What is the Holy Spirit’s Ministry to the Church? Part 2b

By Charles Feinberg

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Continuing on with this blessed truth of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, not only is this taught in John's Gospel, Notice it in the wonderful first Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 2 verses 9 to 16 we have an extended passage which is actually a focal passage on the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. says the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians believers, "But just as it is written things which I has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not entered into the heart of man", they have not entered the heart of man, "All that God has prepared for those who love him". That's a beautiful verse. Many times it's read at funerals that in heaven there will be things that we haven't seen with our eyes, we haven't heard with our ears, it's not entered in, these things have never entered into the reflective processes of man, his thinking apparatus God has prepared for those who love him. But my dear friends we don't dare stop there, He's not talking about the future here he's talking about a present reality. "For to us God revealed them". They can't come through the gate. They can't come through the ear gate. They can't come through the reflective or reasoning gate of man. But they must come by revelation, what we've been saying already. You cannot depend just on man's teaching. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit. The reason so many people are aberrations and in so many isms and schisms and asms and spasms As far as doctrines are concerned and the reason they are in so many cults and sects is because they are waiting for some man to say the last word. Well so-and-so holds this and also holds that and I understand that so-and-so takes this position; that
can never be the final authority. These were more noble the believers these were more noble than those of Thessalonica in that they did what they searched the scriptures daily not for some moral authority. It doesn't mean that were not to listen to others too but let's look. Ultimately the Spirit of God.

They searched the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so and the Spirit of God won't mislead you. He never has, he never will. For to us God revealed them through the spirit. Not through greater training, not through seminary or university academic training, he reveals them through the Spirit "for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God". There are depths of Satan, there are depths of man, and they can be searched out by some others but it takes the Spirit of God to search out the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the Spirit of man which is in him? I know how a man feels when he's grieved. I know how a man feels when he's disappointed. I know how a man heals when some of his plans have gone awry because I have the spirit, or nature, of a man in me. Even so, the thoughts of God nobody knows except the Spirit of God. on our plane If we can't know what goes on in the thinking process of angels, and they're above us, how can we possibly know friend what goes on in that infinite sphere about the angels? They're just created beings. They are important beings but they are created, but God is not.

No one can know the thoughts of God, hear it again. "Even so, the thoughts of God No one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God". Why? "That we might know the things freely given to us by God. Spirit of God to teach the things of God. Well that fits. If we are going to know spiritual things, if we're going to have a spiritual birth, we must be born of the Spirit that's why we need to be regenerated. Now we need to be Spirit taught if we are going to have Spirit outlook on truth.
spiritual truth can only be comprehended, You're going to see it some more here in a moment, in 1 Corinthians 2, "that we might know the things freely given to us by God which things we also speak not in words Taught by human wisdom". Watch your language, too many people are preaching and using the language of the street and some things that are far from proper. Paul is indicating in 1 Corinthians 2:9 that the things that we speak are not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. I often say that if we are talking about spiritual concepts, then in the name of high heaven and in the name of common sense, we really ought to be using spiritual words. If it's a truth taught by the Spirit, then he can teach it in spiritual words, in phraseology that magnifies the truth that's being brought out. He goes on to say, the Apostle Paul does, "But a natural man", that's man as he's naturally born, "Does not accept the things of the Spirit of God". He doesn't have the apparatus to, it's out of his realm. It's just like trying to teach Calculus to a 3 year old child that doesn't know arithmetic. It's out of his field, it's beyond him. He's beyond his depth, the natural man, doesn't accept the things of the Spirit of God because he doesn't have the Spirit of God in him you see. They are foolishness to him and he'll tell you that in just so many words. He cannot understand them. And when he tells you, "I don't understand what you're saying", he's not lying. He is not parrying words. He is not just joking. He cannot understand them because they are spiritually, or by the Spirit of God, appraised. They’re evaluated. They've got to be judged in a spiritual manner. But he who is spiritual, that is one indwelt by the Spirit of God, appraises all things. Yet he himself is appraised, or evaluated, or understood by no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct him? The only way anyone can know the mind of the Lord is by being taught of the Spirit of God. No one can do that on his own. Who has known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct him? A man can't instruct God that he may claim he
knows things so well. Is he going to try to teach God? No. But we have the mind of Christ and along with that goes the blessed Ministry of the Spirit of God.

And then in that famous passage in the first Epistle of John, we are still on the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, 1 John 2, verse 20 and 27. Says he, "but you believers have an anointing from the holy one and you all know". The anointing then, is a ministry of the Holy Spirit that makes a believer aware of spiritual truth and of spiritual realities. "Therefore they know", the world doesn't know. But you all know. And it's for you the anointing which you receive from him abides in you. It doesn't fluctuate. It all depends on your degree of commitment to the Spirit of God. As to how much that anointing will accomplish in your life. "But as for you", he says, "The anointing which you receive from him abides in you. You have no need for anyone to teach you", meaning apart from the Spirit of God. If the Spirit of God wants to use a man some have used this passage to say that nobody needs to be taught of any individual in the church. That can't be true because Ephesians, we're told by Paul with the same Spirit of God and that the Spirit of God has placed among gifted men in the church those that are pastors and teachers. So when he says you have no need for anyone to teach you, he means as your ultimate expectation. He is not your last resort. the last resort beyond him is the Spirit of God and the spirit of God will tell you whether that man is teaching you according to what the Spirit of God wants or not. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and is true and is not a lie, Yes, The important thing in truth is this so. Or is it falsehood? He can teach you what is true and is not a lie and just that it is as it has taught you, you abide in Him. Wonderful, Blessed truth.

And then, in 1 Corinthians 12:10 and 11 Speaking of the gifts, not gifted men now, but gifts to the church; 1 Corinthians 12, "and to another the affecting", or the accomplishing, "of miracles to another prophecy", that was in the early church, "and to another the distinguishing of
spirits. To another, various kinds of tongues", that's languages, "and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things distributing to each one individually just as he wills". Notice how much depends on the will of the Blessed Spirit of God.

And then in 1 Corinthians 14:3, "But one who prophesies", that means preaches as we speak of it today, "but one who prophesies", in the New Testament meaning of the word, "speaks to men for edification", He builds them up, "exhortation", tells them to put what he's taught them into practice. And sometimes the members of the congregation, people in the body of Christ, don't need to be instructed further, they don't need to be told in a sense that you should do this or that or the other, but they need to be consoled because of the many harassments of life, the many trials of life and the separations in life by death. So "edification, exhortation, and consolation". And a godly pastor, if you will watch it, will be majoring in these three paramount areas. He will edify the church, He will exhort the church, he will console the church. And that is all a definite teaching ministry of the word of God.

Now, in Ephesians 4:11 we have what we've already indicated, the gift of gifted men. Now will teaching be among them? Is that necessary? Is that an important area of life in the church for a believer? "He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors, and teachers". Yes. Apostles are not here, some of these gifts were temporary but, there are no apostles now since the first century A.D. But some pastors, notice the word pastors and teachers. And the Greek grammar there is such that pastors and teachers are joined together grammatically as an equipment of the same persons and individuals. You see, the Spirit of God intends to use teachers but our ultimate dependence and expectation are to be, they are, from the Holy Spirit Himself. We need to realize our need of his teaching work and that no one can ever take his place.
We're told that many years ago on the throne of Russia there were two boy princes. That throne was once occupied by two boy princes. They sat side by side and when matters came before them they gave their decisions on the very gravest questions. Their judgments were so wise and just that older men, far beyond them in years, marvel that Princes so young and inexperienced in life could know so much of statecraft, and of government, and administration of the affairs of state, or speak with such discretion on questions so very difficult and involved, complex. But the Spirit was, not just their Spirit small s, the Spirit behind them was this, the secret was that close behind the throne where they sat hidden by a thin veil was their mother. The Princess Sophia. Interesting that her name should be the Greek word for wisdom. She heard the cases brought to them and she was the one that gave the decisions which they pronounced. Those boys referred everything to her, waited until she whispered to them the wise answer they delivered. Similarly my friends in a far higher, infinitely higher sense, we are to refer every matter to the Holy Spirit and he will teach us the will of God.

We have heard then and studied, we have been discussing these ministries of The Holy Spirit that are to be repeated again and again, the more often the better. Leading, teaching, and now a third one and we shall yet in another message spend the entire time on this. We must touch on it now though and that's the filling Ministry of the Holy Spirit. The filling, F-I-L-L-I-N-G.

The filling Ministry of the Holy Spirit. That was the blessed experience of the witnesses in the early church. It goes through as a beautiful refrain. Beautiful to watch it and to notice it. Acts 2:4, "and suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind and it filled the whole house where they were sitting". The concept of filling. Now the fourth chapter of Acts, verse 8 and 31, "then Peter, filled, with the Holy Spirit", watch that word, "filled with the Holy Spirit", not just wrought upon the Spirit but he was filled with the Holy Spirit said to them, rulers
and elders of the people”. And then we read on in Verse 31 of Acts 4, "and when they had prayed", believers, "the place where they had gathered together was shaken and they were all filled", again mark the word filled, "filled with the Holy Spirit began to speak the Word of God with boldness". Notice of Ephesians 5:18, "And do not get drunk with wine for that's dissipation", excess, riot. Other Translations indicate, "Don’t get drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit". Isn't that an amazing thing to contrast, the filling of the Spirit with wine? What's the resemblance? Ah we'll discuss that further in another message. But it is interesting that you have these two contrasts, "don't get drunk with wine for that's dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit".

Acts 6 verses 3 and 5. "But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation". Some of the widows in the church were complaining that they were being passed over, that there was favoritism being shown to others and that they needed help as well. So the word came from God, from the Spirit, "Select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, Full of the Spirit", There it is, "and of wisdom whom you may put in charge of this task". "And the statement found approval with the whole congregation. They chose Steven a man full of faith", Watch it now, "And of the Holy Spirit and Philip Prochourus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, proselyte from Antioch". Then Galatians 5:22 and 23, “but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law". You say, "Where is the filling?" Oh you can't bring forth the fruit of the Spirit unless there's the filling of the Spirit. 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". We’ve got to have things cleared, the decks have to be cleared if we are going to be filled. There can't be debris along the line there. No, all believers have the indwelling of the spirit, hear it friends, all
may have the in-filling of the spirit. It's for service as we saw in Acts 6:3 and 5. It's for the fruit in the Spirit as we saw in Galatians 5:22 and 23, just been quoting those.

Nowhere isn't this an interesting thing friend? Look it up in the New Testament, verify this, check on it. Nowhere are we asked in the New Testament to pray for power for God's service. You won't find a single verse. Nowhere are we encouraged in the New Testament to ask or to pray for power for God's service. Why not? When filled with the Spirit there is all the power ever needed. To be filled with the Spirit the conditions must be met. And there are three very clear ones. There is all matter of confusion here in the minds of many. I will go into that more fully as we say in another study. The conditions are all sin must be confessed and put away. 1 John 1:9, "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness".

Secondly, the life must be surrendered. Unyieldedness hampers the work of the Spirit, 1 Thessalonians 5 and 19. Sin must be confessed because Ephesians 4:30 says that we are not to grieve the Holy Spirit, he cannot work his fullness in us, he cannot dwell in us and through us with the fullness that he wants as long as we grieve him. "Don't grieve the Spirit of God by whom you are sealed for the day of redemption. Well how can we keep from that? By being cleansed. Sin must be confessed and cleansed away. The life must be surrendered, there must be yieldedness, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, "do not quench the Spirit, don't suppress him, don't hold him down, don't hold him back. Romans 12:1-2, "I urge you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God to present your body as a living and Holy Sacrifice, acceptable to God which is your spiritual service of worship". Life's got to be surrendered for the filling. "Don't be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind", that you may prove, that you may find out beyond a shadow of a doubt what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable
and perfect. Ah, then you are filled with the Spirit. All sin must be confessed and put away, the life must be surrendered, there must be a conscious dependence on the Spirit of God in a proper spiritual lifestyle. Galatians 5:16, "But I say, walk by the spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh". How great is the necessity for yieldedness that the Spirit may work through the light. You see lightning in the sky, The Lightning's going to strike comes down a tree. But it's the tree that's nearest and the best conductor. It's the law of nature that as the lightning flashes along over the tops of the trees, it chooses the tree that is nearest to it and is the best conductor for it and down that tree it comes. In 2 Chronicles 16:9 we read, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth to find a good conductor". Yes and he will come down and flow through the man or woman that's the best conductor. Here is a man that is greatly used of God. You're not greatly used of God yet you know far more than he does. Why is that? Something is the matter with the conductor. Yieldedness is vital.

I heard of a dear man of God preaching in Canada. He was so feeble he couldn't stand to preach. He was so feeble he couldn't sit to preach. They had to bring him in on a cot. His voice was so thin that they had to have cotton bats certain bats of cotton suspended from the ceiling so his voice wouldn't be dissipated. And that dear man of God preached with such power that when he finished and gave an invitation for those who wanted to yield their lives for full time service on the mission field for Christ, The record is not fiction but fact, that there were some three hundred young people, young men and young women, that gave themselves for the mission field. What a power for God. Oh are you a conductor? Are you a good conductor? Yieldedness is vital.

Now the believer can never be filled too often. The more obedient he is to the Lord in his word, the more often he will be filled. It'll mean everything to his life, to his service for God, to His joy, to his effectiveness. It was when Bishop Simpson reached, preached years ago in
Memorial Hall in London. He preached quietly and with very little motions or gesticulation. But he did so with such power, Think of it, that the whole assembly as if moved by an irresistible impulse arose at the climax of his message Then after a second or two sank into the seats. It's been over forty years ago, my dear friends, that I was in a meeting in the first Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas and that great man of God was preaching to a country-wide Sunday school convention, Dr. Robert G. Lee of Memphis, and he was showing the preeminence of Christ. He says, "You mention a Calvin, I'll mention a Luther. You mentioned a Barnabas, I’ll mention a Paul. You mention this one, I'll mention that one. You mention that". Then he said, "But Christ", and all that congregation with two balconies stood up and applauded to a [inaudible], I'll never forget it. What power. Yes. Something similar to that happened when Bishop Simpson preached years ago in Memorial Hall in London. A professor of elocution was at that meeting in London. a friend, a friend who knew that he had come to criticize asked that Professor of elocution, Today we call him Professor of speech or communication, that friend who had known who knew that he had come to just tear the message apart, Asked him after the service, "How did you like the bishop's, How did you like that Bishop's elocution?" "Elocution", He said, "that man doesn't need elocution. He's got the holy spirit." right, the secret of his power was not just the indwelling of the Spirit but the filling of the Spirit. That is the provision for us as well.

What is the Ministry of the Holy Spirit to believers? Ah, my dear friends it is one healing, it is teaching, it is filling. These are the repeated ministries. The others that are not repeated are the ones that were in an earlier message on regeneration, Baptizing, indwelling, and sealing. Oh be led of the Spirit, to be taught of the Spirit, to be filled with the Spirit. May God graciously grant that you, dear friend, as a believer may realize the blessing of his filling. In his name we ask it.