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We continue with Romans 8:14-17. In Romans 8:14, we have read, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Here, Paul has declared that those who are given personal guidance by the Holy Spirit are thereby marked out as sons of God who are bound for heaven. Since Christians possess the sin nature, however, they are prone to resist the leading of the Holy Spirit which they received. Christians thereby are inclined to grieve and to quench the Holy Spirit, and they do not live their lives under His guidance into the will of God. Christians who live in defiance of the Holy Spirit the Bible calls "carnal," and they are indeed a discredit to the family of God and to fellow believers.

The Holy Spirit leads a Christian by means of the written scriptures. The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated this in his wilderness temptation experience. When the devil attacked him, he responded with an appropriate quotation of the Word of God. He brought the appropriate doctrine to bear upon the particular attack. So, when we talk about God the Holy Spirit leading us, we are talking about his applying the scriptures that we have learned to the appropriate situation.

Carnal Christians, however, because they are incapable of learning the Word of God, they are indifferent to it. They are sloppy in their spiritual lives, do not depend upon this kind of leading of the Holy Spirit via the Word of God. So, they claim to be being led by the Holy Spirit as an excuse to justify impulsive behavior - something that is just wild, off-the-wall, and they say, "This is what God has told me to do." And off the go even though it is often very contradictory to many basic principles of scripture. Or, it justifies their bizarre behavior.

This is nowhere better demonstrated than in the charismatic movement where people under the claim that God is leading them make fools of themselves and act in a way that is totally incompatible with the Word of God. Or, the carnal Christian will justify and rationalize his lack of preparation in Christian service. And this is a devastating thing: Christians who have a position of service, a position of responsibility, and they're careless in how they execute it, careless in preparing it. Why? "Well, God is going to lead me. I read in the Bible I don't have to think about what to say. All I have is to open my mouth and God will give me the words." And, when you approach your service in that way, you open your mouth, and we all know we're listening to an idiot very quickly. The Word of God is what the Spirit of God uses, and there's no justification for operating under these other techniques for excuses for careless Christian living and service.

Certainly, our personal experiences are not the way God the Holy Spirit leads us. They are not the criteria for deciding what is true and what is the will of God. The Bible is the thing that the Spirit of God uses, so therefore, we must apply the Word of God through our minds to our experiences to evaluate our experiences. Nothing is so devastating like saying, "Hey, I've got an experience that proves that something is true." It doesn't do that at all.

**Freedom From the Bondage of Fear**

In Romans 8:15, then, we read, since this is true - that those who are led of the Spirit of God thereby demonstrate that they are in the family of God - we read further that we "have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" In this verse, we saw that Paul declares that this leading of the Holy Spirit frees the believer from the fear of facing the absolute holiness of God the Father. And that is a great relief to a human being when he's not afraid to face a holy God. Christians, therefore, are not still under the bondage of this kind of fear concerning their sin as they were before their salvation.

Confidence in God's promise to atone for our sin produces peace in the soul for the Christian. And this is something that shows up very strongly at the point of death. There's no point in human existence like when you know you're in the threshold of death when the real issue of your confidence and your peace and your stability shows up. That's when panic tears loose if there is no real peace, assurance from God, and that's when great stability is demonstrated in dying grace. For the unbeliever, the prospect of facing God produces a sense of terror, of uncertainty because he is enslaved to the sin nature, and he knows he doesn't possess the absolute righteousness. He doesn't possess the standard that God demands.

Fear is incompatible, therefore, in a Christian, as a member of the body of Christ, the royal family of God. We have it made with God. Whatever else is true of us, we have it made, and fear of facing Him is totally out of line. A Christian who labors under a sense of facing God, waiting for some disaster to befall him is spiritually immature, and he is ignorant of doctrine.

The born-again believer is the person who is fully capable of loving God, and because he is capable of loving God, he has also driven fear out of his experience. 1 John 4:18 puts it this way, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath punishment [fear is a punishment]. He that feareth is not mature in love."

Those who are the children of God, instead, we are told, are given a very special quality that excludes fear from their experience. 2 Timothy 1:7, as you know, puts it this way, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Or, a better translation there is, "of a disciplined mind." A disciplined personality. God has given us power, the power of God the Holy Spirit, the power which is exemplified by what it took to raise Christ from the dead. He has given us the power of love which is the code word, the first of the elements of the fruit of the Spirit, and therefore love is a summary word for being filled with the Spirit and of a disciplined personality - a stable, controlled life.

So, a Christian walks through life through with all of this with great confidence in the integrity of God and the absolute authority of His Word, the Bible. And therefore, we seek to glorify God by developing in our souls the capacity through the Word of God to receive great blessings which God can then direct toward the absolute righteousness which is functioning in us. And never forget: God never blesses you for anything except for what He does. He never directs blessing to you for anything but the absolute righteousness that He has put in you. Not for your service, not for your praying, not for your dedication. Zero, nothing. The only thing that God evaluates is the perfect production that He creates through us. And it is the Christian who develops the capacity to build a spiritual maturity structure in his soul who can receive that kind of blessing. So, if you're afraid of God, that's a mental attitude sin, and that results of a lot of disoriented thinking, emotional instability, and human viewpoint decisions.

So, this is no small statement that Paul makes in Romans 8:15 to tell us that we have not received the bondage of fear. We are completely freed from that. And religious systems which still leave people in fear of God relative to their salvation and fear of facing Him, no assurance, no security - these are obviously false systems, and they keep people from serving God through the Holy Spirit.

**Adoption into the Family of God**

Furthermore, verse 15 tells us that God has actually adopted us into His family. And as we pointed out, adoption here has to do with the Roman custom of the New Testament era. That's one of the elements of isagogics. An all-through exposition of scripture deals with isagogics which is, as you know, the background of the times. The act of adoption was the act of making either your natural son or one who is not your natural son your legal heir so that he, after your death, received all your privileges, your titles, your honors. Whatever you had, that went to him, and it was an adult position. So, such an adoption removes one furthermore from the fear of being an outsider relative to your future and to your inheritance.

Now, the Roman Caesars were very careful to use the technique of adoption. They actually went through this system in order to identify who was to follow them to the throne of the empire. And once a Roman Caesar formally went through the ritual of adoption, that person was the irrevocably the inheritor of all that that Caesar possessed upon his death, including the throne. The final act in the ceremony of adoption was to address the one who was adopting you as "Father," and you called him "Father."

And sometimes, the Romans would use it in two languages. They'd say "father" in Latin, and they'd say "father" in the common business language of the day, which was Greek. And this is apparently the background of what Paul is doing. Paul here uses the Aramaic, "abba," which is the Aramaic for "father," which is a dialect of Hebrew which developed after their captivities in Babylon. So, "abba," is "father" in Aramaic, and then he puts it in Greek, "pater," in order to translate it for those who would not know it.

And actually, we suspect that "Abba, Father" became a term used in the early New Testament church among Christians as a term of endearment and of intimacy when addressing God the Father. And as you know, in the Garden of Gethsemane, this is exactly what Jesus used; he used this term "Abba" when addressing the Father in His moment of great trial.

So, the ceremony of adoption would end with this addressing the one who was adopting as "Father," and the Holy Spirit, Paul says, has done the same thing for us. Every church-age believer has been adopted into the family of God with full, adult privileges and full, adult rights. There is nothing that any Christian can have that you don't have a right to now. Whether you're a kid or you're a grown-up; you've got it all. You've been adopted into the family of God. And so, we Christians, therefore, use this endearing term of addressing our Heavenly Father as "Abba, Father," or we usually convert it into "our dear Heavenly Father" which conveys the same idea.

The point of our adoption, of course, it at the point of our salvation when God the Holy Spirit at that time baptizes us into the body of Christ with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Thereby, the Christian seeks to go on a super grace level of living as a Christian adult compatible with his honored position of his adoption into the family of God. God the Holy Spirit, in other words, takes a nobody, like all of us, and he elevates us by adoption to a permanent position in the royal family of God. And adoption authorizes all of us to call on God the Creator, our heavenly Father, in prayer as one has claims upon other members of your family, and you will never be excluded. You will never be removed. You and I live daily in the full and assured privileges before God in His family. That's not always true on the human level.

Several years ago, our family was camping at North Padre Island down in the Gulf with our trailer. And my daughter Heidi was a primary-aged child, and she kept going in and out of the trailer, and as you know, the winds can be pretty high there on the ocean, and every time she'd open the door, the door would fly out of her hand, and it would bang against the side of the trailer. And so, after she did this several times, I said, "That's it! Don't go in the trailer anymore!" And her brother Stephen, who was a teenager at the time, said, "She has to go in there! She lives in there!" I said, "No more! Don't go in anymore." So we turned her loose there on North Padre Island. I never did find out what happened to her after that, but she was out.

Now, with God, even if you bang the trailer door, you cannot be excluded from the family of God once you've been adopted. That's what adoption means. It's a permanent, authorized position of honor from which you cannot be removed no matter what you do, and that is a great sense of relief for all of us.

**The Holy Spirit as a Person**

So, coming to verse 16 then this morning, Paul moves further with this amazing relationship that we have with our heavenly Father, for he says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." The word "Spirit," as you know, looks like this in the Greek Bible: "pneuma." And the word "himself," the old King James translation originally translated this as "itself." Well, actually, it's the personal pronoun "ego." And what you have in the Greek text - and I want to pause to explain this so that you'll understand in the Greek text - this is a noun, and nouns have gender. They're either masculine, feminine, or neuter. It so happens that the word "Spirit" is neuter. And therefore, when you have a pronoun in the Greek language, it has to be in the same gender as the noun it's referring to.

So, if "Spirit" is neuter when you use the personal pronoun, it has to be in the neuter form. In English, we don't have to fool around with all that different kinds of endings which indicate whether it's masculine, feminine, neuter, but in the Greek, you do. It's very natural in the Greek Bible that when it said, referring to the Holy Spirit, it would use, for you Greek students, it's "auto." Now, that is neuter. And we translate that as "itself," which properly refers up here to the neuter Spirit, referring back to God the Holy Spirit.

But, we know that God the Holy Spirit is not a thing. He is not a force. He is revealed in the Bible to be a person, therefore, it was very wrong of the King James translators who foolishly say, "the Spirit itself." They should have understood from other scriptures that the Bible refers to God the Holy Spirit as a personal being, not a Star Wars force. And consequently, we translate this properly as "himself," even though it is a neuter form.

I'll show you a couple of places where the Bible recognizes this. In John 16:13, we read, "Nevertheless when He, [and here, the word is masculine, this pronoun, referring to whom?] the Spirit of truth, is come." Now, that's referring to God the Holy Spirit. And there again, you have the word "Spirit," and it's neuter, but this time, the "He" is in the masculine. So even in the scriptures, the original writers under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognize that they properly should use a masculine term in referring to God the Holy Spirit, not a "thing" term referring to Him.

And, the same thing is true in verse 14, when, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine," the "He shall glorify me," referring back to the Holy Spirit, is again in a masculine form.

You have that again in John 14:26, "But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, WHOM the Father will send in my name." And "whom" there is neuter. And so, if it's neuter, how should you translate it? You would think you should translate is as "which," referring back to the Holy Spirit, but we know that he is a person, so therefore, it is translated as "whom" as you would refer to a person. "But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He." And that "He" right here is masculine, referring back to the Holy Spirit, because He is a person. "He shall teach you all things."

Furthermore, the Word of God indicates to us that Jesus said to the disciples that He would send to them another Comforter. And, this is an important point when speaking about the Comforter. The first Comforter they had was the Lord Jesus Christ. But He said, "I'm going to send you another Comforter." Another Comforter that He's going to send to Him. He uses the word "allos" for "another," which is important in the Greek because that indicates another of the same kind. If it had been "heteros," from which we get our word "heterogeneous," different kinds, "another" here is used with "allos," which means it's going to be another as the same kind of person as Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was a person. He was not a Star War force. He was a living being, and that's the kind of person that Jesus said, "I'm going to send to you in place of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Furthermore, Ephesians 4:30 says, "Do not grieve the Spirit of God." And that is certainly a clear demonstration that God the Holy Spirit is a person, because only a person can be grieved. A thing, a force cannot be grieved.

Now, this is important because you know, the J.W.s, the Jehovah Witnesses, in their New World translation always use a small "h" and a small "s" when referring to the Holy Spirit, because they reject the doctrine of the trinity. They are heretical in that respect, as well as many others. And furthermore, that leads them then to say that there is no person like the Holy Spirit; this is just a force that emanates from God. And so, they put a small "h" and a small "s." But here, the Bible is very clear that the one called the Holy Spirit can be grieved. He has an emotion.

There is, furthermore, very clearly declared in the Word of God that He is not only a person but that He is deity. And I only want to touch on this just in passing. This could be a major study. The Bible has a lot to say on this, but let me just show you Acts 5:3-4, "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.'"

And what's he referring back to when he says, "unto God"? He is referring back to the Holy Spirit. In verse three, he said, "You lied to the Holy Spirit." In verse 4, he said, "You lied to God." You couldn't have a clearer declaration in the Word of God that God the Holy Spirit is both a person and He is deity. And so, it is quite proper here that in verse 16 that we should say, "the Spirit Himself."

And I tell you this because I know that people who are heretics and who reject the Spirit of God will jump on you and say, "Hey, do you know that that 'himself' is neuter in the original language, and it should be 'itself' because He is a force?" And if you don't know a little bit that the Bible refers to the Holy Spirit also in masculine tenses in other places, that might shock you.

**The Testimony of the Holy Spirit Alongside the Human Spirit**

"The Spirit Himself bear witness with." The word "to bear witness with:" "summartureo." Actually, two words: "sum," which is "with;" "martureo," "to testify." So, to bear witness with, to bear witness conjointly. In the Greek grammar, this is present tense, which tells us, present tense always says that this is something that is continually true. So, the Holy Spirit continually gives us testimony. Active voice means that He Himself personally gives this testimony. It's indicative mood; we have a statement of reality.

This is the same verb that the Apostle Paul uses in Romans 2:15 where he indicates that when he uses this word, he is referring to two different things that are witnessing to the same fact. In Romans 2:15, he says, "Who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness." And there, you have the same word. So, Paul says here, "The law is written in the human heart. There's a consciousness of God's standard of the requirements of morality, and conscience also tells us what that standard is."

In Romans 9:1-3, you have again, that same comparing of two distinct factors that are witnessing together. So here, we must interpret this word in that same consistency. And what I'm getting at is "summartureo" is telling us that there are two witnesses that are telling us something. The Spirit Himself bears witness along with some other witnessing factor to some important thing. And what is that? He tells us that that other thing is our spirit. And again, it's the same word, "pneuma," that we had for God the Holy Spirit. Here, it is referring to your human spirit. God the Holy Spirit and our human spirit together are giving us a dramatic testimony to some fact.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, we find that God has created the human being in three basic elements, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; I pray in your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Spirit, soul, and body. So that, here you have a human being. He has a body, and he has within that body a soul, and he has within that body a spirit. And you will recognize that is a human being with a body, soul, and spirit. The body is actually a tent, the Bible says. The body is a building in which the inner, real man, which is soul and spirit, lives. The immaterial part of man lives on the inside of the body. When you die, this is what exits. And until that soul leaves, you're not dead. When that soul leaves, then you're dead.

Now, God has created us in this way. The human body, through its five senses, possesses world consciousness. The soul and the spirit are not the same thing; they are in the Bible very clearly distinguished one from the other. Just one verse to show you that, in Hebrews 4:12. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit," so that the two can be separated.

Actually, the soul possesses three elements: it possesses intellect, it possesses emotions, and it possesses will. That's what the soul is. That's why you are a personality because you can think, because you have feelings, because you can make decisions. Animals, while they have these soul qualities are distinguishable from human beings because they do not have a human spirit. Because the spirit is what enables you to have God-consciousness. Your soul gives you man-consciousness. Your body gives you world-consciousness around you through the senses. Your soul gives you man-consciousness and self-consciousness, but it is he spirit that is our communicating point with God. And, when that's dead, the whole system has collapsed; the whole system is inoperative. This is the nature of man.

The Bible tells us in Genesis 2:7 that at the creation of man, God breathed into that body that he had formed the "breath of lives." Plural. Not the "breath of life." Lives. Plural in the Hebrew. And breath of lives that God breathed in was soul life and spirit life. When Adam and Eve sinned, their souls continued to live, but this part of their being, their spirit, died immediately. Later on, that caused the body to die almost a thousand years later, so that the body died as well. So now, when their human spirit was dead, they were now spiritually dead. They were destined for hell.

Today, everybody is born into the human race with a sin nature, and therefore all are born spiritually dead. That's indicated to us in Jude 19 and in 1 Corinthians 2:14. The natural man cannot perceive spiritual things; he's spiritually dead, incapacitated. But, the Bible also tells us that at the point of salvation, a very marvelous thing takes place. When you trust in Christ as Savior, you are what the Bible calls "born again." And what is born again in you is this dead human spirit with which you were born that was contaminated at the point of your first breath by the old sin nature so that you were born spiritually dead while physically alive. That spirit comes to life.

Ephesians 2:1 says, "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Ephesians 2:5 says, "Even when we were dead in sins, hath made us alive together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)."

So, when the Bible talks about coming to life, it's talking about this human spirit coming back to life. Now, the human spirit is a very important element in our being, because it is the storage reservoir of Bible doctrine truth which is taught us by God the Holy Spirit. Under the filling of the Holy Spirit (filling of the Holy Spirit achieved by confession of all known sins), Bible doctrine goes from the Bible via the pastor-teacher or some other means in the local church to the mentality of the soul, and then it is stored in the human spirit so that the Word of God is here. It is taught to the mind, to what we call the perceptive factor of the mind. It is believed, and then it is cycled down here into the human spirit. Now it is stored there waiting some future use. At an appropriate time, the Holy Spirit takes this information, and he cycles it up here to the intellect of the soul so that the soul may now guide its emotions and may guide its will so that they do not run amuck. And out of that guidance, the decision-making mechanism, the directive mind, makes decisions.

So, the system is marvelous. It depends entirely upon the Word of God to function, and without the knowledge of doctrine, you cannot function. Once you're spiritually alive, you can really go forward.

Now, the one who is your teacher in all of this, John 14:26 tells us, is God the Holy Spirit. Reading that passage again, "But the Comforter, who is the Holy Spirit, 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." And that's what He does for the believer today. The believer who knows the Word finds that it is being brought to his remembrance by God the Holy Spirit at the appropriate point in time when that particular truth needs to be applied.

And a more extended passage concerning how this works is 1 Corinthians 2, and we have gone over this in greater detail, but we'll just run by it, because it's appropriate at this point. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, "But as it is written, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God [doctrinal truth] knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

What these verses are telling us is that God has revealed marvelous truths to believers via God the Holy Spirit who alone can tell us what God thinks and what God requires of us. Nobody on a human level, from the Pope on down, can speak for God.

Verse 12 says, "Now we have received, not the spirit [the cosmic spirit] of this world, but the spirit which is of God." And I think that should be a small "s" there. Our King James puts it as large "s" referring to God the Holy Spirit, but as you see the word "pneuma" in the Greek is for God the Holy Spirit and our human spirit. And I think what this is referring to is our human spirit. What we have received is not a spirit of human viewpoint from the world but we have received a living, human spirit from God ".that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." It is that living human spirit that gives us that point of God-consciousness and capacity to learn spiritual truths so that we Christians are in a position to understand divine viewpoint.

Verse 13 then says, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Doctrinal truths are not communicated by human wisdom or cleverness or ability but by the power of the Holy Spirit who conveys spiritual phenomena to your understanding. He is the ultimate teacher.

Verse 14 says, "But the natural man [that is, the unregenerate person] receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The unregenerate man is spiritually dead. Therefore, he is totally without God the Holy Spirit, and therefore, he is totally incapable of being taught spiritual things. Furthermore, he has no place in which to store the spiritual truths that he learns that it passes simply through the mentality and is lost.

The only doctrine that God the Holy Spirit makes clear, therefore, to an unbeliever, is the doctrine of salvation. His human spirit is dead; therefore, he does not have that capacity for learning, so God the Holy Spirit comes in and acts in place of the human spirit to give a person understanding of the doctrine of salvation. If he goes positive to that, he then comes alive spiritually and now can function on his own with the Spirit of God guiding him to learning and storing spiritual truth. The person who does not have this spiritual life considers the Bible foolishness. And we have plenty of evidence to that effect.

Verse 15 says, "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." The believer who is functioning under this system of what we call "the grace system of perception," this grace way of learning spiritual truths, comprehends all doctrine. He can understand anything in the Bible, but he himself cannot be evaluated or understood by the unbeliever. The unbeliever knows nothing of reality.

And finally, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." Nobody can teach God, but the Christian with doctrine stored in his human spirit actually has the mind of God. Now, that's fantastic, and this is important for you to understand that this is how you have the mind of God. Every one of you who know the Word of God and where you've been positive to, you've not resisted, you've accepted it, into your human spirit lies all this divine viewpoint. And that divine viewpoint represents divine thinking. So you're on your way. The person who does not have this is just wiped out. He is nothing. He is totally incapacitated.

Job 32:8 puts the whole thing in this way, this marvelous teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit that fills our human spirit. Job 32:8 says, "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration [or the instruction] of the Almighty giveth them understanding." That's it. There is a spirit in man, and God teaches our spirit. It is the point of our contact with Him. So, as the doctrinal understanding in the human spirit is cycled up to the mentality of the soul, we make decisions, we control our will, we control our emotions. The unbeliever has only a fallen human IQ to guide him. The Christian has a living, human spirit-filled reservoir with divine viewpoint and the Spirit of God to guide him.

Ephesians 3:16-19 describe that great contrast. You see how pitiful the unbeliever is. You see how pitiful is the carnal Christian who is acting as if he is an unbeliever. And yet, we have these people prominent in public life who are standing up like a bunch of pompous donkeys proclaiming and pronouncing things who are totally ignorant of divine viewpoint, unqualified to speak, whereas the humblest, simplest Christian who knows the Word of God can proclaim what in truth is reality in this world upon which God functions.

In Ephesians 3, beginning with verse 16, we read, "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man [that is, to be taught the Word]; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; and ye, being rooted and grounded in love [in the capacity of being filled with the Spirit], may be able to comprehend with all saints what is [the totality, and here it's a four-square totality] what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled [and there it is, filled] with all the fulness of God [with the full knowledge of doctrinal truth]."

Remember, when you come into the Christian life, this human spirit is an empty warehouse. That's why you should keep your mouth shut as a newborn person, and don't stand up giving testimonies and making pronouncements. And any time some famous Dallas Cowboy who has just been born again who is now being touted and promoted as someone to go around speaking to groups to have something to say, don't go, and don't listen. You're going to get a bunch of fouled-up thinking. He's not qualified to open his mouth, not as famous and as capable as he is on a football field, until his human spirit has been filled with God's viewpoint. And I can guarantee you, it takes a couple of years when a person wants to understand this and starts filling it before he gets anywhere at all.

The spiritual IQ, then, of any Christian, is determined by the amount of doctrinal understanding here in this human spirit. The living human spirit in a Christian enables him to comprehend and to store divine viewpoint truth from the Holy Spirit. And, of course, it is this information which is stored here that enables you to build that whole other thing, which we're not going to get into. (You can get that on tapes: the spiritual maturity structure of the soul with its grace orientation, mastery of the details of life, relaxed mental attitude, the capacity to love, and inner happiness.) The Holy Spirit and the Christian's human spirit make a united testimony then to the believer.

Getting back to Romans 8, Paul says, God the Holy Spirit Himself bears along witness with our human spirit (two witnesses) to something very important. In Deuteronomy 17:6, we have the legal principle established that a truth must be arrived at as the result of two eyewitnesses. You cannot just take one person's testimony; he may be lying. And you cannot have two people who have been inclusion with one another. People who have not spoken to each other who independently reported to you, that, in a court of law, establishes that you have a true witness. And this is the principle that you have here. You can further compare that to Matthew 18:16 and John 5:31-39 where that same concept is enunciated that it takes two independent witnesses to establish a truth.

So, the point that we are establishing here is something about ourselves. And here, God says, "I have given you two independent witnesses that will confirm something to you." "That;" this is the conjunction "hoti," indicating what. "Iemi," "we are," the verb for "the status quo." This is a continual status of the Christian, his personal condition that he is a child: a teknon. Now, we've had the word "son" before, which as you know, looks like this, "huios." The son is a legal position. That's what happens, you see, when you're adopted in the family of God - you now are called a son. Legal position. But teknon is different. We might translate it as "born one." This has to do with having been born into the family. It stresses relationship, and it is a fitting word to use because one has to be born again in order to be in the family of God and to be headed for Heaven.

I know that on the Donohue program, they turn livid with rage when people are told that if you're not born again, you're not going to heaven. But, whether they like it or not, this is true. God says without being born again, you cannot go to heaven. And this word "teknon" is specifically the word for a child who has been born into the family, and specifically, he tells us, it is whose family? It is "theos," God's family. So here's the basis of assurance. The testimony of these two witnesses tells the believer that he's a member of the family in heaven.

The assurance from the Holy Spirit, however, is not based upon some personal experience. Personal experiences can be controlled and counterfeited by Satan. The assurance from the Holy Spirit is based not on some experience that you have. People who think they're having an experience, basing some spiritual truth on an experience they have are usually listening to the voice of Satan and not the voice of God. Worse than that, our experiences are often the expression of what we want to do, and we are equating that with the voice of God, and it's got nothing to do with what God thinks. It's simply that we have arrived at something that we want to do. So, this can be dangerous territory here when we speak about the fact that God the Holy Spirit tells us something, that our human spirits tell us something relative to the fact that we are going to heaven.

The basis of our confidence of being children of God is the conviction which God the Holy Spirit indeed gives us, but He gives it to us via scriptures. He gives it to us via what the Bible teaches. So that I don't care whether it's a charismatic issue, whether it's a tongues issues, a healing issue. When you go back to the Bible, you have a clear declaration as to what is the truth on, and that is what God the Holy Spirit is saying - not what your experience you may think is saying to you. Furthermore, the human spirit, as you have seen, has been filled with God's viewpoint, so it has God's frame of reference. It has God's divine viewpoint, and it too may testify to your condition relative to being in the family of God. And such a testimony from God the Holy Spirit is a completely trustworthy/ testimony.

1 John 5, as you have often read, puts it this way, verse 9, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son." We do listen to what people tell us. God says He has told us something. Here's what He has told us, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself [via the Holy Spirit and via your human spirit]: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." Paul in 1 Corinthians has told us that those who don't believe consider the Gospel a foolish message.

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. [Not in your church, not in your personal performance. Life is in relationship to the Son.] He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. [It's as simple as that.] These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know [not hope - that ye me know] that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

**Assurance of Salvation**

That's why I've said to you when I ask somebody about their relationship to God and going to heaven, they say, "I hope so," I immediately tell them that the Word of God would indicate that if they only hope to go to heaven, it is almost certain they are not. For John says if you know the Word of God and the basis of salvation, you have made the move, God the Holy Spirit says, "Hey, you're a child of God." Your human spirit says, "Absolutely. This is true, this is confirmed." What you believe, that's the way God works, you are accepted. If you only hope, then, that shows that you have an uncertainty.

The same people who in scores of ways each day accept what people tell them will not believe what God tells them in His Word about salvation about Christian living. They'll tell them when the particular trip is going to leave on an airline flight. They'll believe the pharmacist in the prescription he makes out for them. They'll believe what the lady at the store tells them as to what's available on sale. They'll believe everything left and right constantly all day long, but we come to God, and we say, "No, I don't believe Him." And that's the point of what John is making, because in effect, you call God a liar. But Christians who live in the sphere of carnality and unsaved people, you will find are very opinionated people. They're arrogant, and they're pushy in what they think God wants done. Some people, however, become very quickly deflated once they're faced with the sudden presence of death. Then, the reality of their human viewpoint poverty comes crashing down around them, and they become fearful of meeting the God whose Bible they have ignored and called "foolishness."

Imagine yourself on KAL-007 flight out of Anchorage just after the brutal barbarians of the Soviet Union shot that plane down. As you know, the plane did not disintegrate as the India Airlines plane did recently, but actually, it was up something like 35,000 feet, and it went into a shallow spin. And for something like ten or fifteen minutes, it spun down. It was night. There was nothing but the cold, Arctic waters down below. The people on board that plane knew what was happening. They knew they were on the threshold of death.

Now how do you think the playboy, playgirl aficionado sitting there felt at that moment who was so confident in his lifestyle? How do you think that the humanist felt at that point, so confident, now he's about to face God? What testimony did he have from the Holy Spirit? None. From his human spirit? None. What did the thief, what did the adulterer, what did the fornicator, what did the humanist of every stripe, the socialist, what did all those different mentalities on that plane have at that moment?

Here and there undoubtedly were a few Christians. And for them, their ears were ringing with "The Hallelujah Chorus." They were on their way down. They knew where they were going. How did they [know] that they had an assured place in heaven? They knew within a few minutes the immaterial, inward man was going to move out of that body and they were going to be in that place that the Lord was going to prepare for them. They only knew it because God the Holy Spirit testified to that fact to them via the information of scripture. Their human spirits confirmed it to them on the basis of the Word of God stored in that human spirit. So that at that moment, for them, there was a peace on that long, long descent from that high altitude to death in the waters below.

Now, the Bible, you see, is not specifically clear on how the Holy Spirit speaks to us, but the spiritual Christian, I can assure you, gets the message. And I cannot explain to you how He speaks, but you understand, those of you who are born again who have this truth, you know that there is a peace. You know that there is a settlement. You know that while heaven is your home and you're not eager to go home, that if it's necessary, you do not do it in intimidation and groveling fear because God has testified to you an assurance that you can count on. And so, in that moment, there were people in plane KAL-007, I have no doubt, who were calling out, "Abba, Father," in their moment of preparation and anticipation.

So, we address Him as "Abba, Father." We hang on Him like children for comfort and security. We cast all our cares upon Him. We humbly wait for His answers in prayer. We want to do right because it pleases Him. We want to serve and please Him and not follow our own inclinations, even when we are not doing it. But it amounts to at the infinite price of the sacrifice of His son and death for us, God has chosen to save us from hell and to give us instead a place in heaven. God adopts us, furthermore, into His family to make it legally binding, assuring us of an eternal inheritance of all that God possesses. He sends, therefore, God the Holy Spirit into our hearts to illuminate the Word of God to us, to give us assurance that we are right with Him and we are in good standing. Our human spirit that the Spirit of God has taught further confirms that first truth.

1 John 3:1-3 say it all, ".The Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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