

*Are You
Spirit-Taught?*

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INTRODUCTION

“Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things” (John 8:28).

One of the greatest needs of our day is to learn how to be taught by the Holy Spirit. In John 8:28, Jesus said He spoke only what the Father taught Him. In His humanity, He would not communicate outside of the Father’s doctrine. In my years as a pastor, I have watched people stumble at this simple truth. Jesus taught only what He was taught by the Father through the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit can only bring to our remembrance what we have been taught by Him.

There is a way to go and it’s very clear. The disciple who is being taught is not above his Master, Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:24-25). The ser-

vant is not above his Lord. In God's plan, the disciple will be treated the same way that his Lord was treated. If Jesus, who was perfect, was called Beelzebub, the prince of demons, how much more will be said against us? If we are not Spirit-taught, we won't be led in the way we are to go. As a result, the challenges we face will cause us to be distracted from Him.

God wants to teach us by the Spirit so that we can be more than conquerors, overcomers in this life. Spirit-taught people will have a greater impact upon this nation than any other group of people. They can, by their obedience to the Word of God, literally help to restrain judgment upon America. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (Psalm 76:10). For our nation, our churches, and our families, it is more important than ever that Christians learn how to listen and to be taught by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter One
NOT AS THE HORSE,
OR AS THE MULE

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee” (Psalm 32:8-9).

I want you to notice the crucial principle contained in these verses. It is very important that a believer listen every time the Word of God is spoken and do exactly as it says; he should not let his mind wander. “I will guide thee with mine eye,” the Bible tells us. This is the Holy Spirit saying that He will guide the believer with His divine perception.

“Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding.”

The Hebrew text speaks of a horse that has

been trained over and over again but cannot be controlled by its owner. The mule speaks of stubbornness and a lack of experience with its owner. Similarly, many believers have no understanding because of rebellion, stubbornness, and a lack of personal appropriation of their training in the Word of God.

“Whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle....” The rebellious horse will not do anything unless it is forced to by its master. “... Lest they come near unto thee.” Some Christians will always be in a state where God is using situations and circumstances to bridle them. It doesn't have to be this way! God has promised to teach His people in the way which they should go, guiding them with divine perception, divine awareness, divine knowledge, and divine information by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Distraction and Blasphemy

“He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy [Spirit] shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven

him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy [Spirit], it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matthew 12:30-32).

Take everything that comes from the Word of God as it really is. The Bible says it's all inspired, in 2 Timothy 3:16. Those who speak from the Scriptures and about them aren't necessarily inspired, but the Word of God in itself is totally inspired.

In the particular context of Matthew 12:30-32, *blasphemy* implies distraction. Sooner or later, those who have been distracted (pertaining to Christ and His Body), will scatter with their words of analysis about a church. Those who speak against the Body are distracted from doctrine and distracted from Jesus Christ, and they are blaspheming Christ. They can be forgiven at any instant, but, for the moment, they are against Him. Thousands of Christians do not understand that they are living in blasphemy against the Word of God because they have never been thoroughly Holy Spirit-taught with doctrine.

During Jesus Christ's time on earth, there were multitudes of people who said they were not against Him. They said, "We're not fighting Him! We're not repudiating Him in any way."

As Jesus illustrated, this wasn't enough: "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." In other words, a Christian who is not constantly gathering with Jesus Christ is not *for* Jesus Christ. He may not do anything by word or deed that seems to go against Jesus Christ. He may even be saved and going to heaven, but he is against Jesus Christ.

In verses 31 and 32 of this passage, Jesus speaks of the two categories of people who do the scattering: one is outside the church, and the other is inside the church. The one who commits blasphemy against the Spirit is the unsaved person who rejects Christ. Then, in verse 32, "who-soever speaketh a word against the Son of man" is someone inside a church who goes against His Body.

The Bible teaches that, as Christians, each of us is a member of His body, flesh, and bones (Ephesians 5:30). We have been joined together with Him in one spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17) and, therefore, all believers throughout the world make up the one new man of Ephesians 2:15. To speak against any one of God's people, whatever weaknesses he may display, is to blaspheme Jesus Christ's wisdom and Jesus Christ's understanding. It is a violation of Romans 14:1—"Him

that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.”

Avoid Ungodly Counsel

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful” (Psalm 1:1).

The believer who avoids ungodly counsel and scornful words will be blessed. The Holy Spirit will instruct him in the way that he should go. This person will be guided by God’s divine understanding. He is not like the rebellious horse, unable to be trained, nor as the stubborn mule. Multitudes of Christians go to churches for years, but when pressures and trials arise, as God said they would (John 15:18; Luke 6:22, 26), they still do not know how to be Spirit-taught.

Chapter Two
THREE WAYS THE SPIRIT
TEACHES US

“... Hearken unto me: hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom” (Job 33:33).

I would like to bring out the three meanings of the word *teach*. First, it means *academic concentration* under the instruction of a pastor-teacher in a local church. In Proverbs 1:4, in the original Hebrew, *discretion* implies keen perception through concentration. Academic concentration means a believer is to have a single eye in human perception.

The pastor should offer more than just good messages. He must teach the whole counsel of God, based on the Finished Work of Christ. He teaches not only categorical doctrine but also governmental doctrine, meaning the believer is taught how to live in the Father’s plan, in the character of the Son’s execution, and in the attributes of the Holy Spirit’s revelation and illu-

mination of the Word of God. This practice helps the mind of Christ to be formed in the believer.

The second meaning of *teach* is *academic discipline* toward the pulpit's communication. Whenever humanly possible, the believer comes to hear doctrine when it is being taught. He does everything in his power to take advantage of the classroom of opportunity, "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus" (Ephesians 4:21).

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:4-7).

Thirdly, as the above passage shows, God teaches through *chastisement*. This is not something to be considered hard and ugly. Chastisement is to be thought of as something that produces peaceable fruit of righteousness after it's been experienced (Hebrews 12:11). I don't think a parent considers the discipline he places

upon his child as an unkind thing. No, this kind of chastisement is necessary to bring brokenness and meekness into a child's life.

The Fear of God

"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD" (Psalm 34:11).

"And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things" (Psalm 45:4).

God wants to teach us terrible things! These aren't bad things. *Terrible* speaks of the awesome power of Christ. These are the things that lead to the reverential fear of the Lord. The world has seen nations crumble, but many still refuse to see Christ as the King of the nations (Jeremiah 10:7). History comes and goes, but He is not honored as the controller of history. Why? People refuse to be taught. There is no way to find God's way unless He is allowed to teach us with knowledge in concentration and academic discipline.

Lessons of Faith

"Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.... Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way" (Psalm 25:4, 8).

Many people refuse to be taught lessons of faith when they don't understand God's plan beyond what they can see. Psalm 25:8 tells us that when we did not know Him, He taught us and led us in the way. It was a lesson of faith taking us beyond sight. Jesus said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," and many disciples went back and followed Him no more (John 6:53-66). Those who went back would not go beyond what they perceived with their senses. They trusted only what they saw and felt in their emotions and minds.

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" (Isaiah 50:10). When we walk in darkness and have no light, we are to keep our minds stayed upon Him. Very few Christians have allowed themselves to be taught how to do this. If the average church today went through a trial, the majority of its members would leave almost instantly. They don't know how to walk in darkness and still trust in the name of the Lord. After they have departed, they will tell others, "Watch that church over there." Words of unbelief and

evil will come out of their mouths. There will be murmuring and complaining.

People get alone in dark corners because they have never been Spirit-taught. They do not know how to apply knowledge through faith in the midst of darkness, and they don't have the power to walk in a faith that works by love (Galatians 5:6).

Chapter Three

THE FRUIT OF BEING SPIRIT-TAUGHT

When I step outside of God's teaching, I am living in the knowledge of the flesh and the experience of my emotions. It is then that God treats me as a rebellious horse or a stubborn mule. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6a). I may have an intellectual understanding of Truth, but I lack the Spirit-taught doctrine that goes beyond sight.

Colossians 2:7 says that as we have been taught, we are to abound in thanksgiving. The praise and thanks we give to God must be according to teaching, not according to our emotions. Everything comes down to teaching.

Notice this, in 1 Thessalonians 4:9: "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." Only God can teach us how to love. No one else can do this.

The Spirit-taught Christian is the Christian who is always comforted. Amy Carmichael, life-long missionary to India, wrote that to be comforted means to be strengthened by God's indwelling illuminations at all times. "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort" (2 Corinthians 1:3). God has given His written Word "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Meekness: A Necessity

"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Psalm 25:9).

No one is Spirit-taught unless he is meek, living the words of 1 Corinthians 13, the great 'love' chapter. A person may be knowledgeable, yet not Spirit-taught. The meek believer thinks no evil. He believes all things. He rejoices not in iniquity, but in Truth. He bears all things and hopes all things. He edifies with every word he speaks. This is a meek person, one who has been taught by God.

"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21).

God's way is to bring every believer to Calvary so that we might learn meekness. Do you know why we get offended? Because we are not meek. Do you know why we get our feelings hurt? Because they are not crucified. Do you know why we worry? Because we live in natural faith. We worry when this type of faith doesn't fulfill us by sight. Each of us needs to be taken the way of the Cross to be broken with God's meekness.

Spirit-Taught to Teach Others

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works" (Psalm 71:17).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy [Spirit]: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

God is always ready to teach us. We need to be taught to number our days. He wants to teach us how to follow the way to the Cross in order to find meekness. He wants to teach us how to deliver our own soul and be equipped to

teach others. Teaching comes with concentration, with academic discipline, and with chastisement through love and grace.

There are multitudes of Christians who leave a ministry when it goes through a difficult trial. They have never been Spirit-taught. They don't understand Calvary, nor the way they should go.

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts" (Isaiah 28:9). God will teach us knowledge if He can wean us from depending upon the "mother's breast."

"Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word. Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes" (Psalm 119:65-68). Verse 66 of Psalm 119 says "teach me good judgment and knowledge," but the original Hebrew reads "teach me lovingkindness," meaning He wants to give us the contract of grace and the covenant of mercy. Through afflictions, the Psalmist writes that he was taught that God will always treat him according to His word of love. This all comes through teaching.

It's more than just listening. These things must be taught to us by the Spirit of God.

Ceasing Not to Teach

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42).

“Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets” (Luke 13:26).

The Apostles ceased not to teach ‘Jesus’. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:2, “I am determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” These verses are considered outdated by some Christians today. We must not cease to teach, even in the streets. Street preaching may not be popular, but neither was Jesus—and He was a street preacher. He taught people in the streets.

If people are going to hell, if people are wounded and hurt and sick, we have to try to help them no matter where we have to go. The way has been established, the mandate is clear. Let's continually be taught by the Holy Spirit so we can go forward, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching with confidence the way of the Lord (Acts 28:31).

CONCLUSION

The meek will He teach, the humble will hear Him. As you have been taught in the Lord Jesus, so walk ye in Him (Ephesians 4:21, Colossians 2:6-7). There has never been a time when it has been more necessary for Christians to really be taught by the Spirit of God. We cannot afford to sit in the counsel of any ungodliness.

My prayer to the Father is this: Teach me, teach me, teach me! in grace and in love. Only the Spirit-taught Christian will go in God's way, the narrow way of Calvary, which means often walking in darkness, many times without *any* light. That Christian will make right decisions according to the Word, even when things are beyond his understanding, and he will go forward because he is after God with all of his heart.