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How The Spirit Leads Us

By Harold Turner

Few subjects have received more attention among churches in recent years than the study of the Holy Spirit. Numerous books and articles have been written on almost every imaginable aspect of this subject. Many of these writings have been enlightening and helpful to a better understanding of the many questions that have arisen on this subject, while others have only been conjectural, and thereby confusing and misleading.

Truly, there are many things that we do not and cannot know about the Holy Spirit, hence it would be profitless to speculate about things that are not clearly revealed in the Bible. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." (Deut. 29:29) Any approach to this subject that is not totally supported by the Scriptures will only lead to wrong conclusions. The Bible commands, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11)

One of the great works of the Holy Spirit is in the revelation of God's will. And one of the great problems confronting us today is, as to how this work is accomplished. To illustrate this problem; in any typical city we may have ten or twenty preachers proclaiming what they claim to be God's will. Each of these will claim that they are led by the Holy Spirit in their ministry. Yet, each of these preach doctrines that conflict with, and often directly contradict the things preached by the others. Are we to believe that the Spirit leads these men to preach things that contradict the others? The Bible assures us that "God is not the author of confusion." (1 Cor. 14:33)

Our problem is not over the fact that the Holy Spirit is God's revealing agent. In 1 Cor. 2:10 the Bible declares, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." The problem involves the subjects to whom this revelation was to be given. Do men today receive special revelations and direct guidance from the Holy Spirit?

It might be that we need to define the word revelation as used in the Bible. It is possible that some confuse remembrance for revelation. Remembrance is the ability to reflect the mind upon things previously learned. Revelation is the making known that which had not

previously been learned. In 1 Cor. 2:9-10 Paul stated, "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. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." We again see this to be true from Gal. 1:11-12; "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Now to whom does the Bible promise these special revelations? In Eph. 3:2-5 Paul gives us the answer; "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Jesus selected the apostles, who were also prophets, as the subjects for the revelations. In Acts 1:2 we learn that after Jesus returned to heaven, "He through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen." The apostles were the only ones that Jesus promised, "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13) Too, he promised the apostles that the Spirit would "teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26)

But did the apostles receive the complete revelation of God's will? The above shows that they would be taught ALL things, and receive ALL truth. In Acts 20:27, Paul said that he had not "shunned to declare unto you ALL the counsel of God." In 2 Peter 1:3 we learn that the apostles had received "ALL things that pertain unto life and godliness." James 1:25 refers to the gospel as the "perfect law of liberty." To be perfect it would have to be complete. In Gal. 1:8-9 Paul makes it clear that there would be no additional revelations; "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so (Continued on Page 2)

The Bible

By Richard England

The Bible is from God. It did not originate in the mind of men; it is inspired, "God breathed." It makes known to us things that were unknown and that could not have been known through any other source. This is "revelation." Over a period of about sixteen hundred years God revealed things to approximately forty men and had them write them down so that we would have an account of them today.

Jesus, being raised from the dead, proves that He is the Son of God. This we showed in the previous lesson. If we accept that, there is no difficulty in seeing that what Jesus said and what His disciples wrote under His direction, is dependable. They said of the Old Testament: "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21) Concerning the New Testament, the Lord promised: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26) "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." (John 16:13)

The Apostles received the very things promised. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (2 Pet. 1:3) Furthermore, Paul declares that they taught these things; "Not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:13) God did not reveal to them a thought and depend on their ability to write it down and teach it as best they could by their own understanding. God gave them the very words.

The last inspired book to be written was the book of Revelation. Since that time, in that all the truth is in the Bible, (Continued on Page 3)

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How the Spirit Leads Us (Cont.)

say I now again. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The apostles received the complete revelation of God's will. Any person who preaches anything different from that preached by the apostles is to be accursed.

It should sound a warning to us when we hear men claiming to receive special spiritual guidance, and preaching things that conflict with others as well as with the Bible. The Holy Spirit does not lead men in conflicting ways. But, do you suppose that Satan would? We learn in 2 Cor. 11:13-15 that he has ministers that appear as the ministers of righteousness. His purpose is to deceive people from a love of and belief in the truth. (2 Thess. 2:9-12) God warns us not to believe everything we hear taught, but to test the teaching (1 John 4:1, Acts 17:11). He warns us that some will 'pervert the gospel of Christ.' (Gal. 1:7). Of others who will "wrest the Scriptures" (2 Peter 3:16). And of others who "will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

The Spirit leads men today through the Scriptures. When men are led by the Spirit in preaching they will "speak as the oracles of God." The Spirit may help us in many ways, but he does not lead us in conflicting ways and to preach conflicting doctrines. We must follow the "law of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:2) which will make and keep us free (Eph. 1:13, 1 Cor. 15:1-2).

"A lot of trouble in this world is caused by combining a narrow mind with a wide mouth."

"One of Life's greatest blessings is that we don't have to believe everything to which we are forced to listen."

Are Men Receiving New Revelations From God?

By Glynn V. Purdy

WE HAVE ALL TRUTH:

Jesus said to his apostles, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he shall shew you things to come." (John 16:13) The truth (which we now have ALL, Acts 2:1-4) will make us free! (John 8:32) We can purify our souls by obeying the truth. (1 Peter 1:22) If we have ALL truth, that is all we can receive! If we received something else it would not be truth.

WOULD GOD GIVE MAN ANOTHER GOSPEL?

Paul said that the gospel was "God's power to save" man. If the gospel Paul had would save man, why would God give us another? Paul also said, if a man, or angel preached any other gospel than the one he preached, such a one would be cursed. (Gal. 1:8-9) Where did Paul get the gospel he preached? From Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-12). There is no other gospel than the one Paul preached (Gal. 1:6-7).

DOES GOD GIVE ONE MAN A MESSAGE DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS?

Peter declared that "God is no respecter of persons." (Acts 10:34-35) Paul said the same in Rom. 2:11. Can we depend on God to tell the truth? God "cannot lie". (Titus 1:2) Now, if a man receives a special revelation today, it is not from God. God is no respecter of persons, and he cannot lie, so if some one lies, it is not God.

THE REVELATION WE HAVE WILL MAKE US PERFECT.

If the present revelation is what it says it is, we need no other. If it is not what it claims to be, we could not believe one that some man claims to have received. "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." (2 Tim. 3:16-17) The revelation we now have is "perfect" (James 1:25). It furnishes us with every good work. If a revelation today was different it would not include GOOD WORKS, for we have ALL of them, and if kept perfectly it will make man perfect. If it is perfect, it cannot be changed without making it imperfect.

JUDE SAYS WE HAVE IT ALL NOW.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation,

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The Disciples' Place

By Frank L. Cox

"I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." (John 17:15)

These prayerful words fell from the lips of the greatest man that ever lived; of the founder of the church; of the conqueror of the grave, even of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. They were words spoken the night before his death, concerning his disciples on earth. Of course, he knew what he was saying. But these words are not what some religious people would have expected. They would fancy that the Savior's intercession would have been rather after this fashion: "I pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one."

But not so prayed the Son of God. Some people would fancy that the Master would rather have the disciples retire into walls of seclusion or into a lonely wilderness or into a desert place, and there, amid the solitude of nature, to remain unto the end; to meditate on spiritual things; to prepare their hearts for heaven. But so command not the Christ. We are thankful that he came, not to take men out of the world, but to teach them how to live in the world; not to pronounce work or business as irreligious, but to sanctify it and to ennoble it.

And that is exactly what Jesus did, by word and example, during the days of his flesh. Never by any word or deed did he lend encouragement to those people who would separate religion from the common acts of life. We know how he spent his time before he began the public ministry; that he spent it, not in desolate retirement, not in a lonely wilderness; but in company with his fellowmen, working with his hands, as other men work, as a carpenter in the village of Nazareth. And we know how he spent his time after he began the public ministry. There were periods of retirement when he prayed to the Father and refreshed his weary body, of course. But seldom was he alone. We find him with people—people who needed his word and his loving service. He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." As a friend of man, he lived with man and for man.

By the power of his example he taught us that we must live a life of usefulness; that, if we would follow him, we must not take ourselves out of the world, but to do our duty to the

(Continued on Page 3)

The Bible (Cont.)

there is no need for further information. Through the years the book has been preserved from one generation to another accurately enough that we have no doubt but what we can know all the will of God for man today. It may well be in the wisdom of God that we do not have the original copies of the Bible writings, for if we did some would worship the parchment and ink rather than the God of heaven who revealed it. But, we do have many manuscripts which date back very close to the original writings. Preservation of the Bible has been so accurate that when the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, and they dated possibly as old or older than any other manuscripts we had, there was no additional information, books, or contrary writings to what we already possessed.

The Bible is an account of God's dealings with man. It lets us know what He wants us to do; that is, it is His will. It gives us examples of both those who obeyed and those who disobeyed. The results of obedience and rebellion are vividly displayed.

All people should carefully, prayerfully, and with a receptive mind, study the Bible. If one believes the Bible to be from God, then he will be interested in what it says.

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"As you leave footprints on the sands of time, don't leave the marks of a heel."

"No matter how much you nurse a grudge, it won't get any better."

Persistense Is The Key

By James Knight

Just before Jesus ascended back into heaven he gave the apostles what we know as the great commission. He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) In Matthew 28:19 he said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is a tremendous challenge, and it has been passed on to each succeeding generation. Therefore, it is our responsibility to preach the gospel to the whole world in our generation.

One of the great tragedies in the church today is the number of people who begin to do personal work and then quit. A large number of these quit because they become discouraged when there is no immediate results. Others quit because the first person whom they contact does not allow them to come into their home and study with them. It is true, and we must accept it, that not every person is interested in studying the Bible, and not every person with whom we do study is going to obey the gospel. If we get this established in our minds then more of us will continue to do personal work for the Lord.

If we are going to be successful as personal workers, there is something that we need to understand, and that is the key to successful personal evangelism. The key to winning souls to Christ is PERSISTENCE. By this I do not mean that we are to hound a person to death, but neither are we to give up after just one visit. I know of cases where it has required several visits before a person would allow someone to come and study with them.

To illustrate this point, I want to share with you some statistics that I recently read in the newspaper. While these do not relate directly to teaching the Bible, I feel that there is much that we can gain from looking at these facts.

The National Dry Goods Association survey recently came up with some interesting facts on the importance of repeated contacts. It showed:

(1) 48 percent of the salesmen make one call and quit.

(2) 25 percent of the salesmen make two calls and quit.

(3) 15 percent of the salesmen make three calls and quit.

(4) 88 percent of the salesmen quit after one, two, or three calls.

(5) 12 percent of the salesmen keep on calling.

What was the result? This survey showed that the 12 percent who keep on calling do 80 percent of the business. The 88 percent who quit by the third call do

Are Men Receiving (Cont.)

it was needful for me to write unto you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3) Faith comes from hearing God's word (Rom. 10:17). There is "one" faith (Eph. 4:5). So, when Jude speaks of "the faith", it is the "one faith" which comes from hearing God's revelation, and was "once delivered to the saints." This means that God is not continuing to deliver the faith to men today.

WE MUST NOT BE DECEIVED.

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1) There are false teachers today and there are honest and sincere men who are deceived. These teachers must be checked against the Bible. The church at Ephesus TRIED those who said they were apostles (had special revelations) and found them LIARS. (Rev. 2:2) Christ commended them for TRYING the CLAIMS of others. We MUST do the same today!

The Disciples' Place (Cont.)

world—the world of people. How can you love your neighbor as yourself if you live the life of a hermit? How can you love your neighbor as yourself unless you can touch him and teach him? Of course, there should be periods of rest and retirement that powers may be renewed, but there is no virtue in withdrawing from humanity, in living in solitude, in living for self and self alone.

The hardened criminal should be isolated, so should the poor lunatic; but not the disciple of Christ. He is salt. He is light. He is leaven. As salt, he should touch that which should be preserved. As light, he should not be covered. He should shine "unto all that are in the house." And as leaven, his influence should permeate the lump of society.

"A pound of preparation is worth a ton of hassle."

"The most difficult assignment is the one you are too lazy to start."

"Silence is termed golden because the supply is so limited."

"No one gets fat on excuses, but everyone gets 'fed up' with them."

only 20 percent of the business.

Brethren, the lesson should come through loud and clear. If we want to be successful in personal evangelism, we must be persistent.

THE WORD "SAVED"

By Leslie Leonard

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10)

We can never have unity in religion until we speak the same thing. A lot of the confusion that exists is the result of careless, and sometimes erroneous, use of words.

Every religious group has its own peculiar meaning for some words. This makes it possible for the initiated to listen to a conversation, or a preacher, and not understand what is being said. This is caused by religious people attaching meanings to words that the word doesn't normally have. It is possible for two religious persons to say exactly the same thing, and still not understand each other.

Of more importance, though, is the possibility that we may use a word in a way that the Scriptures do not use it. When the meaning of a word has some peculiar idea that we have attached to it, that is different from the scriptural usage, we may use it to discuss religious concepts that may sound like they originated in the Bible, when in reality the Bible doesn't present such ideas.

I have friends and relatives who are members of different religious groups that do not use the word 'saved' as I use it. Since I realize that they place a different meaning to the word than I do, it is necessary for me to translate this word into the sense which they use, to understand them, and I have to use a different word to get them to understand me. The situation is similar to that mentioned in 1 Cor. 14:11, "Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me." We cannot hope to agree in religious matters until we all use words alike, and we can't be sure that we are safe until we use them in the same way that they are used in the Scriptures.

In the use of words, we are sometimes a lot like Humpety Dumpety, who in "Alice In Wonderland", said, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "Whether you can make a word mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpety Dumpety, "Which is to be master—that's all."

To further understand the situation, let's examine the way that we communicate with each other. Do you

realize that it is impossible for you to think without using words? Just try to think of something without attaching a word to it and you will find that it is impossible. Everything you think about has a word that draws a picture in your mind. If you picture a tree in your mind you immediately attach the word tree to the picture. Now, if you try to communicate with me, when you see the picture of a tree, you would then utter the word tree. When I hear the sound of the word, I have a picture of a tree formed in my mind. With the use of a word you have transferred the picture of a tree from your mind to mine.

Here is where the danger exists. It is possible that I may not form the correct picture, or the exact picture, in my mind that you intended. If I came from an area where pine trees were prevalent, I probably would picture a pine tree, when you use the word tree, but if you came from an area where oak trees were prevalent, you would probably be thinking of an oak tree. So we haven't completely communicated.

It is possible that I have been misinformed about what a tree looks like. If I think of a rock when you use the word tree, I would have an erroneous picture in my mind. This is entirely possible because I have been educated to form the wrong picture. This is the reason that the word 'baptize' can be used causing one person to think of sprinkling, another of pouring, while another of immersion. Since the Scriptures only use the word to mean immersion, someone has been teaching it to mean something else.

When I was about eight years old, during the depression in north Missouri, my father raised his own tobacco. He hung it in a shed to dry; so me and my two younger brothers would sneak out and try smoking. We realized that the youngest, who was about four, would tell what we were doing; so instead of calling it smoking we called it playing. When we were with our parents my youngest brother would say, "We have been playing out in the shed." Of course he meant, "We have been smoking," but our parents never caught on.

The word 'saved' has at least two meanings for religious people. To one its meaning is simply to be rescued or delivered from sin and punishment. To put it another way it means to redeem from spiritual death. The other meaning that is attached to the word is to have an experience. Those who use it this way may ask, "Have you been saved?" or "Are you saved?" The way they use it has the basic idea of being rescued, but there

is an added dimension of having had an experience. This added dimension does not exist in the correct use of the word (see a dictionary), but of more importance, it does not exist in the Scriptures. A careful unbiased examination of the Scriptures will show that the word simply means to be made safe, no longer lost, or having been rescued. It simply means to have been placed among a group who are in safety. It is a misuse of language to attach a meaning to the word that it does not have, and it is a dangerous practice.

We can jeopardize our eternal safety by attaching an erroneous meaning to a word because we are thinking of something that God didn't intend. A few years ago Hammershjould, Secretary General of the U.N., met a tragic death because the pilot of his plane didn't notice that the name of a town had an "A" in it, instead of an "o". In the wreckage of the plane the map was found open to Nabolo, a town in a section near Leopardville, instead of the map of Nabola, Zambia, which was their destination. If they had been at Nabola, the pilot would have had 1,000 feet more runway than he actually had at Nabolo. Following the wrong map he crashed.

By following the wrong meaning of a word we can also crash spiritually. We can talk about being saved and mean that we have had an emotional experience and not be talking about being saved as set forth in the Scriptures.

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