

“Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening”

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

The above instruction was given to young Samuel by Eli (see 1Samuel 3:1-10) when the youngster had not yet learned to distinguish the Lord’s voice. We’re beginning this Teaching Email with this account because there are too many in Christianity who don’t *expect or want* the Spirit of our Lord to say anything to them. If He did, then they’d be responsible to Him to follow through on what He told them! Others have been trained by their religious leaders to neither seek nor listen for the voice of the Holy Spirit. Rather, they place misplaced confidence in the person who’s teaching them.

We want to propose to you a truth we’ve discussed many times in the past for you to prayerfully consider – asking the Holy Spirit if what we’re sharing is from Him so that those who are born again can weigh it according to His indwelling Spirit:

When someone is genuinely born again, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of our Lord Jesus, takes up His dwelling within that person. Jesus Himself promised with assurance, “*And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—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*” (John 14:16,17). Don’t ever think that the presence of the Spirit of our Lord Jesus in you is any less than the full presence of our Lord. You are a temple containing the Spirit of the King of kings and Lord of lords (1Corinthians 3:16; 6:19).

Out of that temple flows the aroma of our Lord Jesus that others can experience from you, an aroma that bears witness that we are genuinely born again: “*For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing*” (2Corinthians 2:15). And to keep us humble in our self-appraisal, we’re told, “*We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us*” (2Corinthians 4:7). **Have absolute confidence in the reality that our Lord will use you through His power. Then you will be committed to hearing His voice and seeking His empowerment.**

The world around us would be transformed ***if only*** those who are genuinely born again would first implore the indwelling Holy Spirit for the humility of our Lord Jesus (Philippians 2:5-8) – aromatizing His love, forgiveness and compassion which He had for each of us as He hung on that cross. And transformation would follow ***if only*** the genuinely born again would next exercise the power and authority of His Name against the demonic forces which capture and dominate the minds of so many around them. Why is this so?

Because so many of His own are fearful to exercise the power of Jesus's Name or are unbelieving and doubting that He will prevail through them, many Christian families are as enslaved to Satan's dark devices and bondage as unbelievers are. ***if only*** the genuinely born again made the foremost consideration in their faith journey to stay intimately connected as branches to the Vine as Jesus emphasized, His Spirit through their spirits would make possible: •*Their unity* as our Lord Jesus's followers would be motivated by love, forgiveness and compassion. •*The defeat of the stranglehold* of demonic forces on families and this nation at-large by the power of the precious Name of Jesus. ***if only...***

“What God has joined together, let no one separate” (Mark 10:9).

Our Lord is focusing everyone on *the sanctity* of the **covenant union of marriage** which our heavenly Father intends between a husband and wife. It's His intention that the marriage covenant be a physical reflection in this world of the **spiritual Covenant union** we have both with Him as His child and as the collective Bride of Jesus.

A recurring strategy of Satan is also used in armed conflict: to ***divide and conquer***. Through whatever means he can, and especially through the unrepentant and those with undemolished strongholds, the devil incites people •to disagree, • then, to resent and turn bitter, • and finally, to become estranged – in other words, he first divides them and then conquers them. How is Satan victorious? By severing **relational commitment and unified cooperation** whether in a marriage, family or faith family. The mutual synergy in serving our Lord Jesus and combatting the devil are substantially diminished.

One obvious victory Satan has achieved in his divide and conquer strategy is that Christianity is a wildfire of divorce, while encompassing multiple thousands upon thousands of competing denominations and sects. But less obvious is that the devil has also kept the majority of the born again from absolute reliance on the indwelling Holy Spirit. Within you the Holy Spirit *reveals truth, provides understanding, and confirms truth through your spirit*. Many congregants have been trained by religious leaders to rely on their intellect, self-will and feelings rather than on hearing and obeying the inner voice of the indwelling Spirit of our Lord as they confirm the message through God’s Word. Their mind, will and emotions override dependence on their spirit to hear and obey the Holy Spirit.

Prayerfully ponder the differences between the source of wisdom which the world values, and the Source Who is from God, the indwelling Holy Spirit:

“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. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1Corinthians 2:12,13; see also Romans 8:9; 2Corinthians 13:5).

We illustrated this difference between having the Holy Spirit’s understanding through your spirit and limiting yourself to your soul’s input in our book, *Demolishing Strongholds* <<https://restorationministries.org/download/demolishing-strongholds.pdf>>. We’d like to expand on this (see explanation on next page):



#1. The Holy Spirit is completely involved in the genuinely born again. He reveals truth and gives understanding and confirmation through the spirit of the born again *if* they have trained themselves to listen to the Spirit within them.

#2. For those without the Holy Spirit, or those who refrain from listening to Him, they only hear through their soul — their mind, will and emotions — like people who are ensnared by the world system. Easily duped by the false teachings which so prevail within Christianity today, they prefer to place confidence in the person who's teaching them than in the Spirit's understanding and confirmation of God's truth.

Genuinely Being Born Again Is Much More Than Being “Saved”

The current reality: Many in Christianity who *think* they're born again aren't born again in our Lord's sight. What it means to be genuinely born again has been so altered by religious leaders over the centuries (and so trivialized by the world) that it has nothing to do with the spiritual rebirth which our Lord Jesus cited to the Pharisee/teacher, Nicodemus: *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3).

From our Lord's perspective, being born again refers to the inner coming of the Holy Spirit as a person repents and turns away from their previous sin- and self-driven life so that by trust in Jesus they may be forgiven and reconciled with our Father as a new creation in Christ, with ongoing transformation by the Spirit into Christ's character. (See 2Corinthians 3:17,18; 5:17.) How far away has this purposeful understanding drifted as religious and worldly agendas alike have altered its original intent!

Words *do* get altered so that the original meaning is lost in favor of another, entirely different connotation. For instance, consider the word “gay.” It once referred to a lighthearted and carefree person. Now it almost universally refers to homosexuality, an abomination in God's sight (see Romans 1:24-28). The current trivialized and incorrect understanding of being “born again” is just as much an abomination to our Lord's true meaning and purpose of being born again. Declaring

someone to be “born again and saved” just because they recited a “Sinner’s Prayer” and were told they now had entry into heaven even as they continued in their previous sinful patterns and activities is a LIE — something which delights the devil who has deceived them, and grieves our Lord Who knows that His Spirit is not abiding in them. Just know that getting people “saved” is a man made sales pitch to add people to the **denominational/creedal persuasion of religious leaders** (see Galatians 4:17; Jude 19) and to inoculate them from the authentic Life-giving Gospel that is foretold in the Older Testament and fully revealed in the New.

Who are the genuinely born again? Those who daily live with Jesus as Lord of their lives, and are quick to repent when they stumble and grateful to love and serve Him. To be born again is entering into life-long Covenant union with our heavenly Father in which you grow in the character of Jesus through His Spirit while fulfilling Father’s purposes through the Lordship of Jesus.

The genuinely born again are born into Kingdom service, and not just “church services.” The more you are transformed in Christlikeness, the more you despise yourself when you do sin and bring down Jesus’ holy reputation. You grieve at having offended the One you love and serve, and know firsthand that repentance is a cherished grace of our Father.

We’ve written previously that many years before the coming of Jesus, a number of what we call the “Hebraic stream” of rabbis taught that a person must experience a *spiritual rebirth* – ie, be born from above. These rabbis recognized and understood the trust-filled personal relationship which their patriarch, Abraham, had with God. And with the coming of Jesus, being born again was the point at which you shifted from religious practice (or no practice!) and put your full trust and reliance in Him. To be genuinely “born again” is demonstrated in your trust in the Lordship of Jesus and through the inner presence of His Spirit. That obedient trust is certainly no less than Abraham’s as he trusted the voice of God (Galatians 3:9).

“Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”

(Hebrews 4:7)

“I wanted to hurt you. That’s why I didn’t send the money.” These words were spoken to us when a man came to ask our forgiveness. Several months earlier we’d been praying for a certain sum of money to meet a specific need, and the Holy Spirit had spoken to him to give us the exact amount we needed. The man told us his reasons for disobeying the Spirit flowed out of his jealousy for the Spirit giving us such a powerful spiritual influence on others in his congregation.

On another occasion we needed a large truck for a day to collect a load of furniture. The morning we needed it, we still didn’t have it. But as we prayed, the Holy Spirit gave us a phone number to call. It was a UHaul rental place near us — and that day *all* their trucks were being rented for the price of the smallest truck, which was just about all the money we had on hand! We filled their largest truck from top to bottom. Several months later a man came to the retreat center and sheepishly asked our forgiveness. The Holy Spirit had prompted him to lend us his truck the morning we needed it, and he’d resisted His voice.

We share these two examples to encourage you to never allow yourselves to harden your heart when the inner voice of the Holy Spirit is speaking to your spirit. Quite often someone else may be disheartened because their prayer, which the Spirit was going to *use you* to answer, is unmet. Be careful! ***“Do not quench the Spirit”*** (1Thessalonians 5:19; see also Ephesians 4:30).

This truth bears repeating. The first followers of our Lord Jesus understood salvation as a process, a life pilgrimage to your heavenly welcome. Our goal as followers of Jesus is to ultimately be found faithful in fulfilling our heavenly Father’s will, and to hear our names proclaimed to the hosts of heaven. This won’t be done without the indwelling Holy Spirit!

Mike & Sue