

September 11, 2022 AM  
Pastor Ken Hepner

***LIVING LIFE IN THE SPIRIT OF GOD:***

6. "Hearing His Voice of Direction"

I Corinthians 14: 1 – 5

**Introduction:**

This morning we are continuing a series of messages regarding what it means to be truly born again, to be inhabited by the Holy Spirit. This is what happens when we decide to become a believer in Christ, invite Him to cleanse us of sin, and welcome Him to live in our lives. He invades us and begins a lifetime of transformational **Love** of **Heaven** dwelling in our lives!

The series is building on a powerful theme of Scripture. **The Almighty God has planned and purposed in His heart to Know each one of us Intimately**, as His sons and daughters, by His Holy Spirit living in our lives. He has been working at this desire in His heart to know us and walk through life with us for thousands of years.

This is the wonder before us: The Lord God Almighty desires to **Partner** with you and me, as we live our lives here on earth each day. He desires to give us the incredibly wonderful privilege of living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, to walk with Him and talk with Him each new day.

A second factor has to be stated and understood in the light of this deep longing and desire in God's heart. Satan is God's mortal enemy, the prince of this world, who absolutely hates God and everything that God loves.

Satan and his kingdom beings violently oppose God's Spirit living in us, transforming us, and using us as vehicles of God's grace for God's glory. The reason should be obvious, but let's state it. If we are glorifying God on the earth, the enemy loses power! Every time one of us is redeemed, comes to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, Heaven is populated and Hell is depopulated. The evil one does not take that lightly! We can expect some backlash.

This morning we will study the various ways we may hear the Lord speak to our hearts! Let's begin with Jesus' wonderful promises regarding the desire in God's heart to speak to each of His adopted sons and daughters by the Spirit. The Spirit speaks to each one of us about **His perfect Will, Provisions, and Power**.

*John 16:12 – 15 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."*

There are many ways God speaks to and through His people today: We will begin with the most obvious one: God speaks to us through the **Scriptures**, that is through the correct interpretation

of what the Bible speaks to our hearts and lives, as we are taught by the indwelling Spirit, who makes it come alive!

By **Strong Conviction** and accompanying **Peace** when we repent and surrender to His leadership.

Through inner **Impressions** or leadings, nudges of His Spirit, and **Whispers** of His voice, “Do this,” or “Go over there and talk to that person.”

Through **Dreams, Visions, and Mental Images** the Lord may put in our hearts while we are wide awake, going through a normal day.

Through the **Preaching and Teaching** of the Word of the Lord, as God anoints people to do so. God the Holy Spirit puts things in the hearts of humble, contrite and brokenhearted teachers.

Through the **Prophetic Gifts** of the Spirit, which He makes available to the children of God. These are tongues, interpreting tongues, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, discerning spirits, and prophecy. God speaks to His people through giving words of knowledge and understanding we couldn't know apart from Him.

Through **Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual songs** that we hear sung, worship music that we sing, and music written to speak the truths of God into our hearts.

Through **One Another**, in that as He works in our hearts and we share that with each other, He can and does use those words of testimony we give to encourage and challenge others.

The affects of God the Holy Spirit giving prophetic words to the body of Christ today can be really wonderful. As God speaks and confirms His words to our hearts it has the affect of encouraging us and strengthening our faith, as we walk with Him together. As He leads us and counsels us to do things, then we see fruit born out of those things we do, it can have a tremendous strengthening and faith-building affect on our Christian walk.

When the Lord speaks to His sons and daughters, and then through them to the gathered church, the affects of this on people who are unchurched and Prechristians, can be tremendous. The Bible speaks to this, in the Scriptures, I Corinthians 14:24, 25: *“But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, ‘God is really among you!’”*

## **I. The Anointing is for Everyone:**

I John 2:20 and 27 *“But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit – just as it has taught you, remain in him.”*

The anointing of God, as it is referenced here in John's open letter to the Church, is synonymous with the life of the Lord Jesus flowing into our lives by the powerful presence of the Spirit in us. The anointing is in essence divine life, the inner ministry of the Holy Spirit of God in each of His people. This is without question based on intimate relationship with God. It is the deeply settled truth that He is our inner **Counselor and Teacher**, who desires to tell us things and grant us knowledge we couldn't possibly have without His direction.

John's words are written to people who are sons and daughters of God, people in whom dwells the Spirit of God. He isn't writing these words to pastors and teachers, or to some classification of super believers. He is writing to people just like you and me and he says, "*you (all) have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.*" He wants to make it clear to all of us that the Lord God will communicate with His people!

This is deeply personal and relational as outlined in his words to Christians in verse 27b, "*But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit – just as it has taught you, remain in him.*" The picture drawn by His words: "*As his anointing teaches you, ... remain in him,*" is that His life and ministry of His Spirit must be **Cultivated** in and through a deepening intimacy with God the Spirit by faith in our Lord Jesus!

One of the ways the Spirit of God brings powerful anointing into our lives is that He makes the Word of the Lord come **Alive!** This is His inner ministry of **Illumination!** As Spirit-directed people read, study, and meditate upon His word in the Scriptures, He makes words on a page spring to life in us, filling us with powerful truths He wants us to know.

**The characteristic of Spirit-empowered and Spirit-anointed study of the Scriptures is that it takes us into an encounter with Jesus, impassioning us to know and walk with Him daily in increasing intimacy with Him.**

The other way His anointing teaches us, is that He will impress upon us things we couldn't possibly know apart from His teaching and counseling us within This is His inner ministry of **Insight**. He will tell us things to help us to better minister His grace, mercy, and drawing love to others, proving both to us and to them how deeply He loves us. There have been times God has given Raina and me precious words through other people, and He has likewise, used us in ministering encouraging and uplifting words to others.

## **II. The Holy Spirit's Counsel to Our Hearts:**

I Corinthians 2:10 – 16 "*But God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's*

*judgment: 'For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?' But we have the mind of Christ."*

Paul tells the Corinthian church, and you and me, some absolutely powerful things about the role of the Holy Spirit in communicating truth to people. One of the most profound things Paul tells us in this passage of Scripture about the communicative work of the Spirit is that He in fact, **reveals God's Heart** to His adopted sons and daughters. This is what the Greek word "propheteuo" means – to tell forth the Word of God. It isn't just telling what will happen, but speaking the whole counsel of God.

Scripture teaches us that God's thoughts are so much higher than our thoughts, and His ways higher than our ways. We must have help to know and learn to understand the desires God cherishes in His heart, because knowing Him is not something we can do in and through our human capabilities alone.

Paul's analogy is powerful. No one can read another person's mind perfectly to know what that person is thinking, without being given glimpses into the soul and the feelings of that person. In like manner, no one can know the mind of God, without the Spirit of God taking us to that understanding.

Paul takes us to the place where we must understand that knowing God intimately is a personal and profoundly spiritual journey! He tells his readers the Spirit of God expresses spiritual truths in spiritual words, and only those whom He has made alive by His Spirit can understand this. We are absolutely dependent upon the Spirit of God to take us to deeper levels of **Spiritual Understanding!**

He makes it extremely clear when he says the person who tries to understand spiritual truth with natural metaphors and intelligence is destined for a frustrating journey. Verse 14 is quite explicit: *"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned."*

The Lord wants us to be gripped by the truth that we have been given the privilege of knowing Him and that He dwells in us by His Spirit. Paul puts it in specific and concrete terms for us here, that we have been given the **Mind of Christ**. The Holy Spirit who lives in us makes known to us His thoughts and the desires of the heart and mind of Jesus. On the evening before He died He told His disciples a powerful truth, as recorded four times by the Apostle John:

14:20 *"On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."*

15:4, 5 *"Remain in me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit. Apart from me you can do nothing."*

17:26 as Jesus prayed, *"I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."*

### **III. Possessing Teachable and Desirous Hearts:**

I Thessalonians 5:19 – 22 *“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.”*

Paul, under the Spirit’s leadership encouraged believers to be fanning or desiring **the Holy Fire of His Presence**. This is an incredible word to the believers in Christ Jesus. Paul writes about the Spirit’s fire dwelling in us, which is a metaphor for the love, desires, and passions of the Spirit of God. We have within us, through the choices we make, the capacity to either fan into flame or to extinguish the fire of the Holy Spirit.

When we choose to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, to hear what He is saying and how He is leading and keep in step with Him, we have taken the avenue of fanning into flame His desires of His heart.

When we do not choose to walk with Him, disdain His working and leading, or as Paul puts it here, treat the prophecies He gives with contempt – as though He didn’t give them – we can extinguish the fires of His passion in our hearts. The Holy Spirit isn’t an “it,” He is a person. He desires to be known, loved, and to be cooperated with.

Paul’s word of instruction to the Thessalonian believers was to be people who are both **Open to and Desirous of what the Holy Spirit is saying to us**. The following instructions, found in verses 20 – 22, speak to way we will choose to handle what we sense He is saying. *“Do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.”*

There is a Biblical principle we should be gripped by as we think through prophetic words: While Old Testament prophecy was considered to be the very oracle of God, New Testament prophecy is imperfect by nature, and therefore it is to be tested. The speakers should therefore, submit their words to one another, not act like they are the only ones who can hear from God.

As we read the Scriptures it becomes very obvious, throughout the New Testament that the Lord God very much desires to speak to His people by the indwelling Holy Spirit. It is important that we see the difference between the prophets of the Old Testament times, who were responsible to be the very oracles of God and the prophecy of the New Testament, in which all of God’s people have part. The key text, in this regard, is the one in Paul’s letter to the Corinthian believers.

I Corinthians 13:9, 10, and 12: *“For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes the imperfect disappears. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”*

What Paul is saying is don’t buy into everything you hear, especially when someone says to you, “God told me.” Whenever anyone says that to you call time out! Respond to the speaker by saying, “Would you like to rephrase that?” If you are telling me that God told you to tell me something I have no right to test it or disagree with it, and you may be angry with me if I don’t do it! Would you like me to take it under consideration, and by all means, put it to the test? In today’s terms it would sound like this: “Check it out!”

Test prophetic words with the grid of Scripture, meaning, does the Bible validate this word in a passage or principle? Test it with the grid of Truth that you know about the nature of God, and test it by whether or not your heart resonates with it as something you believe God may be saying to you, and what others sense as it is shared with them.

Not every message supposed to come from God has originated with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes prophecies originate somewhat lower than in heaven. They can be humanly engineered, wound induced, or even demonically inspired. If these words are shared without the discernment of the Holy Spirit people can and do get hurt!

#### **IV. What Genuinely Prophetic Words Do:**

I Corinthians 14:1 – 5 *“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy.”*

When prophetic words are genuinely from the heart of God an adopted son or daughter, or to the collective and gathered people of God, the audience is human beings. **There are three fruit that are always true of genuine prophetic utterances:**

**THE FIRST** word reflecting the fruit is that genuine prophecy **Strengthens the hearers**. The word has the connotation of giving life, empowering, and strengthening others with endurance and desire. The word in the Greek is oikodome – meaning to build as one would build a structure, to put in solid foundations and good wall structures. The spiritual life that experiences genuine prophecy is strengthened to stand!

**SECONDLY**, when prophetic words are genuinely from the heart of God, they will also have the fruit of **Building Up** those who hear them. The Greek word here is paraklesin – meaning one who walks alongside to assist, to counsel and bless. The Holy Spirit is the parakletos, He who walks alongside to cheer and to guide.

**THE THIRD** word reflecting the fruit of genuine prophecy to individuals and to the collective people of God is **Encouragement**. The word Paul chose is pinpoint accurate in conveying truth. The Greek word is paramuthian – meaning, “to exercise a gentle influence with words,” “soothing, comforting, and consoling.” This is a compound word meaning having a similar desire.

What these words convey is consistent with the rest of the New Testament teaching on the issue of prophetic words. These words aren’t the same as Scripture. They are to be listened to and weighed carefully, knowing they will probably be imperfect at some points.

#### **Conclusion:**

September 11, 2022

***LIVING LIFE IN THE SPIRIT OF GOD:***

6. "Hearing the Voice of the Spirit"

I Corinthians 14:1 – 5

**Introduction:**

Our series is about the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit coming to live in the Christian's life, pouring out in us the **L**\_\_\_\_\_ of **H**\_\_\_\_\_.

Our series is built on a Biblical truth: The Almighty God has planned and purposed to **K**\_\_\_\_\_ each of us **I**\_\_\_\_\_ by His holy presence of His Spirit living in us! The Lord God desires to **P**\_\_\_\_\_ with you and me as we live our lives!

We also must consider the fact the enemy of our souls hates God and everything and everyone God loves! The evil one's kingdom on earth violently opposes the Holy Spirit living in you and me transforming us!

This morning we will study the various ways the Holy Spirit speaks to us as the children of God. He speaks in our hearts about His good, perfect **W**\_\_\_\_\_ and His provisions of His **P**\_\_\_\_\_. John 16:12 – 15

There are many ways God speaks to His people today: We will begin with the most obvious: The **S**\_\_\_\_\_.

By strong **C**\_\_\_\_\_ and accompanying **P**\_\_\_\_\_

Through **D**\_\_\_\_\_ and **V**\_\_\_\_\_

Through **P**\_\_\_\_\_ and **T**\_\_\_\_\_

Through **P**\_\_\_\_\_ gifts and enablements

Through **P**\_\_\_\_\_, **H**\_\_\_\_\_, and spiritual **S**\_\_\_\_\_

Through **O**\_\_\_\_\_, **A**\_\_\_\_\_

When He speaks to us and we see fruit borne out of our obedience it can have a wonderful strengthening and faith-building impact on us: I Corinthians 14:24, 25

**I. The Anointing is for Everyone:** I John 2:20, 27

The anointing of God is synonymous with the life of Jesus flowing into and through us by His Spirit. It is the deeply settled truth He is our inner **C**\_\_\_\_\_ and **T**\_\_\_\_\_.

The anointing of Jesus is deeply personal, relational. So, His life and ministry must be **C**\_\_\_\_\_.

There are two clear ways He speaks to us in His anointing: One is the Scriptures made **A**\_\_\_\_\_ to us, His ministry of **I**\_\_\_\_\_.

The other is telling us things we couldn't know apart from Him, His ministry of **I**\_\_\_\_\_.

**II. The Holy Spirit's Counsel to our Hearts:** I Corinthians 2:10 – 16

Paul tells us in this passage the work of the Holy Spirit is to **R**\_\_\_\_\_ God's **H**\_\_\_\_\_ to us. The Greek word propheteuo means, "to tell forth the word and the will of God."

We are called to understand a really simple truth: We are all dependent on the Holy Spirit to give us deep levels of **S**\_\_\_\_\_ **U**\_\_\_\_\_.

Paul tells us specifically in this text: We have been given the **M**\_\_\_\_\_ of Christ! This is exactly what Jesus promised to His followers as recorded in John's Gospel: John 14:20, 15:4, 5, and 17:26

### **III. Possessing Teachable and Desirous Hearts:** I Thessalonians 5:19 – 22

Paul encourages the believers to fan into flame or desire the Holy **F**\_\_\_\_\_ of His **P**\_\_\_\_\_. The picture is one of desire, passion to know Him!

Paul's instruction is for us to be **O**\_\_\_\_\_ to and **D**\_\_\_\_\_ of what the Holy Spirit is saying to His people.

There is a Biblical principle: Old Testament prophecies were the **O**\_\_\_\_\_ of God. But New Testament prophecy is "imperfect" so the words are to be **T**\_\_\_\_\_! I Corinthians 13:9 – 12

Test prophecies with the grid of Scripture ... the nature of God ... what fruit it creates deep within us ... unsolicited confirmations

### **IV. What Genuinely Prophetic Words Do:** I Corinthians 14:1 – 5

Genuine prophetic words always will have one of or all three of these fruit:

**S**\_\_\_\_\_ oikodume

**B**\_\_\_\_\_ -**U**\_\_\_\_\_ paraklesin

**E**\_\_\_\_\_ paramuthian

### **Concluding Thoughts:**

## **Discussion Starter Questions for Home Groups**

1. What did Jesus say about who the Holy Spirit is and what He does when He invades us and lives in our lives?
2. Why does the evil one work against the followers of Jesus, seeking to turn us away from walking with Jesus wholeheartedly?

3. Have you thought about the various ways the Holy Spirit speaks to believers today, from a Biblical perspective?
  
4. Have you experienced different ways the Holy Spirit has spoken to you or led you? What was the fruit when you obeyed His calling?
  
5. Do you think Christians today generally understand we are inhabited by the mind of Christ? Can you point to ways His thoughts have impacted your thoughts?
  
6. In I Thessalonians 5 the Holy Spirit is referred to as a holy fire. What does that term mean? How should it cause us to live?
  
7. Have you experienced having someone who was submitting an encouraging or strengthening word from God's heart?
  
8. Has the Holy Spirit spoken to you and asked you to go give an encouraging or word of blessing to someone? Did you do it?
  
9. Read together aloud I Corinthians 14:1 - 25 and discuss insights you have about how Paul describes the voice of the Spirit.
  
10. Share testimonies with one another of how the Lord has enabled you to live hear His words of loving direction to you or how He has enabled you to encourage someone else.