go into scripture with that mentality it is possible for it to creep in so we must be weary of this always.

Quote:  
-----Prayer, particularly prayer "in the Spirit"; is simply immeasurable to us. What are the implications of the Spirit to us? To me the greatest work of the Spirit is that it is an expression of Christ in us as believers. As we are different parts of the body of Christ, the Spirit expresses itself differently in all of us. Christ and the Spirit are inseparable for it is on this basis that we as believers have any relationship at all with the Godhead. We do not bring our own "worthiness"; or rather, "unworthiness"; to communion with God or with other believers. Being "In Christ"; and "In the Spirit"; are synonymous and are the basis for everything that is of the kingdom. It is these works that will abide the fire at the judgment seat of Christ. We must be in the business of examining ourselves, not by our own eyes and deceitful hearts, but in the light of the Lord, in which no darkness may abide. Howbeit we do not come to such light, especially the light that is in prayer, lest our deeds be made manifest, that they are wrought in darkness; Christ is our worthiness for being in the light and unless we lay hold of this worthiness we will not have the boldness and faith to make revolutions that produce abiding works for the kingdom. Listens to what Watchman Nee says of Christ in his book, "The Normal Christian Faith"; (different to, "the Normal Christian life");  
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We see God working in the flesh, providing, protecting etc but we often are content with just that. God's work in the spirit is so much more amazing. God has brought me to a point where I know for sure He will make provisions for me in my life on earth so that sorta becomes an afterthought to what I can feel and see Him doing in the spirit. That seems to have taken center stage for me now. Seeing myself as God sees me, wretched and full of sin is such a breaking experience, but then becoming aware of the trouble God has gone to to nurture this relationship is even more overwhelming. One sees his unworthiness and in that becomes witness to the grace of God, God's prerogative God bringing me into His presence by His own power.

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/31 17:48**

The bible says that we are born again of the spirit, should we not then live and walk and breathe in the spirit? should it not become a thing we do each day until it requires no thought? to walk in anything outside of the spirit is to walk in the flesh.

**General question - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/3/31 18:40**

Can you define what it is you mean by worship him in spirit and in truth? What is your definition of being led by the Holy Spirit? And how do you know when your desires are acceptable in God's sight?

**Re: General question - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/31 19:13**

Worshipping in spirit and in truth is loving God wholly, with all of one's being and when we show that love by various acts, those acts are inspired by His spirit. Truth reflects the genuineness (if there is such a word) of that spirit. As for how one knows whether one's desires are acceptable in God's sight, I can no more define that for you than I can how it should feel when you are in love. God will minister to me differently than He will to you because our needs are different and our characters are also different. The best I can say is this, God told me not to rely on how I felt coz I would not always get that same feeling if I was in line with His will for me. He said to trust in Him for that. He also said I should exercise the spirit and move as it directs. This strengthens the spirit and one matures in the spirit such that one is more and more in tune with God in the spirit. The feeling I'd get ( a fuzzy sort of feeling I guess) was like a crutch now I have to toss it and walk. It's more of a sense of being pleasing to God than feeling like you are pleasing Him. That will be a thing that God will define for you and will not be the same for the next man.

**Re: bear with me please - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/3/31 20:58**

Now than if worship is love then what is your definition of love?

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/31 22:04**

love is not just a feeling but a response to that feeling, what you do in response to what you feel. God so loved the world He sent His only begotten son to die in our stead. worship is born out of love, and it is love.

**Re: Just a scripture - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/3/31 23:11**

Jesus said if you love me you will keep my commandments, John said the commandments of the Lord aren't burdensome. So could worship be doing Jesus' commands and a proof of our love toward God ?

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/3/31 23:14**

Quote:  
-----Jesus said if you love me you will keep my commandments, John said the commandments of the Lord aren't burdensome. So could worship be doing Jesus' commands and a proof of our love toward God ?  
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oh yes indeed bro dohzman but it doesn't just end there there are also tasks that God has for each of us which we are to fulfil, we shouldn't neglect those. The commandments of the lord aren't burdensome to one who walks in the spirit, they become second nature, when we walk in the flesh however...

**A healthy mind part 1 - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/1 10:07**

The mind of the believer is essentially the most active part (outside of the spirit) of his walk. We realize that the mind will manifest what is in the heart and if therefore our heart is wrong, the mind will manifest this fairly readily. In a word, "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). This statement alone shows us the gravity our minds have on our walk in the Spirit of Christ. A carnal mind empowers the flesh, "because the carnal mind is enmity against God...so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:7-8). On the other hand a spiritual mind empowers the Spirit: "they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit... to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:5-6). Added to this our Lord tells us that we are to, "love The Lord thy God... with all thy mind." (Mathew 22:37).

We must have an awareness of our own minds and what the state of a healthy mind should be. A "saved person" (one born of the Spirit) should have a firm grip on his faculties. The mind should be subject to the person and he should be able to utilize it as a tool for serving the Lord. A weak mind is manifest most readily in prayer. Many people have the experience of not being able to maintain their concentration in prayer and meditation. A wandering mind is a big hindrance to spiritual progress. If you cannot maintain concentration in prayer and meditation it is likely that this has been your condition all day, it only becomes evident when you are trying to pray because it is only then that you are finally trying to be "serious" and "focused", to your horror, you find that you cannot. This is the tragic story of many of us. Let us be aware first of all that the mind is just a faculty which in service to us (the person). It is not "normal" to have random thoughts or images appear constantly into your head without your consent. A healthy mind should be able to stop and change its subject matter naturally. Remember, your mind is in fact "yours", that is how the Lord is able to command us to love God with all **thy** mind. Let us be very clear on this one, if you are saved, you should have full authority over your mind. As Dr Tozer once said, "Jesus doesn't save people in pieces, if a man is out at sea drowning we don't take him out in chunks, we take the whole man in one whole piece. And so Jesus saves the whole personality, the whole character, all the man." Your mind is part of that which was saved and purchased by the blood of Jesus. Accept thus divine truth and receive it in the name of Jesus and your spiritual life will see a ray of light from the Lord.

Having said this, we must now come to the practical matter of our experience. We have accepted the Lord truly and fully but how is that there is still some disharmony in the mind? We have established that a healthy mind can stop and change directions naturally and freely. If this is not our experience, then our authority is being usurped somewhere by someone. This "someone" is none other than the principalities, powers; rulers of darkness and "spiritual wickedness in high places" described in Ephesians 6. We are under constant attack and unless we realize our authority in Christ, we shall not find full victory. Paul tells us to "take the helmet of salvation" (Ephesians 6:17). A helmet protects the head, and likewise we must realize that the salvation in Jesus Christ protects us from attack. We must call to mind this authority and use it in faith, and take back the ground that is rightfully ours. It is a battle and you must seize total and full control, in the name

me of Jesus, of your mind to serve God effectively. The quickest way to short-circuit a Christian is through the mind. Be fiercely aware of this and with Godly anger abhor that which is evil and cast it out in the name of Jesus. For, as Paul says, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the **pulling down of strong holds**;) Casting down **imaginings**, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the **knowledge** of God, and bringing into captivity **every thought** to the obedience of Christ; (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). Your mind should be for you a secure stronghold, a mighty fortress in service to God. Lay hold of it and grow in spirit!

Having said that (the mind is a battlefield), we must not become preoccupied with the battle, as if our Lord set us free only to fight, that comes with the territory but it is not the focus of a healthy mind. The mind of Christ for me is described well in this passage of scripture:

Philippians 2:1-11 1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, **if any fellowship of the Spirit**, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being **like-minded**, having the same love, being of one accord, of one **mind**. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 **Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus**, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

James

#### Re: The unity of believers part 1 - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/2 4:40

The unity of believers is one of the ministries of which, the Spirit of Christ is particularly concerned. In perhaps the greatest Chapter in the whole Bible, our Lord prays that the Fathers will may be manifest in the unity of believers as He says:

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are... That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John17:11;21-23)

The glory has been given to us believers that we may be one even as the Father and the Son are one. This is just as important as our personal relationship with Christ and should be treated as such. As Christians, the easy way out is to be in isolation. Dealing with others is time consuming, difficult, frustrating and often disappointing. The love of Christ is required for a close spiritual union, which can be referred to as glorious in the sight of the world and of God. We not only have the same Spirit as believers but collectively we have a glory that cannot be manifest in any one individual. I am not referring to the mere gathering of many people who have different agendas, but a collection of Spirit filled believers endeavoring towards the mind of Christ and actively pursuing the Father's will.

Such talk is very high and lofty, and to the carnal mind this is far too idealistic but we realize also that to be carnally minded is death. We therefore seek to be spiritually minded and aim for the highest Kingdom ideal as set forth by our Lord and His Spirit through His Apostles. The words spoken by Christ are real and eternal...heaven and earth may pass away but His word endures forever. The Lord here in His High priestly prayer has literally spoken into existence a body for Himself, one full of His own glory and one with the Father. We require our faith to collectively substantiate this eternal reality.

We must admit that our own faith is lacking in this respect. We all have a measure of faith but this is not sufficient for the kind of unity that is synonymous with the unity of the Father and the Son. As much as we aspire to this our own faith and aspiration alone is lacking to complete. We need the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself to manifest itself through His Spirit. Faith in the authority of the name of Jesus Christ will manifest the perfect faith of the Lord, as was the case when the lame man lying at the gate called "Beautiful" was healed. (Acts 3:16 And his name through faith in his name hath

made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, **the faith which is by him** hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.). The faith "which is by Him" is potent binding and supernatural. We require supernatural faith to manifest supernatural unity. No amount of organization and good intentions are going to create oneness in a group of people.

This "ideal" must be taken with a pinch of salt. We are for the most part private people and unity means an invasion of privacy and of rights. In close fellowship the rights and privacy of believers must be non-existent. This is much more than being polite, and "putting up" with each other, but a genuine belief and attitude that others are better than me. (Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.).

Brothers and Sisters this is true suffering worthy of the fire and of our Lord. Esteeming others is a pain to the soul, and it is against everything that this world teaches us. We are taught to be "go getters", and phrases like, "don't let people push you around" seem balanced and sound enough even for us to teach our Children. The mental and spiritual tenacity required for this is simply beyond us. Paul tells us that it is in these situations that the Spirit will manifest himself. (Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Romans 8:26). We must be aware if we press towards the goal of the unity and glory described by our Lord, then our infirmities will be made manifest but our suffering is not in vain. (And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Romans 8:17)

The end of Christian suffering is glory in our Lord. The Spirit helps those who suffer with the Lord for the glory of His Church. When we lay hold of supernatural expectations and promises the conditions are ripe for supernatural manifestations of God, but if we become complacent in the status-quo and the mold set by the world we will not touch the glory of God.

James

#### Worship in spirit part 1 - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/2 8:22

The unregenerate spirit of man has no fellowship with God. In essence, death is separation from God, when Adam ate of the tree; his Spirit became a fallen spirit, one that was separated from God, that is the condition of everyone born of man. When we as believers are born again, our spirits are quickened (brought to life) and the union with God is once again possible. Life is in God and separation from God is death. One of the ideals that the Lord sets forth for us is worship "in spirit and in truth". May the Lord lead us to understand what He meant by this:

John 4:21 Jesus told her, "Believe Me, woman, an hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know, because salvation is from the Jews. 23 But an hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Yes, the Father wants such people to worship Him. 24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Previously the Lord had His first discourse concerning the Spirit with Nicodemus. Our Lord is the master physician and we note immediately that He does not dispense the same cure to different patients with different illnesses. The message was specifically tailor made, for the woman at the well. He did not tell her about the need to be "born again" although that was needed, but he told her about, "a well of water springing up within him for eternal life" (verse 14). The Lord discerned both the woman and Nicodemus by His spirit. We know that the Lord was able to perceive with His spirit (Mark 2:8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit...) and this was an accurate means for Him to assess the spiritual condition of a person. His spirit being pure was immediately able to discern a person's spirit and their deficiency.

Today we as "born again" (born of Spirit) believers are equipped with a live spirit which, which is in communion with God though His own Spirit dwelling in us. We must also realize that our spirits grow with continual fellowship with the Lord (And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. Luke 2:40). Again notice the lower case s in the phrase spirit and truth, this refers to our own spirit, not the Holy spirit. Here the Lord tells us that we are to worship God in our spirit (for the time is at hand when we have received the means to do this). The Lord seeks a race of people to commune with Him in the same form that He exists, in Spirit. The doctrine of our spirit is not so important as the experience. People who have a strong fellowship with the Lord have a strong spirit whether they know it or not

It is a blessed thing to be able to serve God with our spirit. As Paul says, "For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit..." (Rom. 1:9). Christian experience becomes vitally real when we can serve God with our spirit. Our spirit is the means by which His spirit communicates with us. It is necessarily a physical voice that we hear leading us but admittedly, the Spirit does speak to us. The reason prayer is so potent and transfiguring is that is one of the few conditions when we are "in the spirit", whether we realize it or not. You will notice also that prayer becomes more and more intense with duration. We become more aware of the subtle leadings of the spirit and we grow by this. After we pray our intuition is sharper, our conscience is more sensitive; this indicates growth in the spirit.

True worship and praise are like prayer, "in the spirit". Let us at this point be clear that the most significant thing about our spirit is that this is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. If our body is the temple of God (Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Corinthians 3:16) the our spirit is the holy of holies. It is a blessed thing to be able to enter into the holy of holies and to be lead and instructed by the Lord. True worship begins obedience (And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. (1 Samuel 15:22)

The leading of the Holy Spirit is very personal and hard to describe, but to obey this leading is the essence of worship. To follow the leading of the Spirit requires faith, not in yourself, but in God. There is no documented instruction on "how to worship" but as our spirits become more and more keen we will spontaneously worship the Lord as we obey Him. At first, it is hard to discern whether what we are following in our intuition is the Lord, but this becomes easier as our faith grows. In this respect, without faith it is impossible to even talk of true worship. In the endeavors of prayer and worship we immediately see how much faith we have in the Lord. May the Lord in His grace open our eyes and increase our faith.

James

**Re: Worship in spirit part 1 - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/4/2 23:07**

I'll speak on your posts afetr I get back Late Sunday Nite. They were good posts and topics.

**Worship in spirit part 2 - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/3 5:14**

The presence of God is the essence of deep worship. We will now consider two texts in this respect which have to do with the presence of God. May the Lord lead us into focus upon Him as we meditate on these two familiar texts.

Isaiah 6:1-4 1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Revelation 4:8-11 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

We notice here that those angles which are closest to God are doing one thing and one thing alone, worshiping Him. There are many differences between us and angles and between our relationship with the Lord and theirs. The focus here must never be on the angles themselves but on their attitude. The Holiness sovereignty and nature of God is worthy to receive undivided attention and a time in our fellowship that is wholly devoted to that ministry to Him. We do not come to receive anything from Him nor do we come to give him anything apart from our undivided attention. We come to acknowledge the source of all things and we forget about everything else and focus our entire being on Him alone. The only direct benefit of those worshiping the Lord that can be seen is that they are close to God and they are in His presence; this is our reward as the worshipers of God in spirit and in truth.

The Lord as equipped us with a spirit and, as we have said before, this is for us to have fellowship with Him. God lives in us by His Spirit and it is His Spirit that substantiates our faith. The Spirit of God manifests for us that which we require of

God's nature be it his love, authority or presence. He (God) represents the life of the Father through the Son by His Spirit in us. We do not want to take away from the experiences of others which are valid but we must say at this stage that, these manifestations are not necessarily felt, seen or heard physically, in fact more often than not, they are not physically experienced. The presence of the Lord is discerned by our spirit (note the small s in spirit). It is when we have discerned the presence of the Lord that our worship becomes true to us.

The presence of the Lord is real, substantial and glorious. It is a glorious presence and one which is transfiguring. It is nothing vague or for special occasions but it is available to anyone who is a child of God (John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.). To those born of the Spirit, it is the will of God that you have the authority that comes with your sonship in the name of His Son. You cannot come to the throne of God willy-nilly, but God has given you the authority of a son so that in the spirit you can approach God in His presence by your spirit, through faith in the name of His son.

A consideration of our frailty and weakness and sins will cause us to be hesitant to approach God even if our faith allows us to see our right and privilege in Him. Let us be very clear, we do not approach God on the basis of our own deeds or holiness, this is impossible. We approach God in the blood of Jesus Christ and in His name. The blood of Jesus cleanses every sin and unrighteousness and allows us to approach the throne with boldness, not in ourselves mind you, but in Christ. We have boldness that the blood of Jesus Christ is so Holy and potent that it will cleanse even the most wicked sinner of all his guilt and unrighteousness. The blood is the sacrifice we bring with us worship but as we know, the blood is not ours but it has been given to us freely by His grace.

Some believers have grown to know the potency and authority of the name of Jesus but it is a wonderful thing to discover the potency of His blood. We approach God with the blood and all His righteous requirements are met immediately. His Holiness cannot be contaminated by our unrighteousness but, in the blood we are clean before Him and worthy of true worship. We cannot approximate the value of the blood but, our Lord tells us that, it is sufficient for Him...take Him on His word! Boldness does not mean familiarity or contempt but this boldness is a reference to our faith. Fear of unworthiness saps the faith and joy out of fellowship, but boldness increases our faith.

Let us therefore approach the Lord boldly that we may worship Him for, as the author of Hebrews tells us, "ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh."

James

**Re: A healthy mind part 1 - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/4/3 20:57**

That was a good post bro.! When it comes to the mind, though it would seem that so much of our daily battle is getting enough of our mind renewed to actually believe the things Jesus' has done for us in salvation. I once heard salvation described this way, it can be like coffee that's instant coffee, a right now thing. Or it can be like the old fashioned kind that's brewed very slowly and that after it has been grinded up. God privy to his own purposes chooses to take each of through what he sees we need in our salvation experience. The mind is the key thing though, excellent post! Your quote here is on target!!!! The quickest way to short-circuit a Christian is through the mind.

**Re: On target again - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/4/3 21:04**

Tough to do-- that's why the cross is so important. It really takes a death to self in order to walk this walk. BTW one of my favorite scriptures is Ps133.

**Re: Worship in spirit part 2 - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/4/3 21:45**

I love simple. I've read both of your posts on worship and feel like just one thing lackest thou, go sell all you have give to the poor and follow me(Jesus' quote). I've been through so much fire and heart ache , teachings, study ect...that I've reduced much of this life's christianity to some basic principles. Things I see and how I understand them when I cross thier path---I speak about the word of God here. I see the Word as being Jesus and He came from the Father--- The Father actually spoke from the abundance of his heart and that expression on earth was Jesus.I see Jesus' teachings as being very Spirit and truth. I see the Holy Spirit as very God in us to help us DO the teachings of Jesus in our daily Life, and that out of an attitude of Love. I see the doing of the word of God as being lead of the Spirit and walking in the Spirit and honoring Jesus and the whole thing being an act of worship. I love the music I love times of refreshings that come through an anointed song leader who has weep over his ministry to the body of Christ before leading in songs of praise and worship , BUT if I can not walk as an offering of prayer- praise- and worship daily, in life where ever I am then I know I've missed the best and highest for my life. That's why we need the cross, without it we cannot be an expression of the resurrection power of Jesus here and now.

**A healthy mind- part 2 - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/4 5:53**

Quote:  
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When it comes to the mind , though it would seem that so much of our daily battle is getting enough of our mind renewed to actually believe the things Jesus' has done for us in salvation.  
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Welcome Brother Daryl, and thank you for the company; it was becoming eerily quiet around here! As it happens the Spirit will now direct us in the direction you have stated. May the Lord Jesus guide us through his divine truths by His Spirit.

Let us examine a text that should lead us to a further meditation as to why a healthy mind is needful:

Romans 8:1-9 1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh , but after the Spirit. **For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.** For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Two laws are contrasted in the above text: the law of the Spirit of life and the law of sin and death. Let us consider this for a moment. We told that we have freedom from the law of sin and death, but nowhere does it say that the law of sin and death is rooted out or destroyed. Death is still in business and very operational; (the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death- 1 Corinthians 15:26). We are told however that as long as the law of the Spirit of life is operational, we are above the law of sin and death. What does this mean? Let us use a simple illustration to show how laws work:

I have a membership at a gym which allows me access to a running track. My membership allows me to walk freely on this track. The track is clearly marked though, so as to prevent those who are not members from accessing that to which they have no right and have not paid the fee (price) for. To be identified as a member of this gym everyday I must carry my gym card; the card is valid for five years but I must carry it for it to be effective. There are here two laws (or rules) in operation, the rule of prosecution and punishment is only applicable to those who are not members. The other rule, the rule of membership allows me to walk freely on the track, provided I remember (I am **mindful**) to bring my gym card. If I do not have my gym card I will be treated as if I am not a member, and my privileges will be inaccessible to me, that is to say I will fall under the power of the rule of prosecution and punishment. From this illustration, there are only two ways to walk this track, under the law of prosecution and punishment or under the law of membership.

Let us now explain what we mean by this illustration. The law of persecution and punishment is like the law of sin and death. The track is like the world. The law of membership is like the law of the Spirit of life. If you are not a member you have absolutely no freedom to walk on this track and you are in bondage to this law; if you do not have the Spirit you have no freedom in this world and you are in bondage to the law. If you are a member you are free to walk this track with absolute freedom, provided we are mindful to carry our gym card; if you are born of the Spirit, you are free from the law of sin and death provided you are spiritually minded every day. Our membership is "that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14) If however we are not mindful of our membership we will suffer loss and we will have the experience of those who are under the law of sin and death.

We must present ourselves to the Lord daily as living sacrifices and be "transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" everyday. The mind needs to be renewed daily or else we will be conformed to the pattern of this world and not transformed "into the same image

### The fruit of the Spirit - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/13 19:03

The Spirit of God is on a constant quest to unify the children of God. Our devotion to the brethren should be unparalleled and surpassed only by our devotion to God. Although we as brothers and sisters in Christ have many differences the thing that unifies is the Spirit of Christ; the faith that saved you saves me; the Spirit that ministers through you ministers through me. Let us be clear my friends that any differences among those who are begotten of God are carnal and in the natural man, our spirits are unable to disagree for in Christ they are one. When we walk outside of the spiritual mindset that natural outer-man, mindset takes over. We must have before us a starting point for identifying the brethren, and John gives us a wonderful beginning as he says:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (1 John 4:1-3)

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:1-5)

In the last section we have a word about the commandments of God. An examination of scriptures will soon have you to realize that most of God's commandments are man-ward rather than directly God-ward. The "sermon on the mount" is the most expressive (in my opinion) illustration of the grace that is required of us, and this grace by Christ is to be expressed through us to one another. The expression of grace towards the brethren is particularly glorious, and causes the world to say within themselves, "what manner of people are these?" as they give God the praise.

The Spirit of Christ, as we have said before, has been given to us collectively, that we "may be one" in Christ. This is not the entire ministry of the Spirit but it is a very high level of Christianity that cannot be done apart from Christ. Again that high priestly prayer of Jesus Christ cannot be quoted enough:

And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are... That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John 17:11;21-23)

There is a glory that is in the church but we have largely not laid hold of this glory. It is a glory that no individual can express but must be the collective meditation of those "who are begotten of God". As we mature in Christ, the love of Christ constrains us to not be wayward to one another. Paul tells us, the church (as his epistles are addressed to churches not the world):

Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, lon

g suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (Galatians 5:21-25)

James

### Spiritual Gifts part 1 - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/15 10:44

We have not fully considered the fullness of the life in the Spirit of Christ but, we must at this stage digress and reflect on one function of the believer in relation to the Spirit. Let us first consider the origin of the gifts and then our meditation may begin in earnest after this introductory section. I pray that our Lord may enlighten our hearts and reveal some aspects of Himself to us by His Spirit and that He may give us the faith to hear what He has prepared for each of us. I pray Father that the glory of the Son may have preeminence and that the seeds of deception and confusion may not hinder us from knowing you the only true wise and holy God.

The Spirit of God through the scriptures tells us:

“...A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.” (John 3:27)

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” Luke 11:13

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” Ephesians 4:7-8

“So they stayed there for some time and spoke boldly, in reliance on the Lord, who testified to the message of His grace by granting that signs and wonders be performed through them.” Acts 14:3

“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelations 19:10

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. (John 8:14)

The gifts of the Spirit are inseparable from the giver as the Jesus Christ is the gift and His Spirit manifests Him and testifies to Him. Jesus Himself bears record of Himself through us, His Bride and Body. The testimony of Jesus Christ is spiritual and supernatural for he is God, and “God is a Spirit...” (John 4:24). When we speak of the gifts of the Spirit we talk of that which is administered by Jesus Christ through his spirit as a testimony to His ministry in us. We must however tread lightly before we proceed and reflect on a few more verses:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Mathew 7:21-23)

Notice the sincerity these speak with. They genuinely believed that their works saved them. Not even spiritual works will get you to heaven. We are justified not by faith in works but faith in Christ. These were fully persuaded, that is, they had faith in their works. The Lord does not tell them that their works were false for it was not they that worked the works but it was our Lord who testified through them. This is perhaps a difficult concept but consider Saul (1 Samuel 19) and Balaam (Numbers 23) both prophesied in the midst of their own iniquity. Let us dear brethren have our faith place therefore on the testifier and not the testimony; prophecies, wisdom, faith, knowledge, healings and tongues are all to be desired but only that the Lord may have a means to testify through us and not that we work our way to God...that is heresy and its condemnation is deserved.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/4/15 11:50**

Quote:  
-----This is all because we don't do one thing, either in ignorance or just neglect. We don't seek the counsel of the spirit of God. On some levels we want to work for God but we want to do things on our own terms and therein is the problem.  
-----

Is this a personal confession or an accusation? It is difficult to tell which.

**Re: - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/15 14:10**

Hey Ron

Quote:  
----- Is this a personal confession or an accusation? It is difficult to tell which.  
-----

Welcome aboard sir! I am sorry, I do not seem to remember where I posted that but that particular line and in what context. I am just guessing here but, if I said it, it was probably an observation I made from my own life.

James

**Re: Gifts of the Spirit part 2- Different administrations - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/16 12:46**

Romans 7:22 says, "For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man." Our inner man delights in the law of God. Ephesians 3:16 also tells us "to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man." In 2 Corinthians 4:16 Paul also said, "Though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day." 1 Peter 3 says in verses 4 and 5: Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. And Finally our Lord says in Luke 11:39 Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

Let us realize that scripture divides our being into an "inward part" and an "outward part". The outward part of our being is naturally adorned with abilities and natural gifts. Let me say plainly that spiritual gifts are not natural gifts; there is a distinct difference between spiritual gifts and natural gifts. The natural gifts are those which are possessed by the outward man, and the spiritual gifts are those which are possessed by the inward man. Our natural wisdom and knowledge and teaching ability will yield natural results but, our inward (spiritual) abilities will yield inward spiritual results.

The Lord adorns the inward part for this is His dwelling place and that which is in communion with Him and as we said in the preceding section, it is He who testifies through the gifts in us. Now let us add a further fact that this testimony proceeds from the inward spirit in us who are "born again" (..that which born of Spirit is spirit...John3:6). The gifts lie in that inward new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians4:24). I can naturally learn to teach, but this is not the gift of teaching. I can naturally speak in different languages, but this is not the gift of tongues. Let us be clear, that which can be done naturally without the testimony of Jesus Christ is natural and not a spiritual gift.

Let us now proceed by being looking at the Bible objectively (uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices) and not subjectively (influenced by experiences and bias). We must not let external evidence and experience dominate our thinking, but in faith we must accept that which is not seen or tangible. We are not seeking after the gifts and testimonies of Jesus Christ that we may have something to do blindly, or that we may establish ourselves and our ministries.

We seek after God's gifts sacrificially because the spiritual problems in the Church and world require spiritual supernatural testimonies of Jesus Christ. Our natural testimonies may be disputable, but the testimonies (gifts) of Jesus Christ are supernatural and spiritual. Again let us say it is not us who testify and the credit must go entirely to Him, He testifies of Himself and the works are His.

The first distinction we are going to make concerning the Lord's servants is that of office. We are each appointed with an office and a capacity in which we serve the Lord and the office is distinguished from the gift. There are gifts and then there are administration (offices) through which they are effected.

The offices which are commonly noted are found in Ephesians 4:11 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers". And other offices are presented in Romans 12 verses 7 and 8: Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering... Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. And so we have; apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, ministers, exhorters, givers, rulers and mercy showers. I do not believe the list is exhaustive or definitive but I put it this way that this way that we can see a range of ways in which the Lord may use us and in which He can be in service through us.

I do not believe the Apostle was attempting to define the offices but to point out rather that there is a distinction between the office and the gift. Even the list which I have put is subjective but I am attempting to draw attention to the fact that we all have offices in the body. Paul says plainly, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

The order in which the Lord works is not definable, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Although we can see the distinction between the gifts and the office I cannot tell you how the Lord will manifest. In some the office may be more apparent than the gift, in others the gift is more apparent than the office, but as we mature in Him these things become progressively more evident. The first thing (the list of "first things grows longer and longer") we must do is accept the divine truths of the Bible and that the gifts of the spirit were never cancelled, just as the Devil never cancelled His oppression. The gifts of the Spirit are very much alive and operational in Christ, but if you deny them and doubt them they may never become apparent.

#### Separated unto God part 1 - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/4/24 16:02

Keeping in line with the pace and tenor of this thread we will consider a topic of utmost importance in relation to the spiritual walk in Christ. In the middle of his discourse concerning spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12-14) Paul stops to amplify the importance of an attribute that is of God- Love. The attributes of God are in the Son and to produce these attributes we are to be in the Son and to be dedicated to God. In the old testament holiness was always "of God"; it was when something was wholly dedicated to the Lord that it was considered holy. Holiness is not the irradiation of evil, though holiness in us does have this (the irradiation of evil) manifestation, but holiness is in God and obtained by being in Him, that is, in Christ. See also that holiness is not good works and behavior, although it does have this manifestation (good works and behavior), but holiness is of God and it is entirely His attribute and not ours. There is not such thing as holiness "unto oneself" (that is, you do not become holy based on how much evil is irradiated in your life and how many good works you perform) but holiness is always unto God.

Holiness is separation unto God and He is the only means by which holiness is imputed onto us. You do not come to the Lord to get a fill of holiness and then continue with your life until your supply has run out. No; that is not separation, it is not "unto God". Many believers are trying to obtain a self styled holiness and righteousness from God. It is the belief of many that they would be holy with if they were less impatient with a dab of love and a pinch of faith and a little more perseverance and a measure of faith... this is a futile prayer! When we put it like this (as if holiness consisted of many different ingredients that God dispenses like a pharmacist) we see that holiness is far more than repentance and fruits of the Spirit. It is a difficult concept to express fluently but perhaps A.W. Pink's account of God's holiness will give us a good footing:

"Because God is holy, acceptance with Him on the ground of creature-doings is utterly impossible. A fallen creature could sooner create a world than produce that which would meet the approval of infinite Purity. Can darkness dwell with Light? Can the Immaculate One take pleasure with "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6)? The best that sinful man brings forth is defiled. A corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. God would deny Himself, vilify His perfections, were He to account as righteous and holy that which is not so in itself; and nothing is so which has the least stain upon it contrary to the nature of God. But blessed be His name, that which His holiness demanded His grace has provided in Christ Jesus our Lord. Every poor sinner who has fled to Him for refuge stands "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6). Hallelujah!"

Now we have perhaps established that holiness is of God although such a revelation is one which comes from God alone and not from our texts but, if the Lord has been gracious enough to allow us to see this we will now ask how this fits in with the Spirit or should I say the HOLY Spirit. The Spirit is not only of God through God and unto God, He is God. The light of this revelation is staggering but let me say plainly that the holiness is God is expressed by God through His Son in His Spirit within us. It is not the works that are holy but the fact that they are from God that makes the holy. Hallelujah! When we see this, that God is not our aid to holiness but that He is our holiness we must fall on our face and worship the creator who is God blessed forever amen. God does not follow a higher moral code above Him, the Lord is the moral code and by that virtue anything that He does is pure and righteous and just and indeed, very good. Hallelujah! My words fail me on this matter and I cannot express it enough. Dr A.W. Tozer may provide some insight as to the fallacy of self-styled holiness when he says:

“If we compare what we ought to be and could be with what we are, and we don't see that we are in a rut and we are not concerned, then one of three things may be wrong. First, we may not be converted at all. . . .

Second, people may not be concerned about the rut because of sin they have committed...

Third, some people are so self-righteous that they are impervious to any work of the Holy Spirit. They cannot be cured of their blindness because they think they see. The Pharisees never got under conviction. They crucified Christ, they hated the Son of God, but they never got under conviction. They had ordered their religious life so as to be impervious to the arrows of the Holy Spirit. The adulterous woman could fall at the feet of Jesus, the tax collector who knew he had been crooked could run to the feet of Jesus to ask for help, and the poor came from everywhere to say, "What must I do?" They could come, but the Pharisees never did. They never got under conviction, and in hell I suppose they are still fighting and saying they are right. If people judge what they could be and ought to be with what they are and can still go home and have a good night's rest, shrugging it off, perhaps they have never been converted. Maybe they have sinned against light until they are temporarily under a terrible cloud of God's judgment. Or maybe they are so self-righteous that they cannot get under conviction.”

Let us seek after God not for what he may impart but for Him. A greater measure of God is a greater measure of His attributes, but be aware, a greater measure of attributes is not a greater measure of God. Pray with me and meditate on it my friends, that the Lord may lead us into all truth, that is, into Himself. Amen and Amen!

James

### Spiritual gifts part 3- The gifts of the Spirit - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/28 22:43

Paul begins the discourse in 1 Corinthians 12 with this statement, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” Elsewhere (Romans 11:25) Paul says, “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits”.

Let us begin by saying that there is much wisdom in the world concerning spiritual gifts, and the prince of the air “power of the air” propagates much of it, to the end that may not be established; that is, that we may be disconcerted (To frustrate (plans, for example) by throwing into disorder) by the mutual doubt both in us and in others. Fear, doubt and unbelief chokes the life out of the works and the witness of the Spirit. The ultimate example I suppose is that of our Lord Himself whose works were paralyzed by the unbelief that compassed Him (Mark 6: 5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. 6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.) we have said already that the gifts of the Spirit are a testimony of Jesus Christ by which, He Himself testifies by the works which are manifest. Today the mighty works of Jesus are still being hindered by unbelief.

Again to pick up where Paul left us (“...I would not have you ignorant...”) let us say that the way to serve the Lord is not in paranoia fear and ignorance but, a good steward will seek after those things which are true and flee from what is false. May the Lord bear me witness in your spirit when I say that all the gifts of the Spirit in Jesus Christ are still available in the Church, and many of the are activated in a faithful few. All good things are from above and to those who lack faith the Lord gives, if the will only ask, and ask persistently until they have obtained that good thing (spiritual) which they seek.

The false religions and occult practices are producing real signs and wonders, and although identifying this falsehood is required, it is much more important to combat lies with truth. In these last days dear saints the supernatural testimony of

Christ is needed much more than ever that the faith of the saints may have a firm foundation not in word only but in power and in much assurance. Our God is the Omnipotent, omnipresent, Holy One. As highly as we deem gifts of the Spirit (whether conscious or unconsciously), they are no great thing for the Lord to work in Him, if only we would not insult His sovereignty by doubting Him.

The office which the Lord appoints in His service and ministry is unlikely to change but the gifts are those which the saints are given to operate in the office, and these are variable. Let us consider a few verses to illustrate this point:

1 Corinthians 12:12-26 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, hether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are the many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

This establishes without a doubt that everyone in the body has a fixed role to play but Paul goes on to say some things that are rather unusual:

1 Corinthians 14:5 I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesie than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

1 Corinthians 14:23 If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? 24 But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

1 Corinthians 14:29 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

1 Corinthians 12: 31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

What is unusual are these statements, "I would that ye all spake with tongues"; "But if all prophesy"; "...covet to prophesy" and "...covet the best gifts". Careless reading of this text will lead to the one conclusion that some offices are more important than others but we know that, "there should be no schism in the body". Let me illustrate this somewhat difficult concept with an illustration. A servant may have the office of preacher and he may for this office be equipped with the gift of wisdom, knowledge, tongues and healing. This servant of the Lord may rightly pray, 'Lord give me the gift of prophecy that I may serve you more abundantly', but it would not be right to pray, 'Lord, make me and evangelist that I may serve you more abundantly'. An eye must remain an eye, a preacher must remain a preacher, but he may still covet the "best gifts". There is no "best office" in the true church of Jesus Christ, but there are the best gifts. Have all the great servants of the church been apostles; have all been prophets; have all been preachers; have all been teachers? The Lord does equip the saints with the gifts that are most needful to their office. Earnest expectation of the gifts is good and even conducive to receiving them. May the Lord graciously open the eye of our hearts. Amen.

James

**Re: The Church part 1- A meek and quiet bride... - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/30 0:26**

We have now come to the point where we can consider the Spirit of The Bride, that is, the true Church of Jesus Christ. There is much to be added to all the topics posted but let us catch our breath as we rest on this eternal issue. Let us present two texts with which the Spirit will lead us into our further meditations.

Isaiah 66:1-2 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

1 Peter 3:1-6 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

The true Church, is the Bride and as such the Bride is being adorned as a preparation for Christ. As Paul says, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Ephesians 5:31-32). And again John tells us, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Revelations 21:2). When we look at the Church at this perspective we must conclude there is something very mystic about what the church is. There is something that cannot be hidden from the eyes of our Lord, though we do try to hide it with much "outward adorning". The Lord is adorning inwardly the spirit of the saints, who are the church, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing".

Today there is much outward adorning in the saints and there is a great striving to build God's house but he saith, "what house shall ye build me?". This question is rhetoric and the answer is contained in the question, let me say plainly, we cannot build the house of God. Solomon begins a Psalm (127) saying, "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it...". It is God who builds the true Church, and it is He who adorns Her. We may and plant and water seeds but it is God who give the increase, and unless it is sent of God it will not grow, it will not receive increase from Him.

Programs, creeds, denominations, songs, theology, meetings, revelations, tongues, prophesies, psalms, hymns, interpretations are all outward signs which do not necessarily mean that there is an inward adorning. There are many in that day who even after having prophesied will not be adorned appropriately for the Lord and to those he will confess, "I never knew you..." (Mathew 7:23). Let us therefore consider with all sobriety and all quietness before the Lord what it is He requires from His church.

Art Katz once said, "The Lord is not Lord until he has been consulted. You do not automatically go to college and get a career, you consult the Lord first, 'what would you have form me to do?' It maybe that the kind of character training you require will come from picking up the public garbage, and if that is your intent for me that is what I will do. My government (saith the Lord) must be upon my hand for the increase of and peace there shall be no end.

I will not assume anything in my life that he should necessarily come and approve and condone as if to say, "of course everybody knows you have to earn a living, and you have to have a career and you have to have a career to get...No! Not everybody knows that (Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? Mathew 6:31).

The Lord is not Lord until he has be consulted and he has given the disposition of His heart which might confound everything we have planned. The word 'Lord' has become a sort of glib, verbalization and if it's lost its meaning there, where is there meaning anywhere. And he is not Lord, what are we doing, playing a game and saying 'Lord, Lord', when he in fact is not, and we are independently and arbitrarily making our own decisions...and then we come on Sunday and sing His praises... 'Lord, Lord!' This is how the spirits (Acts 19:13) can say Jesus we know and Paul we know but who are you. We see right through you, we know what is the truth of your life and if you are not true on the issue of His Lordship, you are not true on anything."

Let me interject there with a, hallelujah! We the bride of Christ must learn quietness and how to say 'Lord' and mean it, '...even as Sara...'. Our Lord is the center of all things and it the eternal purpose of God that in all things Christ may have preeminence as Paul says, 'And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased, the Father that in him should ALL fullness dwell' (Colossians 1:18-19). This is a central message in many of Watchman Nee's books and, as he says;

"A colossal problem exists among God's children today. The Christianity which they know is quiet fragmentary. You obtain a little grace, I receive a little gift, and he speaks a little tongue. This man experiences some change in conduct, that man possesses some measure of love; this one has patience; that one has humility. This is what is commonly known as Christianity. But is this Christianity? It is not, for Christianity is Christ. Christianity is not reward neither is it what Christ gives to me. Christianity is none other than Christ Himself.

Do you perceive the difference? There are two totally divergent ways. Christianity is not one thing which Christ gives to me; Christianity is Christ giving Himself to me. Here is the problem that people consider today's Christianity to be the endowment of Christ. When I was a sinner, Christ endowed me with grace and mercy. Now that I have become a Christian, He endows me with patience humility and gentleness and whatever. But this is just not so.

Before God it is not a matter of endowment of Christ; rather it is God giving Christ Himself to us. God has not granted us humility and patience and gentleness, He grants the entire Christ to us. It is Christ who becomes our patience, humility and gentleness. It is Christ the living Lord. And this is what is truly called Christianity. Please take note that there is nothing at all impersonal in Christianity. Every matter in Christianity has to do with personality, and the person involved is Christ. To put it another way, our patience is not a thing, ours is a Person- our sanctification is not an experience, ours is a Man- our justification is not a thing, ours is a Personality- our righteousness is not behavior, ours is a being. When we are redeemed and delivered we do not obtain items as such, for our redemption and deliverance are alive."

Again let me interject saying HALLELUJAH. Knowing Christ in this way is the difference between Lordship and "I never knew you; it is the difference between living Christianity and dead Christianity, the true Bride and Church and the institution purporting Christianity. This is a tough pill to swallow but if you will dear saint, in Truth consider the state of your entire Christian life and that of most "churches" the Light that dawns is convicting and sobering. Let us receive the Lord in trembling and quietness and let us, by our submission, give meaning once again to the term 'Lord'. I pray O Father, that you will reveal you Son to us that we may receive Him in His fullness. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Re: - posted by Svineklev, on: 2005/4/30 15:58**

Ironman, et al--

I cannot read all of this thread, so please excuse me if I misread a thing or two. I just wanted to comment on a couple of posts.

1. Though the Pharisees were about the only line of Judaism to survive the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, by no means did they all reject Christianity. Hundreds if not thousands of them converted to Christianity. In fact, Richard John Neuhaus speculates that perhaps *millions* of them did (judging by estimated population of Jews in the Roman Empire prior to and after the destruction...millions fewer afterward, with no reported pogroms or famines that can account for the reduction).

Jesus did not focus on them because they were the worst of the worst. They were the "party of the people" and most ordinary Jews of the time would have identified with them rather than the Sadducees or Zealots, etc. Paul clearly came from a pharisaic roots and probably Jesus, too (as well as he knows the teachings of the Tannaim). Often it is those who (though in error) are closer to the truth who receive disciplinary attention. There is no castigation of study or knowledge in the rebuke of the pharisees, but only of their self-centered application and misapplication of traditions and the Word.

2. What E.M. Bounds seems to be railing against are not *prayerful* Bible worms, but those who neglect their devotional time with God in favor of pure doctrinal studies. Remember that the apostles in Acts 6:4 say (in giving to others the service at tables): "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

3. Watchman Nee is thought to be doctrinally unsound by many, many Christians. His quote--

"But our faith is entirely different. From its outset, Christianity is built on the man Christ. It is not built on the doctrines and teachings of Christ. It is amazing that when you open the Bible, you will not find too many chapters of doctrines. Passages where pure doctrinal issues are expounded are rare and of less concern to people. What concerns one the most is the man Himself and what kind of person He is"

--though not that far from being true, is a dangerous one. And ideas have consequences. Though purely propositional, doctrinal truths are less common than aphorisms or narrative in Scripture, they are hardly of less worth.

4. Concerning the 16-year-old boy who touched people with the mere utterance of "Father" as he began prayer.... (It reminds me of the actor who said he would gladly give a small fortune if he could recite the word "Mesopotamia" with half the evocative inflection and feeling of George Whitefield.) We had an elder in my church who was much this same way... whenever he began prayer you could not help but believe his relationship with the Father was intimate and glorious. But he could also quote by heart vast quantities of Scripture, and he knew his theology backwards and forwards.

5. We worship in Spirit AND Truth. You've somehow collated that simply to mean we should worship *genuinely* in tune with the Spirit.

I believe you only have half the equation: We worship God when we are genuinely in the Spirit AND when we recognize the importance of true Truth (as Francis Schaeffer used to call it).

All God's best,

--Eric

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/4/30 21:13**

Eric

are you following me :-P In short what God has been impressing on me in many different ways is that the Spirit will teach us and lead us into all truth whether it concerns scripture or other things of God. The spirit is the key because without it we're dead in the water spiritually.

**The leaven... - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/4/30 23:25**

Hey Eric

Nice to have your contribution here Brother, I am sure your input will add a new depth and dimension to this discussion; in any case the flavor of "Jimm" and "Ironman" where becoming quite bland. :-)

I have read your post and noted your considerations and learnt something from them, but I believe, from my standpoint we may have missed each other here. The reference to the Pharisees was more a reference to the label as it is described in the Bible, not to the historical and statistical typical "Pharisee" (although that angle is noted and requires further meditation on my part), but as to those who were in short, self-righteous. Yes, not every single Pharisee was the unholy of unholies but in the discourse in Mathew 23 a certain kind of man is described; let us now quote and examine part of the familiar text that we may have the same point of reference. Again, I say I do appreciate that historical input but the man recorded by history is altogether different from the one from which the doctrine was drawn, and from that man, a different lesson is to be learnt. From Mathew 23:5-6 we have:

But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

The minute to minute, life of every scribe and Pharisee is not known or recorded by any historian, indeed, even the people living in Jerusalem at the time of the Pharisees did not know the secrets of these men's hearts. Our Lord here tells authoritatively what is in their hearts. Our Lord warned against, "the leaven of the Pharisees" (Mathew 16) and it was a warning to His own disciples. Any person, not just the Pharisees could have the "leaven" of self-righteousness and it is against this leaven that our Lord speaks against, and as it so happen, this "leaven" was manifest in the Pharisees most readily at that time. At the end of the day what is said here is against arrogant self-righteousness and

the attempt of justification by one's own good works.

Again our Lord said authoritatively (this was not an outward observation but an inward revelation of their hearts) of the Jews in John 5 (who not the necessarily the Pharisees but who too were demonstrating the "leaven"), "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me". I never advocate stopping Bible study; in fact, at times I am lead study as much as 12 hours a day, but I do not believe that "in them is eternal life". The life is in the Son, and any doctrine that does not point to the Son does not point to life. It would be self righteous for me to believe I could read and indoctrinate my way to life, but the purpose of the study is altogether different.

Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:15-17 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, **which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus**. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

I deeply appreciate this statement and take it as a personal statement to me, but all scriptures do is point to Christ. C.H. Surpgeon has a book, "Christ in the old testament" and in the introduction he begins:

"Many of the most picturesque images of Jesus Christ are those found—sometimes seemingly buried- in the Old Testament. Jesus emphasized this point with two of His disciples as they walked and talked on the road to Emmaus. "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27). Using this teaching model of Jesus Himself, he offers 60 studies revealing in the teaching, testimonies and types of the Old Testament. These are organized into three groups, the historical group (comparing Christ to Old Testament figures), the ceremonial group and the prophetic group."

In our studies if we are not lead to Christ, then all we have is philosophy and we are no different to any other religion. I believe that Christ is the sum of all Spiritual things, I do not believe the same can be said for scriptures and doctrine. Though through scriptures and doctrine we plant and water we are given increase only through Christ. There is no intrinsic power in scripture and doctrine except through Christ and His Spirit which is the Spirit of the Father.

The reason my brother and I stress this so much, is because we are basically in agreement with Ravenhill when he says, "I do not believe that 2% of professing Christians are born again never mind filled with the Spirit". This is a sad state and I believe that at the center of the problem is pride and self righteousness, along with apathy ignorance and false assurances. Our assurance should not be based on doctrines and creeds but on Him in whom we have believed, the line is thin, and this is not an accusation dear brother, it is what it is, a statement against "the leaven" of the Pharisees. It is this which I speak against in the post, not against any specific person or specific Pharisee... do you follow me? I have much more to say about your post but lest I talk you into oblivion I will pause here. What are your thoughts so far?

**Re: The leaven... - posted by rookie (), on: 2005/5/3 16:05**

Br. Jim wrote:

Quote:  
-----God has not granted us humility and patience and gentleness, He grants the entire Christ to us. It is Christ who becomes our patience, humility and gentleness. It is Christ the living Lord. And this is what is truly called Christianity.  
-----

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Your testimony of the "Life" is true and good.

In Christ  
Jeff

**Re: The leaven... - posted by Svinekev, on: 2005/5/10 4:38**

Jimm--

My problem with those who correlate doctrine and creed with pharisaism (like Ravenhill, here) is that they throw out the baby with the bath water (and in this case, it's literally the Christ Child they're throwing out). Not that they MEAN to, of course....

When one makes statements like that--Our assurance should not be based on doctrines and creeds but on Him in whom we have believed--who is this "Him" being spoken of? We know we are speaking of the *same* "Him in whom we have believed" by the use of doctrine and creed. The Spirit and theology are not opposing forces. Sound theology enriches our spirituality; it does not detract from it.

There is, as you say, no intrinsic power in Scripture and doctrine except through Christ and His Spirit which is the Spirit of the Father. True enough.

But you would agree that Scripture is "God-breathed" and if interpreted through true doctrine, what do we have? The very Word of God. Its pages drip with the spirit of Christ, do they not? What in heaven's name could you possibly have against rightly dividing the Word of Truth?

By the by, Mr. Ironman, sir. No, I am not following you around. This topic just struck my fancy. "Great" minds may not think alike, but perhaps they're drawn to similar subjects! 8-)

--Eric

**Re: - posted by IRONMAN (), on: 2005/5/11 1:31**

Eric

I'm no great thinker but if you insist... 8-)

**Doctrine and the Spirit of Christ - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/5/18 12:37**

Quote:

----- My problem with those who correlate doctrine and creed with pharisaism (like Ravenhill, here)  
-----

I think you have misunderstood me and "Ravenhill here". It is not that I correlate doctrine and creed with Phariseeism, but that Phariseeism correlates with doctrine and creeds. That statement will make no sense if you are in haste but let me attempt to explain what I mean.

Anyone who ministers the gospel of Jesus Christ must have doctrine of some kind but not everyone who has a doctrine of some kind has Jesus Christ. The first person who explained to me what Calvinism was all about was a drug dealer. He could (at the time) recite scripture more fluently than anyone I had ever met in my entire life! Why is it that he could see the truth and recite it but he could not utilize it?

Quote:

-----When one makes statements like that--Our assurance should not be based on doctrines and creeds but on Him in whom we have believed--who is this "Him" being spoken of? We know we are speaking of the same "Him in whom we have believed" by the use of doctrine and creed. The Spirit and theology are not opposing forces. Sound theology enriches our spirituality; it does not detract from it.  
-----

Doctrine does not necessarily mean unity of belief or one accord in Christ, being in Christ on the other hand does mean unity of belief and one accord, so that the testimony of the individual Christian is more powerful than what he knows. I speak of testimony as a general statement encompassing as much as the person's conduct and walk everyday, that is testimony, that is fruit, which is doctrine in action. Sound theology does not produce enriched spirituality but enriched spiri

tuality produces sound doctrine. If it all it took to change my personality and obtain life was to understand a teaching the n the very sovereignty of God would be lost in that the key to life would be bound up in man's understanding and quickness of mind and not in the grace of God, for grace is not constrained by doctrine. You may say, "it is God who give the understanding and so His sovereignty is not lost" and to that I would say, "Amen, it is also God who gives the spirituality". If however you do not believe this and you turn and you ask me:

Quote:  
----- But you would agree that Scripture is "God-breathed" and if interpreted through true doctrine, what do we have? The very Word of God. Its pages drip with the spirit of Christ, do they not? What in heaven's name could you possibly have against rightly dividing the Word of Truth?  
Quote:  
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In this case I would say to you what book do you know of that is more "God-breathed" than the Bible? (none) Then why is that people reading the same bible can come to doctrines that are not only different but opposing? Truth my produce different doctrines but the are never opposing. Most modern doctrine stems from the Bible, but some doctrine is heretical, for "rightly dividing the word of truth" belongs to God, and those who are not in Christ are not equipped to do it. The Lord may sovereignly enlighten one who does not have the Spirit through the bible (as he did with me) but this is not necessarily always the case. The Lord may have enlightned you with Calvinism, but why has it not worked for the drug dealer? Are not the pages "dripping with the Spirit of Christ" I say to you no, Christ does not dwell in books or temples made with hands but in heaven and in men. A man filled with Christ, can teach of Christ freely, not relying on any fixed doctrine, but because he walks in truth, he speaks of the truth. Forgive me dear sir, for putting words in your mouth, but I only did it to give you a commentary of what I perceive or you and that may be wrong. I await correction.

In Christ

James

**Re: Hearing the voice - posted by Jimm (), on: 2005/5/18 14:32**

There is an aspect of the being born of the Spirit that is unique to the children of God and this is "hearing". the hearing we speak of now is spiritual hearing and must be distinguished from the physical ability to hear. This is not a spiritual gift but it is a faculty of those who are mature in Christ. A normal faculty of the believer's spirit is hearing. Let us consider the following texts that we may be of one accord. I pray that God may direct our understanding and enlighten our hearts to His Son.

Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. (John 10:7-16)

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: **if any man hear my voice**, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. **He that hath an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (Revelations 3:20-22)

Again let us state that having "an ear" is not a spiritual gift and neither is hearing. The Lord speaks not only to the spiritually gifted but also to all of His sheep. As we grow in Christ we will become more familiar to his voice and we will automatically shun and flee from the hirelings prophets and teachers. Let us consider one final text before we go into explanation of this saying.

And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, **The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.** And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed: Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of

corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee. (Genesis 27:22-29)

There is a lot to be said about the voice of someone. I have no experience with sheep but I remember being out on rural farm in Africa when we were herding cattle. I was a city boy and my cousins enjoyed playing pranks on me when I visited, and on one occasion we had gone out with the cattle and I marveled at how obedient they all were. My cousins would run and shout instructions to them to stop, turn, move etc. After noting the commands I was keen to get involved and I told my cousins about this, and they tried in vain to hide their amusement, but they encouraged me to try. And so I began to run in the midst of them shouting in the same way and with the same words but it seemed that they did everything except what I was saying! My words were indeed right but my voice was wrong and they had the good sense to hear and pick that up.

In this age of apostasy we have many false prophets and teachers. Sadly many of them do not know that they are wrong and if we are not careful our other senses will deceive us into hearing the voice of the hireling. We only have one Lord and Master in this world and everyone and everything else is false (But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren Mathew 23:8). As we mature in Christ we should be able to hear whether a man speaks from the Spirit of Christ or not. If it is not the Spirit of Christ then it is not profitable for you to hear anything they have to say. This is far deeper than the question of doctrine, though we should be ware of false doctrine and heresy. The issue of "hearing" goes down to the source of the speaker's message, is it from the Spirit or the flesh or the Devil.

Many teachers are teaching true doctrine but it is from the flesh and for their own purpose and will, but those who speak of Christ are they who we hear. One undeniable mark of the Spirit of Christ is conviction (When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment John 16:8). The Spirit of Christ is convicting. A minister of the gospel who does not bring about conviction, either in his words or in his conduct is very questionable. By conviction I do not refer to alter call numbers, as this may reflect his own charisma powers of persuasion or something else. Conviction refers to that working and speaking which the Spirit operates in the conscience of people. No man has the power to bring Godly conviction, but this is entirely the work of God in His own Spirit. If a person speaks and works of God, there is conviction to those who witness, but if a man speaks and works of Himself, even if the works and words appear to be righteous, there is no conviction.

After maturing in Christ there is in fact a feeling of offense when someone speaks of themselves about Christ. One of the most offensive things for a mature Christian to endure is testimony and works that do not proceed from Christ. Good words and works can never substitute the voice of the Spirit of our Lord, and according to Christ we know His voice. This is divine fact written in your Bible as well as mine, and it is also written upon the spirits of those who are born of His Spirit. We know His voice, and words and works that do not bear His voice are detestable and we should flee from them. With our senses we may see signs and wonders and tears and we may hear scriptures and the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, but all of these can be used in deception. The voice of God cannot be counterfeited and it is upon this that we must rely.

Some of us are not exercised in hearing the voice of God. While it is true that the hearing gets better with exercise, it is not true that this is how it is acquired. You can hear because you are a sheep of God, if in fact you are a sheep. If you are a sheep then you will grow in Christ and your spiritual senses will sharpen as you use them (But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who **by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil**. Hebrews 5:14). That which is of Christ is good, that which is not of Christ is evil. We must become increasingly aware and of the "voice" of Christ in those that name of Christ. May the Lord be merciful to us and by His grace may He give us increase in Christ. Amen.

Re: - posted by Svineklev, on: 2005/5/22 21:12

James--

You said:

"Sound theology does not produce enriched spirituality but enriched spirituality produces sound doctrine."

I agree with you on the first part. Sound theology gets you nowhere in and of itself (like your drug-dealer friend). (Just as an aside--even if a communist, alcoholic, womanizing deadbeat told me that Jesus was the way, the truth, and the life, I wouldn't give up my faith as a result. Truth is truth no matter who says it and whether or not they are able to apply it to their own lives.)

At any rate, I cannot agree with you on the second half: enriched spirituality does NOT produce sound doctrine in and of itself. The two HAVE TO go together. If one is growing in the faith, then one is hearing the Word preached and reading the Word for him or herself, being mentored by those more mature in the faith, and studying the writings of those witnesses who have gone before us. These activities all involve growth in *doctrine*.

That's what doctrine IS. Knowing the contours of His face, being able to discern His voice from imitators (like those cows were able to do).

Enriched spirituality produces sound doctrine produces enriched spirituality produces sound doctrine produces enriched spirituality....

One cannot and must not separate them. If anyone does, then I fear for his or her susceptibility to deception.

Mormon's teach their people that they should read the Book of Mormon with an open mind...and that if it's true God will give them a "feeling of assurance." In other words they will "hear His voice." And lo and behold--through the amazing power of suggestion--*most of them do!*

Ah, isn't that lovely...enriched "spirituality" producing "sound" doctrine.

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Yes, maturity does hone one's sense of hearing. And discerning error will produce offense within one.

The trouble is that immaturity may give one a false sense of hearing His voice. One may even take offense at the truth, believing it to usher forth from the Deceiver.

They are mirror images. Sheep definitely hear His voice. But when can we be sure that WE are sheep?

We can be sure only when what we have heard conforms to the Standard we have been given: the written Word of God. And no, Christ Himself is not in the typeset ink of the words. But in those words we have a benchmark to rely on. A benchmark He has provided for us. (And like any such Standard, it is useless unless we have the ability to interpret it correctly. Hermeneutics and Systematics and Church History may not seem very "spiritual." But they have been used of God to safeguard the integrity of His revelation to us. Be thankful.)

--Eric