

**The Word Became Flesh  
(Week 48)  
John 16:12-15; 1Corinthians 12:1-11  
“The Ministry of The Holy Spirit (Part 3)”**

**Introduction**

**For all those led by God's Spirit are God's sons. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received The Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out “Abba, Father!”** **Romans 8:14-15**

As we continue in our study through John's gospel, we are taking a slight pause to fully explore the vital ministries of the Holy Spirit within the body of Christ. Jesus told His disciples that His leaving was for the best, for if He did not leave them, then The Spirit would not come to them. As Believers in Jesus Christ, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide us in everything that we do. Most of us would do well to pause and seek His guidance before we speak or act.

Sadly, too many Christians are want to “shoot from the hip”, as it were, in regard to their decision making. I have learned in my own personal life that finding the best way forward requires two things... prayer and time. I make far less mistakes and say far fewer things that I later come to regret, when I take the time to consult The Spirit of God before proceeding further. Can I get a witness?

Jesus knew that His disciples were heart broken over His coming departure. And after all that He had told them, they really still did not understand what was happening. When people are under stress, they normally do not listen very well. This is why rational decisions are rarely made in the midst of the storm. Often times, when we are hard pressed, our “fight or flight” response is the first thing to kick in. We either run away, or run into the fray. We seem to lack the one thing that we need in order to make the wise choice, and that my friends is **Peace**. The **Peace** that God can give us in the midst of the storm.

I myself have had a very challenging time of it this week, and God has put a Scripture passage on my heart to remind me of The Spirit's inexplicable ability to give me peace in my storms.

**Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.**  
**Philippians 4:6-7**

I particularly like the word that Paul uses here for “guard” (*phroureo*, pronounced *froo-reh'-o*). It carries with it the meaning of placing a sentinel to watch over our hearts as we truly seek His wisdom and His will. Now, I don't know about you, but my heart needs a lot of supervision. And when I am in distress, I can know the **Peace** of God that passes all understanding, because The Holy Spirit is guarding my heart. That my friends can really be a comfort in times of trouble.

Jesus knew that although His disciples weren't really grasping what He was telling them that night, when The Spirit came to them, He would enable them to recall, understand, and be at **Peace**. That is why He told them that He had much more to say to them, but they could not “bear” it at the time. The word that He used does not mean that they would not like the message, but rather, due to their current level of stress, they wouldn't be able to comprehend it. He promised them that when The Spirit came all that would change for the better. They would not only recall what He had taught them, but they would be able to receive so much more.

In the past couple of weeks, we have learned of the *Exaltation*, *Exhortation* and *Expedient* ministries of The Spirit, as well as, *His Reproving* and *Regenerating* ministries. So let us conclude our study today by examining *The Holy Spirit's Educating Ministry*, *His Equipping Ministry*, as well as, *His End-Time Ministry*.

**His Educating Ministry (John 16:12-15)**

**“I still have many things to tell you, but you can't bear them now. When the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak on His own, but He will speak whatever He hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, because He will take from what is Mine and declare it to you. Everything the Father has is Mine. This is why I told you that He takes from what is Mine and will declare it to you.”**  
**John 16:12-15**

Jesus knew that His disciples could not handle any further instruction that night as He made His way to The Mount of Olives, and ultimately to the cross. But He told them that when the Spirit came to them, their extensive education program would begin. The Spirit would teach them from The Word of God, and as He taught them, He would also guide them so that they would be able to obey. Remember Christ's words to them regarding their obedience.

**"If you keep My commands you will remain in My love..."**

**John 15:10a**

Most of us are fully aware that we are altogether unqualified to obey the commands of Scripture. For all of us have sinned and fall short of God's perfect standard (**Romans 3:23**). But The Spirit not only uses The Scriptures to **teach** us what is right, He guides us as He changes our nature, so that we are **empowered to do** what is right (**2 Corinthians 5:17**).

Now, if we look carefully within our *Bible's* we can see every single thing that Christ promised in regards to The Spirit's teaching ministry has come to pass. Allow me explain. In the upper room, Jesus told His followers that The Spirit would remind them of all that He taught them.

**"But The Counselor. The Holy Spirit, Whom The Father will send in My Name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you."**

**John 14:26**

This promise was fulfilled by the writing of the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. While Jesus was with His disciples, they neither could recall, nor understand, much of what He was saying to them. But when they were filled with The Spirit, they not only could recall Jesus's words, but they fully understood what He had been saying. The Spirit reminded and illuminated them, so that all He had taught them would become a part of their lives.

Jesus also told them that He had much more to say to them, but they were not ready for it yet. So instead, He would allow The Spirit to further guide and instruct them (**John 16:12**). This promise was fulfilled in the further writings of *The New Testament*. In the gospels, the words and deeds of Jesus are recorded, and in the epistles of *The New Testament*, all further instruction that is necessary to live out the commands of Christ has been given. As we teach The Word of God, The Spirit implants it in our hearts and gives us the desire and ability to obey. This is why it is so very important to consult The Spirit in all things. He will teach us The Word of God and guide us to follow its directives. As we do this, we remain in the love of Christ and are blessed. This is the teaching ministry of The Holy Spirit.

Jesus also told His followers that The Spirit would teach them the things that are to come (**John 16:13**). This promise is fulfilled in the book of *Revelation*. It is this book that tells us of the coming of Christ and His wrath upon the disobedient. It is also the key to unlocking some of *The Old Testament* prophecies in books like *Daniel*, *Zechariah*, and *Ezekiel* (to name a few). These once difficult passages in *The Old Testament* can now be fully discerned because of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. He has given us exactly what we need to comprehend what lies in store, both for The Church, as well as, for this fallen world. This is why it is so very important to keep our focus upon lifting up The Name of Christ, so that the lost can be delivered from the wrath that is to come.

We should also notice that Jesus says The Spirit will not speak on His own (**John 16:13-15**). This does not mean that He will never mention Himself. For The Scriptures mention The Spirit multiple times, and they were inspired by Him. But what it does mean is that everything The Spirit says will further exalt The Name of Christ, so that all men will be drawn to Him. This is His primary focus, His "prime directive", if you will. He longs for the world to find salvation, and that salvation can only be found by believing in The Name of Christ Jesus (**Acts 4:12**). The Father has placed all authority in The Son, and The Spirit will draw men to The Son, so that they may be saved. So, as we have said before, if it does not glorify The Son, then it is not of The Spirit. **Period.**

Every word of Scripture is not only from The Spirit, but it also represents all that God has to say on the subject. Theologians call this the "plenary and verbal" inspiration. Plenary means *full* and verbal means word for word. The Scriptures are The Word of God as inspired by The Holy Spirit. And They are both *inerrant and complete*. Jesus promised that The Spirit would remind us of what Jesus taught (the Gospels), give us further instruction (*Acts* and *The Epistles*), and would also tell us of what was to come (*Revelation*). Therefore, the Word of God is now complete. We need no further instruction. And every word of it was inspired by The Holy Spirit in regards to His teaching ministry.

**Above all, you know this: No prophecy of Scripture comes from the prophet's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**

**2 Peter 1:20-21**

### **His Equipping Ministry (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)**

**Now concerning spiritual gifts: brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be unaware. You know that when you were pagans, you used to be enticed and led astray by mute idols. Therefore I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.**

**Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord. And there are different activities, but the same God works all of them in each person. A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good: to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another, the performing of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between spirits, to another, different kinds of tongues, to another, interpretation of tongues. One and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as He wills. 1 Corinthians 12:1-11**

As we have discussed earlier in this study, just as Christ had a body when He was on the earth, The Spirit also has a body. His body is called "The Body of Christ", and it is The Church. In order for that body to function as a unit, The Spirit enables each individual member to function in a way that glorifies Christ and strengthens the body. The word that Paul uses in his letter to the Corinthian Church to explain what each member does is "soomfero", and it is often translated "for the common good" or "to profit withal" (KJV). The word actually means to "bear together". I often think of pallbearers at a funeral, when I read this word. They work together to lift their burden in order to bring some degree of comfort to the family, as well as, to honor the one who has died.

The Church of Christ has one purpose, to carry out the mission of The Holy Spirit, Who has filled us in order to exalt the One Who died for us. We bear this responsibility together. Each having our own role to fulfill. Our giftings are not the same, but they are all for the same purpose or the common good, as it were. They are to be used in conjunction to lift up Jesus in this world. And as we all work together, the Church itself is strengthened as our mutual burden is shared.

Every member of the body has been equipped for this ministry. To refuse to use our spiritual gifts is not only negligent, but sinful. When you became part of The Church, you were also equipped by The Spirit to serve within The Church. So **it is imperative that you do your part**, or the work of The Church will suffer.

The gifts of The Spirit can be divided into three categories: Speaking Gifts, Sign Gifts, and Serving Gifts. The "Speaking Gifts" are in regards to the teaching of The Word. Not everyone in the church is called to teach, nor should they presume to do so, unless The Spirit has equipped them in such manner (**James 3:1**). *The teaching of The Word of God is the most important function of The Church.* For it is by the hearing of The Word, that men will come to faith and find salvation in Christ Jesus.

**How, then, can they call on Him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about Him? And how can they hear without a preacher? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our message? So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Christ. Romans 10:14-17**

The "Sign Gifts" were given primarily in the early church, enabling them to perform signs and wonders, so that the message of the gospel would be believed in a world that had never heard of Christ Jesus. We have little need of the sign gifts in this present age, for we now have the complete Word of God. If The Word doesn't enable a person to believe, then no miracle ever will. For The Word of God is both living and effective (**Hebrew 4:12**). The Spirit uses His inspired Word to reach the lost. And He does this through the powerful teaching of His body, The Church.

The "Serving Gifts" are the most prevalent within the body. Many members do not have the ability to teach The Word. However, they most certainly have been gifted to support the others who do. They can do this by giving, praying, administrating, and simply by being willing to serve wherever they can to see that The Church completes its mission in lifting up Christ to the world. Without these "serving members" The Church would not survive. As I am writing this, I am reminded of so many I have known who served diligently behind the scenes to make the gospel ministries of The Church possible. Thank

God for the servants who never draw any attention to themselves, but give everything that they have in order for Christ to be glorified. These individuals are far more like The Holy Spirit than any pastor who ever lived. They live for the glory of Christ, and no one even knows their names! Talk about following the Prime Directive. These folks *live it!*

### **His End-Time Ministry (2 Thessalonians 2:1-8)**

**Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him: We ask you, brothers and sisters, not to be easily upset or troubled, either by a prophecy or by a message or by a letter supposedly from us, alleging that the day of the Lord has come. Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in God's temple, proclaiming that he himself is God.**

**Don't you remember that when I was still with you I used to tell you about this? And you know what currently restrains him, so that he will be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but the One now restraining will do so until He is out of the way, and then the lawless one will be revealed. The Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His mouth and will bring him to nothing at the appearance of His coming.** **2 Thessalonians 2:1-8**

As Jesus promised, The Spirit would instruct us as to what would take place in the end times. But not only that, it is the Spirit Who restrains the forces of evil to keep them from exercising their dominion until it is the appointed time. The Spirit lives within His Body, The Church, and before the end, before the tribulation period can begin, The Church will be taken out of the way. When this happens, Satan will energize his puppet ruler, the antichrist, who will plunge the world headlong into the wrath of God.

We know by reading the book of *Revelation*, exactly what is to occur at this time. If Satan had his way, this time of unprecedented evil would envelope the world already. We can see, simply by witnessing current events, the straining of the evil one to break free and unleash his fury upon this earth. And The Scripture plainly tells us that one day, he will. But until that day comes, it is The Holy Spirit Who keeps the forces of evil at bay, until the work of The Church is completed. Only God knows exactly when that day will come. But we can rest in the assurance that The Spirit of God is in complete control of the situation. Just as He guards our hearts in times of trouble, He will protect us from the wrath that is to come.

**For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him.** **1 Thessalonians 5:9-10**

Amen and Amen!

So this concludes our three-part teaching on the Ministry of The Holy Spirit. I hope it has served to enlighten you, so that you may know His voice when He speaks. For our fleshly nature is in a constant state of struggle with The Spirit. The flesh wants to glorify self, but The Spirit has come to glorify Christ Jesus. And the more we know about Him, His mission, and His inspired Word, the more equipped we shall become for that struggle.

**"When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak on His own, but He will speak whatever He hears."** **John 16:13a**

And let the Spirit filled believer say... TRUTH!!!