(15) Studies on the Holy Spirit

Discerning the Spirit’s Leading

**Romans 8:14** For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Some Guiding Principles

1. Pay Attention to the Characteristics of the Voices in Your Head
* ***From the Lord***

**John 10:3, 11, 14, 27** "To him the doorkeeper opens, and **the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.** "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. **"I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me….**

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

* *** From the Enemy***

**John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy**…”

**2 Cor. 11:13-15** For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, **disguising themselves** as apostles of Christ. 1No wonder, for **even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light**. Therefore it is **not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness**, whose end will be according to their deeds.

**2 Cor. 4:3-4** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

* ***From Self***

**Jer. 17:9** "**The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; Who can understand it?**

**James 1:14-15; 4:1-5 14** But each one is tempted **when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.** **15**Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. What is the source of **quarrels and conflicts** among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your

members? **2**You **lust** and do not have; *so* you commit murder. You are **envious** and cannot obtain; *so* you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. **3**You ask and do not receive, because you ask with **wrong motives**, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. **4**You adulteresses, do you not know that **friendship with the world is hostility toward God?** Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. **5**Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?

1. Regularly and Faithfully Pray for and Listen to the Spirit’s Leading

**It is Normal to Expect God to Speak in Your Everyday Life Through the Spirit**

* **Persistence Rewarded**

**Luke 11:5-13**

**5**Then He said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and goes to him at midnight and says to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; **6**for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; **7**and from inside he answers and says, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you *anything*.’ **8**I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him *anything* because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

**9**“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **10**For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. **11**Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? **12**Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? **13**If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

* **General & Specific Listening**

**Eccl. 5:1-2**

1 As you enter the house of God, **keep your ears open and your mouth shut.** It is evil to make mindless offerings to God. 2 Don’t make rash promises, and don’t be hasty in bringing matters before God. After all, **God is in heaven, and you are here on earth. So let your words be few.**

1. **Opening Your Heart and Mind in a General Way to the Spirit’s Leading**
	* This means, for example, asking the Lord: “What would you like for me to do today?” or “What would you like to say to me today?”
2. **Asking God for Specific & Direct Guidance**

* + This means asking God for specific answers and counsel on how to handle suffering, crisis, difficult people and/or circumstances, giving counsel to others, or how He would like to see you learn and/or grow from any of the above situations.

**James 1:5-8  *5But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.  6But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.  7For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,  8being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.***

1. Your Familiarity With the Written Word (Logos) Will Guide You in Hearing & Discerning the Spirit’s Leading (Rhema)

**2 PRIMARY WAYS GOD COMMUNICATES TO US ARE THROUGH LOGOS & RHEMA**

**There are two words in the Greek language used for “the Word of God” in Scripture:**

***LOGOS*** **(331 times in NT)**

* A more **general term** used to describe **the whole proclamation of God’s revelation in Scripture**.
* Indicates that you are emphasizing **Content.**

**“The expression of thought as embodying a conception or idea; Collect, count, say, intellectual, rational, reasonable, spiritual…”**

 (Dictionary of New Testament Theology & Vine’s Expository Dictionary of NT Words)

***RHEMA*** **(70 times in NT)**

* A more **specific term** describing **specific words and utterances**.
* Emphasis on **how the message was received** – namely, through a **Spoken Word.**

**“That which is stated intentionally: a word, and utterance, a matter, event, case…Denotes that which is spoken; what is uttered in speech…”** (Dictionary of New Testament Theology & Vine’s Expository Dictionary of NT Words)

**Both are Very Important:**

Our **familiarity** with the ***LOGOS*** (General Written Word of God; i.e. the Bible) makes it **much easier** for the Spirit to use it in **presenting us** with ***RHEMA*** (God’s Specific Spoken Word(s) for the individual living out their lives).

1. Allow No Idols to be Set Up In Your Heart

**When what we desire is Greater in Our Heart’s Than Jesus, God May Speak to Us Through the Idol – The Answer is Distorted.**

**Ezekiel 14:1-4**

Then some elders of Israel came to me and sat down before me. **2**And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, **3**“Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put right before their faces the stumbling block of their iniquity. Should I be consulted by them at all? **4**Therefore speak to them and tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Any man of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, puts right before his face the stumbling block of his iniquity, and *then* comes to the prophet, I the Lord will be brought to give him an answer in the matter in view of the multitude of his idols…

Read **Numbers 22:1-22 Balaam’s Idol**

**Romans 1:21-25**

**21**For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. **22**Professing to be wise, they became fools, **23**and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.**24**Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. **25**For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

1. Get Spirit-Led Counsel and Affirmation

**Proverbs 11:14** Where *there is* no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors *there is* **safety**.

**Proverbs 15:22** Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they **succeed**.

**Proverbs 24:6**

For by wise guidance you will wage war, And in abundance of counselors there is **victory**.

**1 Cor. 14:29**

 Let two or three people prophesy, and let the others evaluate what is said.