

HOLY SPIRIT

Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the time came near for Jesus to be crucified He told His disciples that He would send another Helper to them. This Helper was the Holy Spirit and He could only be sent to live inside believers after Jesus was glorified (John7vs39).

Jesus told His disciples that it was better for Him to go than to stay because He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to them. Even though the people who were able to see and listen to Jesus in person were blessed and fortunate to have been in that position, He was in a human body which could only be in a single place at any given time.

Therefore crowds followed Him and people would stay for days listening to His teachings. Those to whom the Holy Spirit would be sent however were even more privileged because the Holy Spirit could be in many people at a single time. He would not be restricted by the limitations of a human body and could work purely in a spiritual way to teach and guide individual people in the ways of God. He would occupy every true believer in Jesus enabling each person to have God's presence with them continually.

John14vs 15 " If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

This was quite different to the way the Holy Spirit had interacted with people before the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He only came upon people to provide words of prophecy and to help those few people to complete specific work that God had for them. We read in the Bible of only a few people hearing from God and then these people telling others what they heard. In the case of very few, He stayed with them but would depart if the person was disobedient, as was the case with Israel's first king Saul.

Jesus appeared to various believers over a period of 40 days after His death and resurrection. Before ascending to heaven, Jesus told His disciples that they should wait in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts1vs4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, " which, " He said, " you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. "

Shortly after His ascension, the promise that the Father had given in the Old Testament book of Joel (Joel2vs28-29), and as confirmed by Jesus, was fulfilled with the arrival of the Holy Spirit (Acts2vs1-18). With the fulfillment of the Father's promise, the Holy Spirit not only now came to live in people when they believed in Jesus but He also came upon the believers to empower them to live their life for God and for the ministry that God had for each of them. The convicting work of the Holy

Spirit caused many thousands within a very short period of time to come to believe in Jesus and be saved thus starting the early church. This was despite a heavy persecution of the followers of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit was now coming to both the Jews and the Gentiles (Acts 10 vs 44-45) who believed in Jesus. All believers were now forming into a single body, the body of Christ, all having the same Savior, the same Holy Spirit within them and all having the same heavenly Father.

1 Corinthians 12 vs 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

The ministry of John the Baptist had been one of baptizing with water for the repentance of sin. Jesus promised that He would provide a baptism of the Holy Spirit, through faith in Him, which would reflect the forgiveness of sins. This baptism of the Holy Spirit that the disciples and other Jews with them received at Pentecost, was now continuing not only with the Jews but to Peter's amazement, also with the Gentiles who believed in the Lord Jesus. Peter later spoke to other Jews explaining the gift from God that was now available to all believers.

Acts 11 vs 15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, ' John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. ' 17 If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God? "

When Jesus had His ministry on earth, the Holy Spirit empowered the things that He did and the words that He spoke. His many miracles, which included, raising the dead, healing people's bodies and the expulsion of evil spirits, were performed by the power behind the creation of the world, the Holy Spirit. When the religious leaders accused Him of casting out demons by the ruler of the demons, He had the following to say.

Mark 3 vs 28 " Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; 29 but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation "-- 30 because they said, " He has an unclean spirit. "

Those religious leaders could not accept that Jesus was empowered by the Holy Spirit and in fact said that He had an evil spirit. The state of their heart was so dark that they could not recognize or accept the Holy Spirit's presence and power and in doing so rejected the only source of spiritual enlightenment from God that would ever be available to them. Anyone who rejects the Holy Spirit will not be able to be convicted of sin by Him, not be able to believe in Jesus Christ, not receive forgiveness for sins and not receive eternal life with God. Without the Holy Spirit, people who confess to be non-believers or even some who think they believe, are not spiritually alive to God and have no hope of the forgiveness of their sins.

Romans 8 vs 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Presence of the Holy Spirit

Jesus explained that the Holy Spirit would come to impact all people in the world in three ways.

John16vs 8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Firstly, He leads us to confession and repentance by convicting us in our heart of sin generally through the testimony of believers who spread the gospel and through God's word (the Bible). Unbelievers, who were already convicted by their conscience, would now also be convicted by the influence of the Holy Spirit through their spirits.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit also convinces us that Jesus is truly all that He said He was while He lived on earth. We can see that His work of dying for our sins was accepted by the Father in that Jesus not only rose from the dead but in going to the Father, satisfied the Father so that the Holy Spirit was sent to all who believe in the righteousness of Jesus. Because the Holy Spirit could not come until Jesus was glorified, His arrival confirmed that Jesus is all that He said He was. The presence of the Holy Spirit in sinful people who believe, testifies that God the Father has accepted us and treats us as though we have never sinned. This is so because the holy presence of God could not otherwise live in a person where sin existed.

Finally, He convinces people of judgment. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand and appreciate the things that are to come and in this way He convinces people that the spiritual ruler of this world (Satan) has already been judged (John16vs11). This also means that people who are in the world without a belief in Jesus and under the rule of Satan, have also been judged. Although unbelievers will be judged for the deeds they commit during their life, they have already been judged unworthy to receive eternal life in God's kingdom. With this sobering conviction, people are encouraged by the Holy Spirit to repent of their sins, turn away from the world and live their life for God.

When we individually truly believe in the Lord Jesus, our spirit is made alive to God through the presence of the Holy Spirit who has come to live inside us but our soul and heart still reflect the fleshly life that we have lived and they still need to be changed. God sees us as spiritual new creations who are spiritually pure, spiritually free from sin and sanctified in our spirit. It is because our spirit is holy that the Spirit of God, who is holy, can reside in our spirit. Even though we may sin through our soul and heart after becoming a believer, our spirit remains free from sin and God sees us from this perspective as being unable to sin.

1John3vs9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

When a person receives the Holy Spirit and is reconciled to God there is a significant change in the person's perception of sin and the urge to recognize it, confess it and

repent of it. Although believers may sin in the flesh, we do not sin spiritually. As we are led by our spirit, we are able to live the life God wants us to live. However, until our soul and heart are transformed, if we live purely by them, we are likely to live according to the flesh rather than the spirit and sin in our words, thoughts and actions. It is for this reason that Paul repeatedly tells us to live our life according to the spirit and not the flesh. It is the only way that we can reflect the life of Christ in our heart and soul.

By grace we are saved by Christ's blood and by grace we are able to receive the Holy Spirit and our heart and soul sanctified by His presence within us. The purpose of the first gift is so that we are able to take up the second. By faith we believe that Christ's blood cleanses us from sin. By faith we believe that God's presence is within us through His Holy Spirit and we are increasingly sanctified by living a spirit-led life.

The Holy Spirit takes the believer from spiritual darkness into spiritual light, enabling the believer to understand the word of God and to come to know God. He also provides the seal of salvation to assure the believer of their acceptance by God and the promise of eternal life. Once a person truly believes in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes confirming that the belief that the person has is one from the heart and one that satisfies God.

Ephesians 1vs 13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

It is amazing that God in His might, power and holiness would want to come into us and make His home in our individual spirits. However, we have underestimated what God is willing to do to reconcile us to Him and to get our life back on the path He wants it to be on. The presence of the Holy Spirit means that through the mystery of the Trinity, believers have the holy presence of God within us. The Holy Spirit is within us not only as Himself but also as God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ.

John 14vs 23 Jesus answered and said to him, " If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him."

The inability for many believers to really appreciate and accept the spiritual realm makes it difficult for them to believe in the internal presence of the Holy Spirit and live the new spiritual life He provides. Even though some may claim a faith in Jesus, they can still continue to feel far from God and not know how to draw near to Him and enter into a true relationship with Him. They find it hard to recognize His presence within them and therefore fail to come to know Him and commune with Him. They search for Him in church meetings, in other Christians and in church leaders but fail to find Him within themselves. However, we all must come to realize that when we truly seek Him with all our heart through faith in His Son Jesus, He comes to live inside each one of us and will reveal Himself to us.

As believers, the realization of the Holy Spirit within us and the recognition of the

spiritual life God wants us to live through Him unfortunately does not come to some at all during their life, to others it comes gradually. However, I and many others have found that it can come at a particular point in the Christian life as we made a deliberate and definite decision to truly believe and fully commit our life to God.

All Christians should examine their relationship with God and be fully satisfied that they do have a true belief in the Lord Jesus that has resulted in the Holy Spirit living inside them. Once satisfied, each person can then move on to experience God's spiritual kingdom and spiritually mature within it, recognizing how close God really is. By taking hold of God's promises regarding what the Holy Spirit is sent to achieve and leaving our old life behind, each person can live a spirit-led life and come to know God in an intimate and deep way. This will have the inevitable result of individuals living a completely different new life for God. They will gain confidence in their prayers being heard and also expect to intuitively receive thoughts from His presence within them to instruct and direct their life.

The natural tendency for some believers is to be so caught up with the activity, pleasures and cares of their daily life that they have little time, capability and inclination to look within themselves to daily transform and renew their soul and heart. This is why spiritual disciplines (discussed later) become absolutely essential for the Christian life to be successfully lived.

The Holy Spirit is a person within His own right and a part of the God-head. He is also a gentleman because He respects our free choice and will not push Himself forward. When He convicts, teaches or guides us, we must be sensitive to Him, for if we are inattentive or disobedient, we quench His influence over our life. We can also easily grieve Him when we deliberately sin without repenting of the sin and seeking God's forgiveness.

People, who heed the conviction of sin provided by the Holy Spirit and genuinely try to turn from it, can be assured that the Holy Spirit continues to help in their daily spiritual life to provide spiritual growth. The Holy Spirit's presence will ensure that they are kept spiritually safe until they die. Even if anyone loses their full and total commitment to God at points in their life, God will continually draw them back to Himself through the conviction of the Holy Spirit and keep them spiritually reconciled to Him by convicting them of their sin and drawing them back to the full commitment they once had. In this sense the faithful believer is assured of the continued presence, instruction and help of the Holy Spirit forever.

Each of us is precious in God's sight and He longs to accept each of us as His child and be near us. Paul says that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. This means that when we are truly reconciled to God and have a renewed spirit, we know deep within ourselves that God has drawn close to us as our spiritual Father. We have no doubt in our heart that no matter what others may think or say we have become God's sons and daughters.

Romans 8vs 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, " Abba, Father. " 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs--

heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

The spiritual thirst and hunger that people have can only be satisfied through a close relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that people who thirst in this way would only be satisfied by the water of spiritual life which is the presence of the Holy Spirit. His presence in us not only satisfies our spiritual thirst as we live in our physical bodies but will also provide us with eternal life in God's kingdom. Speaking to a woman at a water well, Jesus explained her need for the water that only He could provide.

John4vs13 Jesus answered and said to her, " Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life. "

The Holy Spirit also comes upon believers at particular times to specifically empower them to perform the tasks that God has for them. In describing the work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus stated that all who believe in Him can expect not only a fountain of spiritual water within themselves but also have a continuous flow of that water through which they can live their lives and then minister to others. This flow would be like a river that comes from our spirit and flows from our heart.

John7vs37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, " If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. " 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Spiritual Intuition

King David was a man who was faithful to God, loving Him, trusting Him and generally being obedient in his life. The fact that God had made such an effort to be close to the people of Israel and sought to develop a close relationship with them astounded David. He had great difficulty understanding why an awesome God would even care about people. He expressed his amazement in the following Psalm.

Psalms144vs3 Lord, what is man, that You take knowledge of him? Or the son of man, that You are mindful of him? 4 Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.

The spiritual relationship that David and others had under the Old Covenant has been greatly surpassed by the very special relationship that God provides today for all believers.

1Corinthians2vs9 But as it is written: " Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. " 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God

except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Whereas our spirit being made alive within us is totally an act by God in response to our belief in Jesus, receiving and understanding the information communicated by the Holy Spirit into our mind and upon our heart requires our spiritual discernment. It also depends on our daily cooperation and effort, working with the Holy Spirit, to make it happen. As we live in a daily close relationship with God, we receive His instruction and guidance on how to live our daily life through our intuition which comes from the Holy Spirit deep within us. The Psalmist describes this spiritual communication between a believer and God as deep calls unto deep (Psalm42vs7).

This spiritual revelation which comes by following various spiritual disciplines such as prayer, meditation on God's word and worship, enables us to come to know things which otherwise are shielded to our mental understanding. It comes in a similar way to when a person hears the conscience but this time the understanding is unlike anything we have known or experienced before. It is a deep "knowing" in our heart that we have received spiritual instruction from God within us.

1Corinthians2vs3 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

God's spiritual instruction comes strongly and most noticeably into our heart only as we have a humble attitude, yield our will fully to Him and pursue a spirit-led life. If we never want to approach God in this way and choose to only approach Him from an intellectual perspective still living a double-minded, lukewarm Christian life, our spiritual revelation will be restricted.

We can bypass the spiritual revelation of the Holy Spirit and only learn about God through our mind but this learning is usually not applied to our heart and is not the way God intended for us to be taught about Him. The Holy Spirit works on changing a person's heart because it is only when the heart changes that the person's thoughts, words and deeds change. Simple instruction of the mind without a change of heart is ineffectual and not life changing. The Holy Spirit's teaching comes through our spirit and goes into our heart it is a revelation in the heart.

Learning about God does not always develop a loving and obedient relationship with God but spiritual communion, spirit to Spirit, always will. If the Holy Spirit does not teach us spiritually in our heart, coming to know God is similar to reading about a person who we have never met. We have a vague understanding of what they are like but don't really know them at all. It is only when we meet them in person and spend a considerable amount of time with them that we really come to know them. If there is no close relationship with God and perhaps no real love for God, it will be very difficult to come to know Him and live a life dedicated to Him.

With spiritual instruction, the mind and heart follow after the spirit of the person. Once we have this understanding of how we are spiritually instructed and apply it daily to our life, we can then go to other sources of Christian learning such as books and Bible teachers but we will always do it from the perspective of humbly asking God to teach us with His Holy Spirit. Understanding this and being open to the instruction of the Holy Spirit will ensure that we learn from each source what is required by God for that particular point in time for our life.

The thoughts that enter our mind can come from three sources which are our own thinking, from God through our intuition or from evil spirits planting thoughts into our mind. It is important to be careful when we seek to listen to and apply the guidance of the Holy Spirit to our lives. Without developing our spiritual discernment we can wrongly identify thoughts arising from our own mind, and those that are planted into our mind by evil spirits, as being information received from the Holy Spirit through our intuition. All thoughts that enter our mind must be examined. We must gain a clear understanding and be confident about which thoughts are truly from the Holy Spirit.

1John4vs1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; ...

It is very important to remember that God has given us and continues to respect our own choice. When considering spiritual intuition, He does not seek to take over our thoughts, emotions or will. Teaching and instruction that we believe we receive from the Holy Spirit must be analyzed to satisfy ourselves on their source. Once satisfied that we know the source, we then have the choice of what we should do with those thoughts, even if those thoughts clearly are sourced from God. We choose how we want the thoughts to impact our life.

There is an increasing confidence in discerning and being sensitive to these intuitive thoughts as we spend more and more time daily reading and meditating on the word of God, accompanied by an attitude of submission to God's will. By daily reading the Bible, we come to know God and His general will and this enables us to receive the discernment we need to separate the thoughts that arise within us so that we can identify the voice of God and obey it.

As we receive spiritual revelation from the Holy Spirit and accept it, the result is always a deep peace and a life lived closer to God. There should be an enduring peacefulness deep inside that what is being received and acted upon is in accordance with God's will. Where there is no such peace, great care is essential for there is every likelihood that the inner voice is either your own or that of evil spirits. A hallmark of a true Christian should be a peaceful mind that comes through the presence and instruction of the Holy Spirit. Also, as we wait on God, reflecting on the spiritual guidance we receive, that guidance which is sourced from the Holy Spirit will get stronger and deeper in our heart.

We can check to make sure that this internal spiritual guidance or specific spiritual revelation is truly from God by ensuring that it is fully consistent with the general revelation we receive from the Bible. Where it is not, the teachings in the Bible must prevail. A good test of any spiritual instruction or inspiration regarding

God's general or specific will for our life is how consistent it is with the two commandments that Jesus stated were the greatest, first loving God with our entire being and then loving all people. Words from God will draw the life of a believer closer to Him and will result in us developing our Christian life and building God's kingdom on earth.

When the first man and woman created disobeyed God, Satan was able to gain access to the woman's mind to tempt her into disobeying God. This would not have been possible unless God had initially allowed it to happen. By these first people choosing to disobey God and thereby being able to receive the knowledge of good and evil, they opened the door for Satan and evil spirits to plant thoughts into our minds to a far greater extent than would have initially been possible. This is the reason why Satan has had and continues to have open access to people's minds to tempt, deceive people and draw us away from God.

Thoughts implanted into our mind from evil spirits are usually those that appear quickly in our mind without any attempt by us to think them. Typically they are thoughts that will cause us to sin, be lazy about our spiritual growth, seek the things of this world, be contrary to a love for God and people, and those that cause us to question what we otherwise know to be true or the right thing to do. We use the promises and instruction we find in the Bible to overcome and cast aside the thoughts we identify as being from evil spirits.

We are warned that Satan and therefore other evil spirits can act in a way where they try to influence people in a manner that is so close to the influence of the Holy Spirit that the people are unfortunately deceived. Paul warned the Corinthian church that even leaders in the church can be false leaders in that they themselves are deceived by Satan.

2Corinthians 11 vs 13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Some Christians are encouraged to seek internal spiritual revelation about not only themselves but also others around them. They then may convey their revelation to other Christians as words coming from the Holy Spirit. Today there are many who consider themselves to be prophets who regularly get these words of revelation but even the most experienced of these prophets can be influenced by their own spiritual feelings and those received from evil spirits. Therefore, every believer when receiving a word of this kind, must apply to it their own spiritual discernment and knowledge of God's will to determine whether it should be accepted or rejected for their life. If it in any way appears to not be from God, it must be firmly rejected because once a person accepts an evil thought in their heart, it can come to pass in their life. Even if the word received confirms aspects of your life, your hopes or your feelings, this does not in itself confirm that it comes from the Holy Spirit. We should keep in mind that there are psychics and fortune tellers who can accurately read a person's past and speak of their future by only having access to their own spiritual perception and the influence of evil spirits.

Seeking the spiritual revelation of the Holy Spirit, while being so tremendously important for believers, needs to be pursued carefully and for this reason the diligent daily reading of the word of God and caution in discerning the source of our intuitive thoughts are essential. We must individually as Christians come to know God's word, His will and know God Himself so that we are not led astray by what we may read, hear or experience. We must work towards spiritual maturity because this enables our senses and understanding to develop so that we can discern what truly comes from God.

Hebrews5vs13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Our own self-generated thoughts should be well known to us for they are our old way of living without God. They fight and resist the changes required by God due to our own attachment to the world and a love for what the world has to offer us, our own pride, passions, desires, fears, anxieties and needs. They are generally selfish thoughts that do not help us develop our spiritual life for God. These thoughts are not trustworthy and we must rely increasingly on discerning God's voice and not the voice of self that arises in our mind.

Proverbs3vs5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

The way of the natural person is to fill our mind with our experiences in this world with none or very little input from our spirit. God wants us to be spiritual people who use our mind to learn from our spirit, led by the Holy Spirit. This spiritual revelation results in a new way of thinking and a heart and life that are slowly transformed. For this reason, Jesus sometimes spoke to crowds in parables that were unclear to His listeners, which included His disciples. He did this because He did not want people to rely on their mind to receive spiritual revelation. Jesus was introducing His spiritual kingdom to them which would be within believers and was preparing them to receive the spiritual instruction that would be received from the Holy Spirit who would come to live within them after He had died and risen. The time and opportunity available for the people to be taught by Jesus was limited but once He left this world they would have the Holy Spirit.

It appears that Jesus explained the difficult parables to His disciples when they were alone so that they could have a greater understanding of spiritual things and be leaders for the people after Jesus returned to heaven and the Holy Spirit came.

Matthew13vs10 And the disciples came and said to Him, " Why do You speak to them in parables? " 11 He answered and said to them, " Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which

says: ` Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them. '

Though the mysteries of the kingdom of God were shielded from the ordinary people by Jesus, a time would soon come when a door would open for these ordinary people to enter through and be spiritually taught. A deep and close relationship between God and people would become available so that He could reveal His spiritual truths, mysteries, purposes and plans. After Jesus' death, resurrection and the arrival of the Holy Spirit, Paul speaks of God's mystery being revealed to believers (described as saints).

Colossians 1vs26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

God is the one who draws us to Himself, who blesses us and who reveals Himself and His will to us. In the explanation given by Jesus for His parables, He explains that God has granted to some the revelation of Himself and His will, these will come to know the mysteries of heaven and the spiritual life that God has for people.

Those who choose to not live this spiritual life and receive God's spiritual revelation in this way will forever try to understand and find God and live for Him but will feel distant from Him. These are the ones who are possibly happy to have a lukewarm version of Christianity and who try to find and understand Him with their mind and intellect. They claim to see but do not see, claim to hear but do not understand, for their hearts are hard and unchanged. I pray that all Christians who find themselves in this position, will cast pride aside, submit to God and behave like spiritual babies eager to learn and spiritually mature.

Luke 10vs21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, " I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight."

Once when Jesus' disciples discouraged children from coming to Jesus He reprimanded the disciples saying that the children should come to Him. He went on to use them as examples of the simple child-like faith of total surrender, openness, desire to learn, trust and dependency that was required of all people so that they could enter into God's kingdom. In fact without approaching God in this way, Jesus warned that people would not enter God's kingdom.

Mark 10vs13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, " Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it. " 16 And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

We need to take on a mind of a child for spiritual revelation cannot and will not come unless a person approaches God recognizing how little they understand about Him and accepting the need to be taught by the Holy Spirit. Whether illiterate or highly educated, we must open our life to God so that He can teach us in a spiritual way. In humility and childlike faith we turn to God, seek Him and yield to His will. As we surrender and go to God with a humble attitude eager to learn from Him and a willingness to accept by faith His promises, the Holy Spirit is able to teach, guide us and transform us.

Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Spirit of truth because He brings God's truth to us when He comes to live within us. His purpose is to guide us in God's truth so that we can know God, understand His will, be obedient to it (as it is revealed to us) and be transformed into the likeness of Christ.

John16vs 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Due to the presence of the Holy Spirit within us, John states that we therefore do not need any person to teach us but we can trust and rely on the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, to instruct and guide us.

1John2vs27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

Paul recognized the importance of human teachers and mentioned that a specific ministry that people would have is that of being a teacher. He also said that all Scripture was inspired by God and that it was profitable for teaching and training. However, while this ministry is so important, it should never be a substitute for individuals daily spending time themselves seeking the instruction of the Holy Spirit. The writer of the book of Hebrews says that Christians who have been Christians for a while should themselves be able to teach rather than continually be taught things they should have already come to know.

Hebrews5vs12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

God wants every person who is a Christian believer to take hold of the promise of the Holy Spirit teaching them. As we do, we will find that although teaching from other people is useful, it supplements our greatest learning and the spiritual growth which will come from our daily time alone with God. It is only from this source of learning that we are able to move from the milk of babes to the solid food that is for the spiritually mature.

Our knowledge and experience comes from our life on earth and our ability to comprehend the spiritual kingdom of God and live effectively in it, is limited to what He has and is willing to spiritually reveal to us through our intuition. Jesus came from above and His understanding, wisdom and revelation was so comprehensive that He told His disciples that He could not tell them everything because of their inability to comprehend the full picture. The instruction and guidance that is available to all true believers from the Holy Spirit enables us to find out God's general revelation of Himself and His will, as well as, His specific revelation for the life of each person.

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