

Principle Number 4 – God’s Word & The Holy Spirit 01/25/12 (pm)

Proverbs 6:20–23: My son, observe the commandment of your father And do not forsake the teaching of your mother; ²¹ Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. ²² When you walk about, they will guide you; When you sleep, they will watch over you; And when you awake, they will talk to you. ²³ For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life

Psalms 119:105: Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

God provides a pattern or principle of how the Word and Spirit work together. The Word of God and the Spirit of God work in harmony.

To maintain balance, the Holy Spirit will always be in agreement with God’s Word. Where there is all Word and no Spirit there is condemnation and death. Where there is all Spirit and no Word, there is confusion and no order.

In today’s religious environment, the most prevailing and telltale sign of Christian immaturity is Biblical illiteracy. Most people don’t read God’s Word and don’t understand God’s will, His ways, or His character. God is revealed in His Word. If we don’t know His Word we can’t know Him and should not expect to know His will.

The biggest threat in the church 2,000 years ago and today is legalism. Jesus revealed this problem and Paul wrote of it in his letters to the Corinthian church. (2 Cor. 3:1-18)

Old Testament Covenant

Letter
Ink
Stone
Death
Condemnation

New Testament Covenant

Spirit
Spirit
Hearts
Spirit
Righteousness

Under the New Covenant, eternal life comes from the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives new life to all who believe in Christ. The moral law (Ten Commandments) still points out sin and shows us how to obey God, but forgiveness comes only through the grace and mercy of Christ (Rom. 7:10-8:2). Through the Holy Spirit, God provides freedom from sin and condemnation (Rom. 8:1). When you trust Christ to save you, He removes your heavy burden of trying to please Him and your guilt for failing to do so. By trusting Christ you are loved, accepted, forgiven and freed to live for Him. This is what it means when the Bible says, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (2 Cor. 3:17)

In Matthew 9:17 Jesus says that the Word (wineskin) and Spirit (new wine) must work in harmony. For the Holy Spirit to have expression it must be contained and channeled through the Word.

Jesus was the first Spirit-filled believer. He became the very Word of God. He trained for ministry for 30 years, the Holy Spirit came upon Him, and then He began His ministry for a period of just over three years.

John 1:1, 14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Acts 10:38 ³⁸ "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

John 5:19

¹⁹ Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 8:28

²⁸ So Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

Jesus limited Himself only to what was in the Word. He violated traditions of man, but never the Word.

There is not a day that we don't struggle with trying to keep God's Word and walk in the Spirit. We must continually come into agreement with the Word. The end result is a life-style wholly submitted to God. It is a moment-by-moment refilling of the Holy Spirit.

The frequency of our success in hearing from God directly increases as we apply these principles. Consistent guidance without God's Word is impossible.

Joshua 1:8-9 "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success. ⁹ "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Gifts and Fruit

We must remember that gifts of the Holy Spirit are what God does; the fruit of the Holy Spirit is who He is. Both are needed in balance for us to become all God desires of us.

One way the Holy Spirit helps us is by communicating truth. Jesus is the Truth (John 14:6), and the Holy Spirit guides believers to Him (John 16:13). People who are opposed to Christ are also opposed to His truth, and the Holy Spirit is not working in their lives. When the Spirit leads us, we can stand against false teachers and the spirit of the antichrist. Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to teach His followers and to remind them of all that Christ had taught (John 14:26). As a result, Christians have the Holy Spirit within them ("the anointing") to help keep them from going astray.

- The Holy Spirit marks the beginning of the Christian experience. We cannot belong to Christ without His Spirit (Rom. 8:9).
- We cannot be united to Christ without His Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17).
- We cannot be adopted as His children without His Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:6, 7).
- We cannot be in the body of Christ except by baptism in the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

- The Holy Spirit is the power of our new lives. He begins a lifelong process of change as we become more like Christ (Gal. 3:3; Phil 1:6). When we receive Christ by faith, we begin an immediate personal relationship with God. The Holy Spirit works in us to help us become like Christ.
- The Holy Spirit unites the Christian community in Christ (Eph. 2:19-22).
- The Holy Spirit can be experienced by all, and He desires to work through all if allowed (1 Cor. 12:11; Eph. 4:4).

The following passages from John teach these additional truths about the Holy Spirit:

- He will be with us forever (John 14:16)
- The world at large cannot accept Him (John 14:17)
- He lives with us and in us (John 14:17)
- He teaches us (John 14:26)
- He reminds us of Jesus' words (John 14:26; 15:26)
- He convicts us of sin, shows us God's righteousness, and announces God's judgment on evil (John 16:8)
- He guides into truth and gives insight into future events (John 16:13)
- He brings glory to Christ (John 16:14)

You won't know that the Holy Spirit has come if you are waiting for a certain feeling; you will know He has come because Jesus promised He would. When the Holy Spirit is working within you, you will:

- Believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and that eternal life comes through Him (1 John 5:5)
- Begin to act as Christ directs (Rom. 8:5; Gal. 5:22, 23)
- Find help in your daily problems and your prayer life (Rom. 8:26, 27)
- Be empowered to serve God and do His will (Acts 1:8; Rom. 12:6)
- Become part of God's plan to build up His Church (Eph. 4:12, 13).

All believers are baptized by one Holy Spirit into one body of believers, the Church. We don't lose our individual identities, but we have an overriding oneness in Christ.

Paul mentions two gifts God gives when we become believers:

- A seal of ownership to show who our master is.
- The Holy Spirit, who guarantees that we belong to Him and will receive all His benefits (Eph. 1:13, 14). The Holy Spirit guarantees that salvation is ours now, and that we will receive so much more when Christ returns.

Because "being led of the Holy Spirit" is the most subjective of the seven guidance principles, it can also be the most dangerous. It can usually be identified by statements such as, "God told me..." or "I feel led to..." The problem with such statements is that when someone begins a statement with "God told me" they are communicating an unwillingness to hear from anyone else. They are saying there is no higher authority to appeal to and that they have been to the mountain and have heard from God. In such instances, the person does not desire counsel.

They simply want their way. A better approach would be to say something like, "I sense the Lord has said such-and-such to me, but I also realize I am fully capable of missing Him. So, what do you think?" In this instance, the person asking for counsel is sincerely attempting to hear from God and is evidenced by their willingness to submit their plans to others and hear what they might suggest.

1 John 2:15–16: Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Some people think that worldliness is limited to external behavior – the people we associate with, the places we go, the activities we enjoy. Worldliness is also internal because it begins in the heart, and is characterized by any of the following three attitudes:

1. **Lust of the flesh** - pleasure, preoccupation with gratifying desires, to feel something.
2. **Lust of the eyes** - bowing to the god of materialism, to have something, especially financial increase.
3. **Pride of life** - obsession with status or importance or position, to be something, position and authority.

The devil's temptations focus on three crucial areas:

1. Physical needs and desires;
2. Possessions, position, and power;
3. Pride.

It's interesting to note that Jesus wasn't tempted inside the temple or at His baptism, but in the desert where He was tired, alone, and hungry, and as a result, at His most vulnerable.

Some of the ways God has provided for us to thwart the devil's attacks:

- Exercise self-control, live a "disciplined" life; be a disciple of Jesus in every area of our personal lives (mentally, physically, spiritually);
- Exercise a spirit of generosity;
- Commitment to humble service (serving, not being served).