

**TOPICAL STUDIES OF THE
MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
IN THE LIVES OF BELIEVERS**

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TOPICAL STUDIES OF THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIVES OF BELIEVERS

I. THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN GIVING AND USING SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN OUR INDIVIDUAL WALK IN THE WORLD AND IN CHURCH LIFE.

INTRODUCTION

- 1. Some have wondered why Paul spent so much time in I Corinthians (chapters 12-14) discussing the subject of the GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT. In other books, he had used only a few verses to discuss them. SEE: Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:1-15.**
 - a. One reason may be the presence in that church of great diversity of backgrounds and the human impossibility of fitting all of these together in one church. We noted this problem in chapter 14 of Romans and in chapters 8-10 of I Corinthians. Only the Holy Spirit, by giving His gifts and then instructing them in the proper view and use of them in the body of believers, could bring unity in such a situation. SEE: Ephesians 4:1-3.**
 - b. Another reason may be that these believers, in that completely pagan and antagonistic atmosphere, needed the constant encouragement and consolation that God was in their midst by the Holy Spirit. They therefore needed the constant demonstration of His presence by the presence and demonstration of these gifts of the Holy Spirit.**
 - c. They also needed to clearly see that the blessing of God upon them because of His presence among them could only be found if they spiritually and correctly used these gifts of the Holy Spirit. Therefore some false attitudes and practices among them had to be strongly corrected.**

- 2. In our day, there has been much confusion and spiritual misunderstanding concerning the subject of the GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**
 - a. Some have tried to recreate some of the gifts which were present in the New Testament times but which had fulfilled their purposes in those days and were not intended to be gifts to be used during the entire church age.**
 - 1) Their efforts to copy these gifts have followed their own ideas and guidelines and often bear little resemblance to the gifts God originally gave to the churches in the New Testament times by the Spirit.**
 - 2) The result has been that this recreating of the New Testament gifts has produced confusion in the use of them and total distortions of the original gifts and the ways God intended for them to be used.**
 - 3) Their use of them is based more on emotion and feeling than on emphasis upon the quiet spiritual working of the Spirit in the hearts and lives of the believers and the body of believers as a whole that was present in New Testament times.**
 - 4) This use of these gifts can sometimes become a substitute for true spirituality in their midst, and the true spiritual results that the Holy Spirit was to bring forth in the body of believers through the presence and correct spiritual use of His gifts in their midst.**
 - b. While the wrong gifts have been recreated and exalted in various bodies of believers, many of the enduring gifts, dealing with the practical side of the Christian lives of individuals and the work of the body of believers together, have been ignored and neglected.**
 - 1) These practical ministries of the Holy Spirit do not produce the emotions and feelings that many demand to be present in the presence and use of gifts of the**

Spirit, and therefore are not considered as important as the ones they choose to emphasize.

- 2) These practical ministries of the Holy Spirit are under the strict rules and standards of the Word of God itself and fall outside the freedom and liberty such people seem to demand in their use of the Gifts of the Spirit.**
- c. On the other hand, many churches and believers, recognizing the false use of the Gifts of the Spirit in our day, have been afraid to emphasize and teach the true enduring Gifts of the Spirit. Therefore, they do not teach and partake of them at all.**
 - 1) They fear that they may be confused with the ones who falsely use some of the Gifts of the Spirit and then they will be identified with these false teachers in the thinking of other people.**
 - 2) They also may fear that the ones they teach may be tempted to go beyond what God permits in the use of them and thus will get off into false teaching.**
 - 3) The result is that their people have little or no understanding of the way the Holy Spirit wants to work in their lives and never really reach the potential in Christian life and service that God desires for them.**
- 3. The truth is that, while we must carefully avoid the false teaching and practices of our day concerning the understanding and use of the Gifts of the Spirit, we still urgently need the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in our own individual lives and in the fellowship and work of the body of believers.**
 - a. If we choose to ignore this subject, our own lives will be without the daily help and guidance that the Holy Spirit desires to give us in working in every area of our lives and in meeting all of the deep needs of our lives as we live in the world as Christians.**

- b. In church life, the work of God also will be seriously lacking because of our lack of understanding concerning how He wants to bless and use us in the dedicated use of our gifts in the work of the Lord.
4. Providing we are using our gifts correctly and spiritually, we need not be ashamed of possessing these and using them with others to the glory of God. They were given to be fully used, and the work of God is blest and furthered with such use. However, we do need to constantly examine very carefully the way we are using these gifts to be sure that no selfish motives accompany our use of them and that we follow the guidelines of the Scriptures.

SCRIPTURES THAT DEAL WITH GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Romans 12:3-8	I Corinthians, chs. 12-14	Ephesians 4:1-15	I Peter 4:10, 11
Prophecy	Word of Wisdom	Apostles	Speaking
Service	Word of Knowledge	Prophets	Serving
Teaching	Faith	Evangelists	
Exhorting	Gifts of Healing	Pastors	
Giving	Miracles	Teachers	
Leading	Prophecy		
Showing Mercy	Distinguishing of spirits		
	Tongues		
	Interpretation of tongues		
	Prophets		
	Teachers		
	Helps		
	Administrators		

PURPOSES OF THESE GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

For the unity and service of the body of believers	For the common good For the edification, exhortation and consolation of the members	For unity For the equip. of the saints For building up the body	For serving one another
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OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING GIFTS LISTED HERE

- 1. Although there did not seem to be any spiritual problems concerning these gifts in the other churches where gifts are mentioned, according to I Corinthians 14, these gifts were being seriously misused by believers in the Corinthian Church who were very worldly in nature. We note in these chapters that there was confusion in their use, there was some competition with each other in their use and people who were not authorized to do so were falsely using some of them in the mixed assembly of believers.**
- 2. We also note that, in this total list of gifts, some of the gifts, especially some of those mentioned in I Corinthians 12, had purposes that were limited to that day and age and therefore those gifts would pass away before the end of that first century. These gifts were those known as the “sign gifts.” They were necessary in that day when the preaching of the Gospel was still in its beginning stages and there also was no written New Testament. This subject will be mentioned later in the discussion of I Corinthians 13:8-13.**
- 3. Also, the gift of APOSTLESHIP, mentioned in I Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11, would not continue once the last of the Apostles (John) died very late in the 1st Century. That was a special and limited office given only to a few men, including the Apostle Paul, that had special purposes in that day when the Gospel was first introduced and Apostolic authority and power was needed to validate the message they were preaching.**
- 4. We also note that the gift of MIRACLES, which was the ability to lay hands on people and miraculously heal them, was specifically called one of “THE SIGNS OF A TRUE APOSTLE” in II Corinthians 12:12.**
- 5. The remaining gifts mentioned in these passages are mostly still given by the Holy Spirit to members of the Body of Christ and are important in the relationships Christians have in that Body.**

6. **These gifts are the ones that the Spirit bestows when people have been genuinely saved and are prepared to take their place in the Body of believers. In various societies unsaved people have imitated some of the gifts but their imitations are not of God and have no relationship at all to the work of the Holy Spirit.**
7. **We also note in both Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12 that believers have differing gifts and that one gift is not better or more valuable to the Body than another. Neither is the believer who uses a gift better than another believer in the Body. There is thus no basis for pride or arrogance when the Holy Spirit bestows differing gifts in the Body of Christ and some gifts seem smaller and less significant than other gifts.**

THE MEANING OF TERMS IDENTIFYING THE GIFTS

1. THE WORD OF WISDOM

I Corinthians 12:8

- a. **This is the gift of speaking or communicating God's spiritual wisdom. The "wisdom" spoken of here either has to do with NEW revelations of the Truth given in that day or it can refer rather to the WHOLE body of revealed Truth given through the ages.**
- b. **We note that "wisdom" is one of the main themes of the book of I Corinthians. We see it, for instance, in chapters one to four where it is contrasted with worldly wisdom or the wisdom which unsaved men possess.**
- c. **The "WORD OF WISDOM" therefore would be the special gift given through the Holy Spirit for the revealing of revealed truth as the necessary basis and object of the faith of the believers.**
- d. **We note that, at this time, there had only been four books of the New Testament written.....James (45 A.D.), Galatians (48 A.D.) and I and II Thessalonians (52 and 53 A.D.). Perhaps none of these were actually distributed outside the area to which they were directed to the more distant churches.**

- e. **In chapter 4 of I Corinthians, Paul seems to indicate that the “MYSTERIES” of God, which seem to be the heart of this “wisdom”, belonged especially to the Apostles themselves.**
- f. **We also note that while revelations from God were freely given to the Apostles in that day, especially for the writing of the New Testament Scriptures, once the Apostolic Age had ended and the New Testament had been completed, there would be NO NEW revelations given from God. His Word would be complete and NO NEW revelations would be needed. Therefore, anyone claiming to be receiving new revelations after that time would be a false teacher, and his teachings would be contrary to the contrary to the Scriptures.**

2. THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE I Corinthians 12:8

- a. **This is the gift of speaking or communicating spiritual KNOWLEDGE by both knowing and understanding the revelations of God in Old and New Testament times, and then being able to effectively and spiritually communicating this knowledge to others who lacked this knowledge.**
- b. **This knowledge was given to spiritually mature TEACHERS (I Corinthians 12:28).**
- c. **It is clear that no new revelations were given to these TEACHERS, but they needed this gift to effectively communicate, without error, the Truth that God had revealed to others as God helped them to understand it clearly. Their teaching would not only enlighten the believers as to the Truth, but it would also guard them against falling into false teaching which was already making its appearance everywhere (SEE: Galatians)**
- d. **Though our situation today, with our completed Scriptures, is different from the situation of that day, this gift is still present in the ministry of those who are gifted as teachers today.**

3. FAITH

I Corinthians 12:8

- a. We first note that this is not **SAVING FAITH** which all of them presumably already had. Nor is it the **MIRACLE WORKING FAITH** of Matthew 17:19-21 which was limited to the Apostles and a few other people in leadership positions in the early church.
- b. Charles Hodge believes that the **FAITH** spoken of here as a gift refers to the need of the believers for the very high degree of trust in God they would need to go through the most difficult and perilous situations they were facing in that day at the hands of the Romans and other enemies of the Lord and His Gospel.

4. HEALING

I Corinthians 12:9

- a. While the gift of **MIRACLES** could include the raising of the dead (**SEE: Acts 9:36-43**), this gift has to do only with the healing of physical diseases (**SEE: Acts 4:29, 30**). Like the gift of **MIRACLES**, the use of this gift would prove that the Apostles and the few other leaders truly had been sent by God and that the message they preached was both true and was to be believed and followed.
- b. This gift also seems limited to the Apostles and a few other leaders in the church and ceased as the Apostolic Age ended at the close of that first century. Christians today can still pray that people will be healed from diseases but don't have the ability to do the healing themselves.

5. THE EFFECTING OF MIRACLES I Corinthians 12:10

- a. Though this gift included **HEALING**, it goes beyond the gift of **HEALING** as it extended into all areas of life including raising people from the dead (**SEE: Acts 9:36-43**), the saving of an entire ship's crew under impossible circumstances (**SEE: Acts 27:21-34-44**) and others.

- b. **The use of MIRACLES had an even greater effect than HEALING for it's spectacular nature would impress upon skeptical and often antagonistic listeners that the one doing the miracle was truly sent by God and that God wanted the spiritual needs of the listeners to be fully met through the message the miracle worker brought.**
- c. **Like the other gifts, this gift was never to be used for personal gain or glory, nor was it to take away in any way from attention to God Himself by those who witnessed it and heard the message that accompanied it. (SEE: Acts 14:8-18)**

6. PROPHECY

I Corinthians 12:10

- a. **This gift seems to specifically refer to the PROPHETS in their own midst (SEE: I Corinthians, chapter 14) who had the gift from God of receiving little bits of new revealed Truth in the day when, without the New Testament to read and study, the believers needed the special edification and encouragement of having God speak to them through these prophets with these revelations.**
- b. **It is clear that these revelations were not part of the New Testament books/epistles themselves, but were verbal revelations from God limited to a single Body of Believers.**
- c. **The difference between these PROPHETS and the NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS was that the PROPHETS shared revelations that were for temporary use and encouragement in the Body of Believers, while the NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS wrote infallibly as they recorded the eternal Truth inspired by God in the New Testament. Their writings would forever stand as the Word of God.**

7. THE DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

I Corinthians 12:10

- a. **It is clear from I Timothy 4:1-7; II Peter 2:1-3; I John 2:28; I John 4:1-5 and many other passages that there would be many**

false teachers and false ideas in their day. It is even indicated that some of these might arise from “among them”.

- b. In that day, when there was no written New Testament, it was essential that there be among them persons who would have the gift of determining what was false and what was true....what was from God and what was not. These gifted people would then be able to warn the believers when false spirits appeared.**
- c. Though this gift had a very urgent purpose in that day, it is a gift that is still present today and is needed in the Church. In addition, we have the complete Word of God to help us TEST the teachings that come and this Word of God will help us in discerning between the true and the false.**

8. TONGUES

I Corinthians 12:10

- a. The nature of this gift is set forth in Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4-11 and I Corinthians, chapters 12-14.**
- b. These TONGUES involved languages which were then in existence that were known to some of the listeners but perhaps were not naturally known to those who were gifted to speak in those languages.**
- c. The languages mentioned in the phrases “new tongues” and “other tongues” are the same thing. Whether it was on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12), or in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:46) or with the followers of John the Baptist (Acts 19:6) it was still known languages the Holy Spirit was enabling them to speak. This is also true in I Corinthians, chapters 12-14.**
- d. This means that when the spoke in TONGUES, wherever they were, they were not simply babbling with strange and unintelligible sounds, but rather their speech was intelligible to those who could understand the language they were speaking, and what they said could then be interpreted for others.**

- e. **Since TONGUES were for that day, the problem in that church was that TONGUES were being used when there was no one present who could interpret what was being spoken. Their selfish spirit caused them to speak in these forbidden circumstances even though the result of their speaking was to create confusion, disorder and a poor testimony to the unsaved who might be visiting their assembly. (SEE: I Corinthians 14:33, 40).**
- f. **Paul also stressed that TONGUES were not to be forbidden, but that they were not the most vital and effective gift to be used in the assembly of believers.**
- g. **Until the Word of God in the New Testament was complete TONGUES were still to be used. However, it is clear WHY they were to cease once the New Testament was finished. Their continued use might not only have caused confusion but it would also tempt the later believers in the assembly to resort to TONGUES as supposed new revelations from God rather than turning to the written and inspired and final and eternal Word of God.**
- h. **After about 125 A.D., we find no more use of this gift.**
- i. **It is not easy to explain why the Corinthian Church, one of the most worldly and rebellious churches of that day, seemed to be the only church where this Gift of the Spirit named TONGUES was present.**
 - 1) **Even in the Jerusalem Church, founded after the Day of Pentecost when TONGUES were first used, there is no mention that TONGUES were ever part of their church life and worship.**
 - 2) **Also, throughout the Book of Acts, though there are two other instances given where TONGUES were spoken (Acts, chapters 10 and 19), there is still no reference to TONGUES being used in church life and worship in most places in Asia and Europe.**

- 3) Also in all of the epistles, Pauline and otherwise, apart from I Corinthians itself, there is no written mention of the use of TONGUES in church life and worship.
- j. Some suggest that the choice of the Corinthian Church for the use of this gift in church life and worship had to do both with its place as a strategic launching place for the spread of the Gospel into western Europe, and also as the place where some of the books of the New Testament might have been written.
- k. **THIS RAISES THE QUESTION:** How can we know that TONGUES and PROPHECY and KNOWLEDGE have already ceased and are no longer to be present today either in individual lives or in church life and worship?
- 1) We find the answer to this question clearly taught and explained in I Corinthians 13:8-13.
- a) In this passage, in vs. 9, 11 and 12, Paul speaks of the limitations of their knowledge of God's Truth and the handicap this was to them. This would seem to correspond to the lack of a comprehensive and completed revelation from God, THE NEW TESTAMENT, which they could use as their final source of all Truth and authority in all matters of doctrine and practice.
- b) In this section, Paul speaks of the time when the "PERFECT" would come (13:10) and these named gifts would no longer be valuable or needed. The clearest explanation seems to be that the "PERFECT" refers to the written NEW TESTAMENT itself which we know was completed through John in about 95 A.D.
- c) At that time, these gifts then were to cease forever and the "PERECT would perfectly meet the needs of believers everywhere instead. The entire New Testament would have been available by about 150 A.D., and this period (or even before) is the

time when history seems to record that these gifts ceased to be used/present.

- 2) In answering those who insist that the “PERFECT” refers to eternity rather than to the completion of the New Testament, we note that 13:8-13 makes it clear (vs. 13) that FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE will still be present after these gifts have passed away. Since FAITH and HOPE will not be present in eternity, it is clear that Paul is referring to the passing away of those gifts during the Church Age rather than in eternity.
- l. The fact that many Christians both in history and today have not been spiritual enough either to understand or use the Word of God properly, and even go into false teaching in spite of the clear teaching which God’s Word gives, does not change the PERFECT character of the Word of God. For those who use it correctly and spiritually, it is the final answer to every possible need and question we have. No other revelations are necessary.
 - m. There are some who teach that while TONGUES may not be needed or permitted anymore in church life, it is still needed in the PRIVATE worship of individual Christians.
 - 1) They claim that this private use of TONGUES gives them comfort and encouragement. They admit that such use usually involves babbling which they might not possibly understand, but it is still spiritual worship for them.
 - 2) The main questions for them ought to be: Is there any evidence at all that TONGUES were ever used in the New Testament times in such a way, AND where in the Word of God do they find justification for such use when the Scriptures clearly teach that this gift is no longer present.

9. THE INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES. I Cor. 12:10

- a. This gift was the ability to listen to someone speak in TONGUES and then to clearly interpret what the person had said to the body of believers.

- b. It seems clear in the Scriptures that the gift of interpretation in church life and worship was given to someone else than the one speaking in Tongues. For the most part, the ones speaking in Tongues did not understand what they were saying. The exception might have been on the Day of Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2 when the disciples themselves spoke in Tongues and no interpreters are mentioned.**
- c. The reason for giving this gift to someone else than the one speaking in Tongues may have been to prevent someone from pretending to be speaking from God but actually not speaking from Him at all. The use of a second person would enable them to check/confirm that the message was really from God.'**

10. TEACHERS

I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11

- a. In contrast to the Apostles and Prophets, these men were not inspired to either receive or utter new revelations from God, but were enabled to clearly share with the members of the body of believers the revelations already given. They taught these people for their understanding and application of the written Scriptures. (John 14:26)**
- b. This ministry, of course, continues through today and is still a vitally needed ministry. It may be exercised by the Pastor or other members of the congregation so gifted.**

11. PASTORS

Ephesians 4:11

- a. This position in the Church is called by several different names in the New Testament: Pastor, Shepherd, Elder, Overseer and Bishop. Though some have taught that each of these titles represent different offices, the New Testament seems to clearly teach that these titles simply speak of the different functions of the same person in the work of God.**

- b. The New Testament Pastor was the leader of the flock, with the PRIMARY responsibility for the care and teaching of the members. (SEE: Hebrews 13:17). He not only held a place of high honor and respect, (SEE: I Timothy 5:17-20; Hebrews 7:7) but the spiritual standards for holding that office were also very high. (SEE: I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4). He could be disciplined by the Church for some great failure in his life, but only with great care (SEE: I Timothy 5:19).**

12. DEACONS

Acts 6:1-8; I Timothy 3:8-13

- a. This functions and responsibilities of this office may be compared with those men appointed in the Old Testament to assist Moses in the administrative and spiritual responsibilities of leading the nation.**
 - 1) In Exodus, chapter 18, when Moses was overburdened with administrative responsibilities, on the advice of his father-in-law, Jethro, judges were appointed in every tribe to take over these administrative responsibilities.**
 - 2) In Numbers, chapter 11, when Moses was overburdened with spiritual problems and responsibilities in the nation and wanted go give up, God led him to appoint 70 elders of Israel to help him with this need.**
 - 3) The ministries of the New Testament deacons in working with the pastor seem to correspond to these two Old Testament functions of the helpers of Moses.**
- b. The standards for the choice of these New Testament deacons were also very high (SEE: Acts 6:3, 8; I Timothy 3:8-13). They were to have the same faultless/spotless testimony before the body of believers as the Pastor. As was true with the office of PASTORS, their failure to adequately meet these qualifications might disqualify them from holding this office of DEACONS.**

13. OTHER TERMS DESCRIBING THE SPIRIT'S GIFTS.

- a. In Romans 12:3-8 and I Peter 4:10, 11, there are other gifts of the Spirit mentioned such as GIVING, SERVING and MERCY. These gifts are also important as they are present in the body of believers, for they speak of the sacrificial nature of any work for the Lord.**
- b. We note that GIVING was one of the characteristics of the Macedonian Christians. This is especially mentioned in II Corinthians 8:1-5 as they, in contrast to the selfish believers in Corinth, willingly, sacrificially and joyfully responded to the needs of the impoverished believers in Jerusalem.**
- c. The gifts of SERVING and MERCY show the same compassion, when wholeheartedly exercised in the body of believers, show the same compassion for others and willingness to sacrifice for others with humility and selflessness.**

CONCLUSIONS

- 1. The Holy Spirit is still giving most of these gifts to the people of God today. These gifts are varied, but when all of the believers and leaders in the assembly of believers humbly, spiritually, properly and fully are exercising their gifts in the body of believers, all of the needs of that body of believers will be met.**
- 2, I Corinthians, chapters 12-14, makes it clear that ALL believers are given one or more gifts by the Spirit and that ALL gifts of the Spirit are equally important in the work of God though they may seem to some to be small and insignificant.**
- 3. It must be emphasized that the possession and exercise of spiritual gifts demands humility in their exercise. It will be always true that some of the more public gifts can be a temptation to pride and arrogance in people who exercise them. They may feel that they are more important than others with less visible gifts.**

- 4. Christians are also to be joyously content with the gifts God has given them rather than envying others and wishing that they could have the gifts of others. It would be envy of others with other more public gifts that might cause some to never really dedicate their own gifts to the Lord, then use them with all their hearts to the glory of the Lord and be spiritually satisfied with what God has made them to be and their place in the body of believers.**

- 5. No matter how many gifts might be present in the lives of the believers in a church, if there is no unity and harmony in the life of the church and in the use of these gifts, there will never be the blessing of God on that work. SEE: Ephesians 4:1-3. The unity and harmony of the body of believers is to be a very high priority in the life of each member of that body and is to be guarded carefully against the clever temptations of the evil one. In the Corinthian Church, Satan had clearly ruled in church life and relationships, for unity seemed to be completely lacking. This took away from the blessing of the presence and use of the Gifts of the Spirit.**

II. THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EVANGELISM

INTRODUCTION

- 1. To many people evangelism is simply a matter of using the right methods with the right people at the right time and place and coming to a right conclusion in the evangelistic process. In their eyes, if everything is properly carried out, then people will be saved. To them, it is just as simple as that.**
- 2. It is obvious that God's primary method of reaching out to the lost is to use human instrumentality in the carrying of the Gospel and the proclaiming of the message of salvation. Even those who say that they were brought to Christ through the reading of the Scriptures need to recognize that the Bible they read was translated and printed by human instruments.**
- 3. In the eyes of God, however, these are only human instruments and no credit whatever belongs to them for any results that come. For them to take the credit would be to ignore the true basis and nature of winning the lost to Christ.**
- 4. While people using wise and careful methods and approaches are important in winning the lost, too often people ignore the fact that bringing people to Christ is primarily a spiritual matter rather than simply human efforts that are faithfully and diligently used in serving God. From beginning to end, it is the Holy Spirit that is at work accomplishing God's purposes in the lives of those being reached and bringing eternal results.**
- 5. If the Holy Spirit is not completely involved in the process of evangelism, both in the life of the one doing the witnessing of the Gospel and in the lives of those he is seeking to reach, the results that come will not truly be counted by God as eternal results. No matter how the people mentioned before count or receive credit**

for the results, results coming from purely human efforts will only be man's results and NOT GOD'S.

6. Our purpose in this part of our study about the place and work of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is to see from the Scriptures the true place of the one seeking to evangelize the lost, and the essential work of the Holy Spirit both in his own life and in the lives of those he seeks to reach with the Gospel of salvation.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE SERVANT OF THE LORD IN REACHING THE LOST.

1. PAUL'S OWN TESTIMONY. SEE: I Corinthians 3:4-10

- a. The carnal attitude of the Corinthians in exalting Paul, Peter and Apollos. SEE: I Corinthians 1:10-12; 3:1-3
- b. Paul's statement of his true position in the work of the Gospel as a servant and steward (one entrusted with responsibility) and the place that God Himself occupies in that work. SEE: I Corinthians 3:5-8; 4:1, 2.
- c. He draws the conclusion that they are therefore to relate everything spiritual that has come to them TO GOD AND HIS WORKING rather than to Apollos, Peter or himself.

2. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN EQUIPPING AND PREPARING US.

- a. We see in Acts 2:41-47 what happened in the lives of both the Apostles and the ordinary believers after the Holy Spirit first came upon them on the Day of Pentecost.
 - 1) Before the day of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the followers of the Lord were hiding in fear as they waited for the Spirit to come. The Apostles had been trained in methods and approaches by the Lord, but had no confidence

- 2) **After the coming of the Spirit into their lives, however, both the Apostles and all of the ordinary believers now became bold for the Lord and the Lord began the work, by His Spirit, of multiplying their numbers with true believers as they all fearlessly reached out to the lost. (SEE: 2:47)**
 - 3) **Whatever their gifts and talents might have been, and however great their numbers, only the Holy Spirit indwelling their lives could equip, prepare and use them for evangelism.**
- b. **We see this again in Ephesians 4:1-16 where the ordinary believers were not only united in a close bond by the work of the Spirit in their lives, but also how the Spirit used the leaders among them, who themselves had been called and equipped by the Holy Spirit, to equip and prepare them for “ministry” for the Lord.**
 - c. **We see it again in I Thessalonians 1:5-9 where the Thessalonians with very few trained leaders, were first reached with the Gospel by the power of the Spirit working through Paul, and then were prepared and equipped themselves by the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit to carry the Gospel throughout their region.**
 - d. **CONCLUSION. We may feel very inadequate and unworthy to be so used by God, but if we submit to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and totally depend on Him to work through us, God can use us in winning the lost. In our total dependence on Him and His working through us, He will give us the confidence and wisdom we will need to serve Him with our lives.**

3. THE SPIRIT’S WORK IN EMPOWERING US.

- a. **The promise of the Lord to His followers concerning the empowering work of the Holy Spirit in their lives in Acts 1:8 is a promise that applies to every child of God in whatever capacity God chooses to use them in His work. In ourselves, we also are just as weak and inadequate to do anything for Him as those disciples and Paul (SEE: I Thessalonians 1:5) when that promise was given, but with the spiritual strength that He gives we find that we can set forth to do everything He plans for our lives**
- b. **We are therefore to both be submissive to His work in our lives and also to be totally dependent upon Him in any work God gives us to do for Him. The temptation will be to use the energy of the flesh instead.**
- c. **It is important that we humbly acknowledge, when He chooses to use us, that we were totally inadequate in ourselves but that His power and work accomplished everything. The glory therefore belongs to Him and not at all to us.**

4. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN LEADING AND GUIDING IN EVANGELISM.

- a. **In Acts, there were several instances when God's people were guided by the Spirit in ways that they might not have anticipated or even welcomed.**
 - 1) **When Philip went to work with the SAMARITANS in Acts, chapter 8, this must have seemed strange to some people, for the Jews and the Samaritans were not on good terms and the Apostles themselves had apparently not been very happy when the Lord took them there in John, chapter 4. However, Philip's evangelistic mission in Samaria was clearly the leading of the Holy Spirit in his life and the blessing of the Lord was with him as he was used by the Spirit to evangelize there.**

- 2) Philip also experienced this leading/directing work of the Spirit when he was led, also in Acts, chapter 8, to go to the desert to reach the Ethiopian Eunuch with the Gospel. He could not have foreseen the importance of this witness as the Eunuch then apparently carried the Gospel to that part of Africa after his conversion.
 - 3) The widespread carrying of the Gospel to other areas that came when the believers were “scattered” through persecution in Acts, chapter 8 is also an example of the Spirit’s intervention in the Jerusalem situation as He used those difficult times to lead ordinary lay people to evangelize in ways they had not planned or thought possible.
 - 4) Paul Himself experienced the leading work of the Holy Spirit, in Acts 16, to evangelize in Europe when, from, a human standpoint, he might have felt that that work could wait while he accomplished much more in western Asia. Had the Spirit not intervened in that way, it might have been many years before any witness of the Gospel would have penetrated into Europe.
- b. In our own lives, when we are tender to the leading and directing work of the Holy Spirit, He will guide us in the exact choice of the ones to whom we are to witness in every possible kind of situation.
- 1) Seldom would we know in advance exactly what these opportunities might be until He Himself opens them up to us and leads us in carrying them out.
 - 2) To approach these situations in our own wisdom would only produce fleshly efforts and results, for many of those we ourselves would choose to witness to are either not yet ready for the witness of the Gospel or might even be antagonistic to it.

- c. **Though we may not always see immediate results, we can trust the Holy Spirit when He has guided us in witnessing and we have been obedient to His leading. He will continue to work in the hearts of those to whom we have witnessed and will bring forth fruit in His time.**

5. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN GOING AHEAD OF US TO OPEN, PREPARE AND WORK IN THE HEARTS OF THE LOST.

- a. **In His leading and guidance, He will lead us to PREPARED hearts so that we can at least “sow the seed” in their hearts and lives. Another may still need to “water the seed” (SEE: I Corinthians 3:5-10), but He will have led us to do our part in seeing them come to the Lord.**
- b. **We constantly need to remind ourselves that we ourselves cannot PENETRATE the hearts of the lost no matter how zealous we might be for the Lord or how fervently we might do His work in pleading with the lost people we deal with. Only the Holy Spirit can penetrate their hearts both to prepare them for the witness we will give them and then to move them to take into their hearts the message of the Gospel we share**
- c. **Even when people do not seem to respond immediately when we have witnessed to them, the Holy Spirit will still be using the Word He has implanted in their hearts to cause them to still remember and consider what we have shared with them long after we have left them.**

6. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN MOTIVATING US FOR EVANGELISM AND SERVICE FOR HIM.

- a. **As we study II Corinthians 4 and 5, we note that Paul puts strong stress on the MOTIVATIONS that characterized his life and ministry. The Corinthians had apparently accused him of serving God for the wrong reasons. They thought**

that he only wanted the glory for himself and was selfish in his service for God. Paul had to defend himself.

- b. In his defense of himself, Paul mentions many things about the spiritual motivations of his life and how these things were the true reasons why he was serving the Lord.
- c. Some of these spiritual motivations in his life were:
 - 1) To be approved/accepted by God 5:9
 - 2) The fear of the Lord 5:9-11
 - 3) The love of Christ 5:14
 - 4) To manifest Christ (SEE:Phil.1:20, 21) 5:15
 - 5) To fulfill his committed responsibilities 5:18-20
 - 6) All that the Lord has done for him 5:21
- d. All of these motivations are spiritual in nature and were the result of the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart replacing any selfish and fleshly reasons for serving the Lord with true spiritual ones.
- e. These same motivations apply to our lives today in any service we do for Him. In ourselves, we would be selfish and reluctant to witness to others and to do other things in carrying out His purposes for us. But when the Spirit is moving in our hearts, he stirs in us the right motivations.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF THOSE WHOM WE ARE SEEKING TO REACH WITH THE GOSPEL

1. **THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN RESTRAINING THE LOST IN HOW DEEP THEY CAN GO INTO SIN AND TURNING AWAY FROM GOD.**
 - a. Even in our unsaved state, before we ever hear the Gospel, the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives. In our sinful lost condition, were it not for His constant **RESTRAINING WORK**, we would plunge deeper and

- b. In Genesis 6:3, God speaks of His “striving” work in the hearts of the people of the world to keep them from plunging further into sin and turning forever away from Him.**
- c. Romans 1:18-32 indicates the same thing as God moves on the hearts of men and women to bring them to repentance and acceptance of the Truth. II Thessalonians 2:6 teaches the same thing as it teaches us that the Holy Spirit would be a restraining influence in the world until the “end times” come and He is taken away.**
- d. It is only when they have consistently resisted every effort of God to bring them to the Truth and have finally turned away from Him that God removes this restraining influence of the Holy Spirit.**
- e. We can often see in our witness for Christ both the restraining work of the Holy Spirit and also the removal of it in the lives of those we are seeking to reach with the Gospel.**
 - 1) We often can see great tenderness and openness of heart in some of those we seek to reach with the Gospel. Though they might not respond right away to the Truth we share with them, we know that they are seriously considering the Truth and will someday make a sincere heart decision to trust and follow Him. It is the Spirit’s restraining work in their hearts that gives them this approach to the Truth.**
 - 2) In others, we see a total hardness of heart and indifference to anything we might share with them.**

We cannot say that God has given up on them, but it is clear that they have rejected any of the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives to prepare them for the Truth.

2. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN STRONGLY CONVICTING AND CONVINCING THE LOST OF THE SINS IN THEIR LIVES AND OF THEIR NEED FOR A SAVIOR FROM SIN.

- a. It is a humbling experience to admit one's own sinful condition before God and our need for a Savior from that sin. Many are unwilling to face this truth in their lives and there are even some Christian leaders who teach that we should not emphasize this in the witness that we give to the unsaved.**
- b. It is clear that this Truth is an essential part of the Gospel, and without the acknowledgement of this Truth a person cannot really have a reason/valid basis for coming to Christ. Such people are likely to substitute their own worthiness to come before God for this Truth and altogether miss finding Him as their Savior.**
- c. SEE ALSO: Romans 1:18-3:18; Ephesians 2:1-3, 11, 12; Philippians 3:4-9. In these passages, the sinful and lost condition of everyone in mankind is clearly taught and there can be no further progress with the sharing of the Gospel until this Truth is accepted and hearts are humbled to acknowledge this before God.**
- d. In John 16:7-11, Jesus taught that laying a deep conviction of sin upon the hearts of unsaved people is one of the primary ministries of the Holy Spirit. Without this preparing work of the Holy Spirit, we would never really see any reason to put our faith in Christ and find salvation in Him.**

- 1) **We see this demonstrated on the Day of Pentecost (SEE: Acts, chapter 2) when Peter was preaching to the Jews in Jerusalem. Many of them might even have been among those who helped crucify the Lord. With the Spirit's help, they were deeply convicted of their sins and put their faith in Christ.**
- 2) **We see this again in the life of Paul when, as a proud Pharisee, he met the Lord on the road to Damascus and was humbled by his own sinfulness and brought to the saving knowledge of Christ. SEE ALSO: Philippians 3:4-6, 7-9. It was the Spirit's convicting work in his heart that humbled him and brought him to this point.**

3. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN ENLIGHTENING THEIR SINFUL HEARTS WITH TRUTH.

- a. **Faith in Christ must be based upon a clear knowledge of and acceptance of the Truth of the Scriptures concerning WHO HE IS, WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR US and OUR CLEAR RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE HIM in salvation.**
- b. **In ourselves, using human wisdom (SEE: I Corinthians, chapter 2), we would not understand the Truth of the Scriptures concerning salvation or any other subject.**
- c. **Though this truth is not mentioned in the passage, Nicodemus in John 3:1-21 has come to Jesus as a Pharisee and teacher of the Law with no understanding of his need of the "new birth" in Christ. Between then and John 19:39-42, when he apparently was a believer and had come to help bury Jesus, the Holy Spirit had been working in his heart to show him the truth and bring him to the saving knowledge of Christ. Only the Holy Spirit could work in this way.**

- d. **The experience of Paul in Acts, chapter 9 clearly shows that it was not just the vision of Christ that he saw on the road that brought Paul to saving faith in Christ. It was also the work of the Holy Spirit in clarifying all that he had heard from listening to Stephen and others and convincing him of the Truth.**
- e. **In enlightening us with the Truth, the Holy Spirit not only bases His enlightening work on the Word of God itself, but He also then gives us clear understanding of God’s Word and applies it to our hearts and lives so that we respond to its Truth.**
- f. **In His final meeting with the disciples before He was crucified, the Lord emphasized that it would be the Holy Spirit who would lead them into all Truth and would give them clear understanding of that Truth. SEE: John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13.**

4. THE SPIRIT’S WORK IN “DRAWING” THEM TO CHRIST.

- a. **It is not enough to be convicted of our sinful lost condition and to be enlightened with the Truth that we need to understand. There must also be a deep motivation stirred within us to act upon that Truth and to respond to all that we have been taught.**
- b. **In ourselves, dead in trespasses and sins (SEE: Ephesians 2:1-3), we would have no such motivation in ourselves. Unless the Holy Spirit moved within our hearts and exerted influence to cause us to respond, we would remain hopelessly lost.**
- c. **SEE: John 6:44; Acts 2:41; Romans 3:10, 11; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2:11, 12; Philippians 3:7-9. In these passages, it is clear that this motivating work of the Holy Spirit is necessary in our salvation, for without it we would be incapable to responding.**

- d. **We see this in the crowd of those who heard the Gospel on the Day of Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2. We see it again in the conversion of Paul in Acts, chapter 9 when Paul, who hated the Lord and was as far from being saved as any person could be, was completely changed in attitude and approach to the Lord and was gloriously saved.**
- e. **In this motivating work, the Holy Spirit first causes us to be tender, open and willing to hear and respond to the Gospel of Christ, and then He helps us in our response.**
- f. **This motivating work of the Holy Spirit does not take away from our own clear responsibility to respond and to put our faith in Christ (SEE: Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Romans 10:8-10), but it emphasizes how the Holy Spirit helps us in the response that we make to the Gospel Truth.**

5. THE SPIRIT’S WORK IN REGENERATING THEM AND MAKING THEM “NEW CREATURES” IN CHRIST.

- a. **In John 3:1-21, there is a long conversation between the Lord and Nicodemus about the way to heaven. Nicodemus was an outstanding example of a man who not only had lived perfectly before the Lord as far as the LAW of Moses was concerned, but who also was a faithful teacher of others to help them live the same way.**
- b. **Nicodemus was totally dedicated to living his life perfectly before God, using self-control and discipline to avoid and overcome any possible sin in his life. He honestly believed that he could stand before God and be approved by God for his good works. Jesus had to show him that, apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit through faith in the Lord Himself as his only means of salvation, he was totally lost in his sins before God. As such, he had no hope at all of true**

relationship with God or of going to heaven when he would die.

- c. The truth that the Lord Jesus taught him is that all efforts of the flesh to achieve righteousness are still only of the flesh, no matter how sincerely a person might pursue righteousness that way. This is BECAUSE the old nature is still hopelessly sinful and unacceptable to God. Spiritual righteousness can only come through a SPIRITUAL REBIRTH.**
- d. True righteousness is therefore entirely based on our spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ through repentance for our sins and genuine heart faith in Christ as our only means of salvation. It then is finalized by the REGENERATING work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.**
- e. This REGENERATING work of the Holy Spirit in our lives gives us a new nature and turns our lives completely around as we obey what God has taught us. SEE: II Corinthians 5:17-20**
 - 1) In Acts 2, vs. 41-47 we see how this regenerating work of the Holy Spirit completely changed the lives and directions of those who were saved. They are not only now totally devoted to the one they had formerly hated, but they are also now totally devoted to each other.**
 - 2) We see the same change in the life of the Apostle Paul when he was saved and regenerated by the Holy Spirit in Acts, chapter 9. He also has an entirely new and changed relationship with the Lord and with His people.**
 - 3) In I Thessalonians 1, vs. 2-10, we see the same miraculous change in the lives of those who had been saved in that Roman city of Thessalonika.**

f. There are those who believe that this regenerating work of the Holy Spirit completely eradicates the old nature in us.

1) Unfortunately, the Scriptures do not teach this. To the contrary, the Scriptures teach that, after salvation and the coming of the new nature into our lives, there is constant warfare between the old and new natures in us and that we need constant victory over the old nature in daily living with the help of the Holy Spirit.

2) SEE: Galatians 5:13, 16, 17; Ephesians 4:22-32; Ephesians 6:10-18; I John 4:4.

6. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN SEALING THEM IN SALVATION FOREVER.

a. One of the problems that many Christians have after they have truly trusted Christ for their salvation is their lack of ASSURANCE that they are saved forever and never need to make that decision again. Some Christians reaffirm their faith in Christ again and again and still have no assurance that they are really saved.

b. There are two bases for the ASSURANCE of our salvation: the Promises of God in His Word and the Sealing Work of the Holy Spirit.

1) Perhaps one of the strongest promises in the New Testament is found in the words of the Lord in John 10:28-30, where He promises that His sheep will “never perish, neither will anyone pluck them out of my hand.”

a) In other words, once we have this relationship with Him in salvation, we can never lose it.

7. THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN BAPTIZING THEM INTO THE SPIRITUAL BODY OF CHRIST.

- a. Though some teach different ideas about the meaning of this baptism of the Holy Spirit, including the idea that this means that we have some special experience or anointing by the Spirit AFTER we are saved, the Scriptural meaning of the term means that, at the time of our salvation and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, we are brought into the spiritual Body of Christ with others.**
- b. We find this teaching in such passages as I Corinthians 12:12, 13 and Galatians 3:26-28.**
- c. In its spiritual meaning, it means that Christ's spiritual Body is composed of all believers from all over the world who are united in one Body by the Spirit.**
- d. In its practical sense, it means that all Christians are also to be members of a LOCAL body of believers with whom we have a close relationship and with whom we do the work of God on the local level. This is the emphasis of such passages as Romans 12-8 and I Corinthians 12.**

CONCLUSIONS

- 1. These things are what we can expect and depend on both as workers who are seeking to reach the lost with the Gospel and as those who need the saving grace of the Lord. All of these different ministries of the Holy Spirit are necessary and have a vital place in our lives.**
 - a. As workers for Him, we are taught that we are totally dependent upon the Spirit's help and leading in any work that we do for Him, and that, in ourselves, we have no**

- 4. It is recognized that we Christians have all kinds of personalities and talents. Some, who tend to be somewhat shy and withdrawing in personality, may be tempted to feel that there is no possible way that God would expect them to join others in reaching the lost with the Gospel.**
 - a. We need to understand that, as we live our lives before Him, we can absolutely trust God with our lives and all that we are in personalities and abilities. In His wisdom, God does not use us all in the same ways, but, as we yield to Him, there will be some ways that He will both choose to use us and will fit us for that task.**
 - b. Since this is true, we both need to accept our own responsibility to be involved in the great work of God, to find out how He will choose to involve us and then get involved in this labor of reaching others.**
 - c. Though we may feel that we will always have severe limitations in what we can do and that there is not much that can be done about these limitations, as we yield our lives to Him we will also see Him making some necessary changes in our lives to better equip us for possible use by Him. He does this by the Spirit's working in our yielded lives. These changes may deal with some of the very limitations that have caused us to doubt our usefulness in serving God in reaching out to others with the Gospel.**

III. THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR STUDY, UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION OF THE WORD OF GOD TO OURSELVES AND OTHERS

INTRODUCTION

- 1, Some Christians approach the Word of God with a purely legalistic and mechanical approach.**
 - a. They know that God wants them to have daily time with Him in His Word and that this means that they are to diligently read His Word, spending a set amount of time daily in this study.**
 - b. They also may be following the rules of their youth group or church or the Bible Study they attend and must even report back to other people whether or not they have fulfilled their obligations in this area of their lives.**
 - c. Therefore, they faithfully read selected portions of Scriptures each day, perhaps even several chapters, and spend the required amount of time in their reading so that they are satisfied that they have set aside the required time with the Lord in their daily lives in His Word. They walk away from this time in the Word satisfied from a human standpoint that they have done all they are supposed to do and God is therefore pleased with their approach.**
 - d. However, this type of approach to God's Word has denied them the deep spiritual benefits that God wanted them to derive from this time in His Word, and the real spiritual satisfaction that a true approach to His Word would bring. They have received little spiritual nourishment from His Word, the needs in their lives have not been addressed and dealt with and His Word has not really made much of an impact on their lives.**

- e. **THE ADDITIONAL PROBLEM WITH THIS APPROACH IS** that they might never really even clearly have understood what they have read, and have received no real spiritual profit from it. They have merely satisfied what they believe are God's requirements and the requirements of other Christians for their daily Christian life.
2. God has another and more important plan for our approach to His Word. It is God's own desire, as we approach and study His Word, that we should **MEDITATE** on it, **UNDERSTAND** it, **GAIN SPIRITUAL ENLIGHTENMENT** from it and find its **SPIRITUAL APPLICATION** to our own lives. If these results do not come, then there is little value in our daily reading of His Word.
- a. We see this emphasis in Psalms 119, where the psalmist repeatedly speaks of his **LOVE** for God's Word, his **LONGING** for the Word, the **CENTRAL PLACE** of the Word in his life, his **MEDITATION** in the Word and his obedience to the Word. He also speaks of how the Word meets every need in his life and he could not live his life without it.
 - b. These things the Psalmist speaks of are still God's deep desire for us as we approach His Word. We must therefore be careful that we are not satisfied with something less than a significant and concentrated daily time in His Word, where His Word speaks to our hearts and our lives are enriched and changed by it.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THE SOURCE AND BASIS FOR HIS WORD

1. In II Timothy 3:16, 17 and II Peter 1:19-21, we are clearly taught that every part of the Bible comes from God Himself and is to be considered "God's Word."

- a. **This makes a difference in the way we approach His Word as we accept the fact that God Himself is speaking to us when we read and mediate on His Word no matter what part of it we might choose to read and study.**
 - b. **It is to be taken seriously, it is to be approached devoutly and carefully, it is to have a deep meaning and impact upon our own lives and there is to be complete submission and obedience to it.**
- 2. Both of these passages teach that the means God used to impart His Word so that it could be written down by men was through the INSPIRING WORK of the Holy Spirit.**
- a. **In other words, the Holy Spirit Himself put the Word in the hearts and minds of those writers of the Scriptures so that they recorded exactly what God wanted them to say without any error or contradiction between one part and another. No word, conclusions or ideas of men are involved in the Scriptures. It is all God's Word given through the Holy Spirit.**
 - b. **His Word is absolutely BELIEVABLE and DEPENDABLE and nothing in it, whether of facts or of instruction or of commands, is to be doubted or ignored.**

ILLUMINATION OF OUR HEARTS AS THE MEANS THE HOLY SPIRIT DAILY USES TO OPEN OUR HEARTS TO UNDERSTAND AND ACT UPON HIS WORD.

- 1. We now have the complete INSPIRED Word of God. It will never be added to or taken away from. However, it is not enough that we have the inspired written Word of God. If we are not also given THE MEANS to understand it and apply it to our lives, we are no better than the unsaved people around us who read His Word from the standpoint of habit or curiosity.**

- a. **In I Corinthians 2, vs. 6-16, he speaks of the complete inability of the unsaved man to understand the Word of God or to clearly comprehend any spiritual teaching. SEE: I Corinthians 2:6, 9, and 14.**
 - b. **This was written in the day when brilliant philosophers and leaders were present in society. No matter how intelligent they were, or what claims they made for themselves, they could only understand **WORLDLY WISDOM**, and had no ability whatsoever to understand anything beyond that. Any understanding in the **SPIRITUAL REALM** was completely denied them. SEE: I Corinthians 2:14.**
- 2. The same passage of Scripture in I Corinthians 2 reveals that the Christian has all of the Truth in the **SPIRITUAL REALM** completely opened up to him for his clear understanding and application by the indwelling Holy Spirit.**
- a. **This comes first through his saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ when he is made right with God and is born again by the Holy Spirit. SEE: John 3:3-7; Romans 5:1; 8:9; Ephesians 2:8, 9.**
 - b. **This saving relationship with the Lord has also brought the indwelling Holy Spirit to live and work in his life. SEE: Romans 8:9.**
 - 1) **There are many reasons or purposes for His indwelling in our lives. He brings victory over sin in our lives, He gives us power in our walk and witness, and accomplishes many other things in our lives.**
 - 2) **Every need of our lives is met by His indwelling presence and we could not do without Him as we live in this world.**
 - e. **However, one of the main purposes of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to lead us into the full**

knowledge of God's Word through His ILLUMINATING work in our lives as we read and study God's Word.

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- 1) Though we are learning new things from His Word throughout our lives, there is no part of Scripture that is not opened clearly to us as we look to the Holy Spirit to help us with our understanding at any given time in our daily walk.**
 - 2) This understanding of what God is teaching us in His Word by the Holy Spirit enables us to go on in our Christian lives as we both understand the teaching and then correctly apply all that the Holy Spirit has taught us to our daily lives.**
 - 3) The Holy Spirit will also help us to distinguish between THE FALSE AND THE TRUE in the teachings that come from others as He shows us how to keep our lives from being led astray by false teaching through giving us a correct understanding of exactly what is being taught in any passage of Scripture. SEE: Galatians; Colossians 2:8, 18, 19**

APPROPRIATING THE ILLUMINATING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR OUR LIVES IN OUR DAILY WALK.

- 1. The first requirement would be that we as Christians are to always be in the RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD. Otherwise, we are not in a position to even listen to the Spirit.**
 - a. This means that we are daily walking close to Him, have no sins in our lives to keep us from a clear relationship with Him, are obedient to Him and that we are completely submitted to Him. SEE: John 15:1-10; Romans 12:1, 2.**
 - b. NOTE the phrase "HE WHO IS SPIRITUAL" in I Corinthians 2:15 as a condition for the illuminating work of the Spirit.**

- 6. We are also to be COMPLETELY YIELDED TO HIM concerning any challenges that He wants to share with us from the Word concerning His will, new work that we are to do for Him, major new steps that He might want us to take and how our lives are more closely to be involved in the lives of others in meeting their needs.**
- 7. We are to ACT UPON everything the Holy Spirit has revealed to us as we have read the Word of God.**
 - a. There is the danger of our being convicted by reading His Word of some need in our lives or of something God wants us to do but never really acting upon that conviction to carry out God's full purposes for our lives.**
 - b. We need to understand that the Holy Spirit wants to fulfill all of God's purposes for our lives through our meditation upon His Word, and this ACTION needs to be the final step we take.**
 - c. It is a blessing to know that the Holy Spirit will not only speak to us through the Word of God but that He will also go with us in helping us to take all the action we need to take in obeying God's Word. Sometimes the actions we need to take will be difficult, but, as we are yielded to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, He will take us through these difficult times.**

CONCLUSION

- 1. We need to continually give thanks to the Lord that we are different in every way from those who do not belong to Him.**
 - a. Not only have we been delivered from our lost and hopeless condition of sin and alienation from God, but we have also been brought into full relationship with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ and our eternal salvation is secure.**
 - b. We have also blest by the multiple ministries of the**

indwelling Holy Spirit, who meets every need of our lives and safely and victoriously leads us through this life.

- 2. God also wants us to fully understand the responsibilities we have in our daily lives for consciously partaking of every ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives and fully acting upon everything He leads us to do to help us live in the will of God with His approval.**
- 3. The source of all of our spiritual knowledge is the Word of God itself. This is God's perfect and final revelation of truth to us. The only means we have of reading and meditating upon His Word with UNDERSTANDING is through this illuminating work of the Holy Spirit. He will perfectly enlighten us and lead us to the actions we need to take as a result of this understanding He gives us.**
- 4. It is important therefore that we both be spiritually right with God as we approach His Word, and that we be completely dependent upon the Holy Spirit for His work in dealing with us through His Word.**

IV. THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND IN OUR FAITHFUL WALK WITH THE LORD.

INTRODUCTION

- 1. Once we have been saved, no true Christian would be satisfied with less than all that God has planned for our lives as we live in this world as Christians, nor would any true Christian choose to ignore the spiritual responsibilities we have in our new relationship with the Lord.**
- 2. On the one hand, the blessings and results of our salvation are beyond all comparison with anything that we knew before in our unsaved state. SEE: Ephesians 1:3-14**
 - a. We have been delivered from our old sinful and lost condition and brought into relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.**
 - b. We not only have the hope of eternal life with Him, and, as we live on this earth, we have come under the loving care of our heavenly Father.**
 - c. God has also opened the windows of heaven to us so that we might receive all of His favor and blessing in our daily lives.**
- 3. On the other hand, our new life in Christ has brought us new responsibilities toward God that we never had in our old life when we were related to Satan and his family. SEE: Ephesians 2:1-3.**
 - a. We see this in Galatians 5 and Ephesians 5, where both positive and negative instructions for the Christian life are given.**
 - b. We see this again in Colossians 3, where the phrases “PUT ON” and “PUT OFF” are repeatedly used to indicate what is**

and what is not acceptable to God in our lives.

- c. **We see this again in the repeated challenges concerning our WALK in the world. SEE: Romans 6:4; Ephesians 4:17; Colossians 1:10; 2:6; I Thessalonians 2:12. This WALK is to be strict in nature and is to be completely pleasing to the Lord.**
4. **It is clear that these responsibilities are impossible to fulfill from a human standpoint. SEE: Romans 7:7-25 where the sincere Christian was totally defeated in his Christian life in spite of all his efforts to obey God and live His life in a way pleasing to Him.**
5. **It is only through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit that we can have victory over sin and daily temptations and can grow in our Christian lives with a faithful daily walk before the Lord.**
6. **Though He indwells us and is completely accessible to us in every way, there is the danger that we will ignore His presence and seek both to live our lives in our own strength and according to our own will and desires. Thus, we give Him no place or authority in our lives for Him to work in meeting these spiritual needs that we have.**

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS WITHIN US IN GROWTH AND FAITHFUL WALK.

1. **In II Peter 3:17, 18, God deals with the problem of GROWTH itself in the Christian life.**
 - a. **In vs. 17, He warns of the danger we face with those who themselves are not spiritual (not saved?) and who would teach contrary to God's will and desire for the Christian life. These men will seek to take us away from our "steadfastness" in following the Lord and living the Christian life.**
 - b. **In vs. 18, He addresses the area of our lives we are especially to guard and devote ourselves to..."THE GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST." In other words, our main concentration in our growth is to focus our attention and our entire lives upon HIM**

and our relationship with HIM.

- 1) In John 15:4-6, Jesus had emphasized the same truth in dealing with His disciples just before his crucifixion. Their whole lives were to be devoted to “ABIDING” (LIVING) in Him. Otherwise they could not succeed either in the Christian life or in anything they would seek to do for Him.**
 - a) At that time, their lives were not really very spiritual (SEE: Luke 9:46; 22:24). We see this in their struggle for supremacy among them. The Lord was not yet completely the focus of their attention and devotion.**
 - b) In John 21, in disobedience to His call to them in Luke 5:10 to leave their nets and become fishers of men, they returned again to their fishing and Jesus had to warn them again about His expectations for them.**
 - c) It was not until after Pentecost that they finally seemed completely dedicated to the Lord and focused entirely on Him, both in their own personal lives and in their ministries.**
- 2) In John 14:26; 15:26 and 16:13, 14, the Lord taught that one of the main ministries the Holy Spirit would have in their lives when He would be sent from heaven would be to concentrate their lives on the Lord Himself and working for His glory.**
 - a) In John 14:26, He taught that the Holy Spirit would especially teach them concerning the teachings and words of the Lord Himself so that they would never forget all that He had shared with them for their lives and growth in Him.**
 - b) In John 15:26, He spoke of the Holy Spirit’s ministry of testifying about the Lord Himself...WHO and WHAT He is, WHAT HE**

HAS DONE and our RELATIONSHIP with Him. His teaching us about the Truth about the Lord in the Gospel of John itself, chapters 5-10, would be an example of this.

- c) In John 16:13, 14, He taught about the Holy Spirit's ministry in exalting and glorifying the Lord. He makes it clear that the Holy Spirit would not exalt Himself before them but would lift up the Lord Jesus in their lives instead. SEE: Philippians 2:9-11; Revelations 5:1-14.**

2. In Galatians 5:16, in speaking of our daily walk with the Lord, He answers the question concerning how they could possibly have VICTORY in their lives if they were no longer under the hundreds of regulations of the LAW.

a. The answer from God is that, if they WALK IN THE SPIRIT they will not carry out the desires of the flesh. This will mean victory in their lives.

- 1) This WALK IN THE SPIRIT first of all indicates complete DEPENDENCE upon Him to work in their lives in giving this victory over the flesh.**
- 2) This WALK IN THE SPIRIT also indicates complete submission to the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives to permit Him to work in any way He chooses to work in our lives.**
- 3) This WALK IN THE SPIRIT also indicates complete OBEDIENCE to His leading and working in our lives no matter what He might require or lead us to do to have this victory. This may mean complete changes in our lives.**

b. Romans, chapter 8 had taught the same thing concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in giving victory in the Christian life.

- 1) **In Romans, chapter 7 the Christian who is speaking had completely despaired of ever finding victory over sin as He tried to gain this victory through faithfully following the LAW. SEE: Romans 7:18-24.**
- 2) **In Romans, chapter 8, he found this victory in His relationship with the Lord through the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit. What he had failed to find before, despite his sincere and earnest efforts under the LAW, he now finds through the Spirit's constant work in his life. The Spirit works in every possible area of his life, including his prayer life (SEE: Romans 8:26, 27), to bring victory.**
- c. **His help is completely adequate to help us meet any temptation to sin with complete victory.**
3. **In Galatians 5:22, 23, we are taught concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in PRODUCING SPIRITUAL "FRUIT" in our lives as part of our growth in the Christian life.**
 - a.. **These FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT speak of the qualities that the Holy Spirit produces in our lives to manifest the presence of Christ in our lives (SEE: II Corinthians 5:14, 15; Philippians 1:20, 21) as we live our daily lives before others.**
 - b. **We note that the first three of them, LOVE, JOY, PEACE, had been taught by the Lord about the Holy Spirit in John 14, 15.**
 - c. **We note that these FRUITS are contrasted with the DEEDS (FRUITS) OF THE FLESH taught in Galatians 5:16-21.**
 - 1) **The "deeds of the flesh" would be a problem because of the possible misunderstanding about what "FREEDOM" from the Law signified. Some might have concluded that that**

FREEDOM gave them the right to sin as they pleased because God's Law no longer applied to them.

- 2) As was made clear about the misunderstanding about Grace in Romans 5:20 which was cleared up in Romans 6:1-14, so now it is made clear in this section about the "DEEDS (FRUITS) OF THE FLESH" that we have no freedom to sin. These "DEEDS OF THE FLESH" are enemies of the SPIRIT (SEE: vs. 17) and that, if these fleshly things are chosen by us in our lives, then the Spirit can not and will not work on our behalf and none of His FRUITS will be in our lives as a result.**
 - 3) Therefore, the work of the Holy Spirit in producing in our lives these "FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT" comes when the "DEEDS (FRUITS) OF THE FLESH" have been dealt with in our lives and the Holy Spirit then may freely work in a holy life that is dedicated to God.**
 - 4) If all of these "FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT" are present in our lives through the work of the Holy Spirit, then our lives will perfectly manifest our salvation and our relationship with the Lord.**
- d. In other passages, we note that these FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT are not just manifested before unsaved people but are to be present in our relationships with other believers as well. We see this in such passages as I Corinthians 13:1-7; Philippians 2:1-4; I John 2:9-11 and others.**
- 4. In II Corinthians 12:7-10 and Philippians 4:6, 7, 11, he deals with the ways the Holy Spirit helps us in dealing with the DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE. Although the Holy Spirit is not directly mentioned in these passages, other passages (SEE: John 14:16-18, 27) show that He is the agent that God uses to take us through the difficulties of life.**

- a. **Although we might not face exactly the same types of difficulties that the Apostle Paul and the Christians of that time faced, all of us as Christians will still have some difficulties in our lives.**

- b. **These may be caused by the circumstances we face, the people we deal with or the problems God permits to enter our own lives such as sickness, sorrow, lack of sufficient finances and others. Every Christian will experience some of these in his life.**

- c. **We note the experience of the Apostle Paul in II Corinthians 12:1-10, when, after he had received some special revelations from God, God permitted some physical ailment to afflict him.**
 - 1) **He records that this ailment was so severe that he prayed (SEE: vs. 8) earnestly and repeatedly that God would remove it from him.**

 - 2) **God's answer to him was that He would not remove it BUT He would give him the GRACE (strength) to live victoriously with it present in his life. This GRACE would be sufficient for him. (SEE: vs. 9)**

 - 3) **Paul then joyfully accepted this answer from God and this brought him into greater dependence and trust in his relationship with the Lord. (SEE: vs. 10).**

 - 4) **It would be through the presence of God in his life by the indwelling Holy Spirit that this GRACE would be supplied. Jesus seems to include this in His teaching about the Holy Spirit in John 14:16-18, when He speaks of the Holy Spirit as the one who would come along side us and lift us up as we live our daily lives in this world.**

- d. **It is important, therefore, that we accept the fact that, as we ourselves go through the difficulties of life, we can call upon God for the provision of His GRACE to take us safely through these difficulties. This GRACE, supplied by the indwelling Holy**

Spirit, is just as fully available to us as it was to those believers in the day of the Apostle Paul.

5. In John 13:34, 35, the Lord taught His followers concerning their LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER, and that this would be their proof before others that they are truly His followers. As we noted under our discussion of the FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT, this LOVE is one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

- a. We note in this passage that the Lord uses Himself as their example concerning this love they were to have for others. In view of our unworthiness to receive His love, and all that He did for us in demonstrating His love for us, His example would be the perfect one and one we could not ignore.**
- b. This work of the Spirit in our lives is strongly spoken of in other passages**
 - 1) In I Corinthians 13:1-7, the QUALITY OF THIS LOVE is taught. It is taught that this love is to be selfless, sacrificial and without any personal gain as we reach out to others.**
 - 2) In I Thessalonians 3:12, it is emphasized THIS LOVE is not just for other Christians, but is to extend to “all people.” This means that we are to have a love for the unsaved as well as Christians.**
 - 3) In I John 2:9-11, love for others is taught as a PROOF that we are really saved. Without it being present in our lives, there would be reason to doubt our salvation.**
- c. Since this is one of the FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT, any Christian who is walking in the Spirit and is yielded to His working in his heart will have LOVE FOR OTHERS.**

CONCLUSION

1. **Growth in the Christian life and faithful walk before God are an important part of our responsibilities before God in our new relationship with Him through Jesus Christ, so that our lives will meet His approval as we live in this world.**
 - a. **This growth is not just intended for the new Christian (SEE: I Peter 2:2, 3) but is for all Christians THROUGHOUT their lifetimes. There is never a time in our lives, whether we are young or old, when we can stop growing and being faithful to Him. Until we actually go into the presence of the Lord in heaven, God will continually shape and mold our lives so that we will be more completely “conformed to the image of His Son.” SEE: Romans 8:29.**
 - b. **It is obvious that there are many of God’s people who never have grown in their Christian lives after they professed to be saved. Some of them act and live their lives no better than the unsaved people around them. The lack of any evidence of salvation in their lives is so obvious, in fact, that some would wonder if they ever truly trusted Christ as their Savior and were “born again” by the Spirit of God.**
 - c. **Though we will never be perfect as we live in this life, our growth in the Lord should always be a high priority in our lives and this will be evident both to other Christians and to the unsaved people of the world around us.**
2. **Growth in the Christian life and faithful walk before the Lord will include many different aspects of our relationship with the Lord and will be manifested openly in different ways as the Holy works in our live to bring this to pass. True growth will then come as we humbly and completely yield to His working in our lives so that He can accomplish everything He wants to do.**
3. **With all our hearts, we are to respond to the admonition of II Peter 3:17, 18, “But GROW in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”**

