

SERVING THE LORD BY MEANS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

IV. Special Ministries Of The Spirit

(John 16:12-15 et al.)

I. Introduction

- A. When Jesus told His disciples that He would send them the Holy Spirit in John 14:16-18 NIV, He said that He would thus not leave them “as orphans,” v. 18 NIV. The Holy Spirit thus functions much like a parent.
- B. This “parenting” role of the Spirit includes several special ministries to edify the believer much like a parent edifies his or her child, and we view those ministries for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

II. Special Ministries Of The Spirit (I am partly indebted to C. C. Ryrie, The Holy Spirit, 1973, p. 104-107)

- A. The Holy Spirit parentally teaches the believer, John 16:12-15:
 1. Shortly before His crucifixion, Jesus informed His disciples that though He had many things to tell them, they were not then able to bear them, John 16:12.
 2. However, when the Holy Spirit of truth was come (on the Day of Pentecost, cf. Acts 2:1-11), He would guide them into all of **the** truth, John 16:13a. The definite article appears in the Greek text before the word “truth” in this verse, implying God’s revelation in written Scripture, Ibid., p. 104.
 3. Thus, the Holy Spirit teaches the believer Scripture content that not only leads him to understand how Christ is revealed in the Scriptures, but also leads him to understand prophecy, “things to come,” John 16:13b. Thus, a believer should be encouraged to study Bible prophecy in the Spirit’s leading!
 4. The result of the Spirit’s teaching ministry is the glorification of Christ, John 16:14.
 5. This teaching will often involve human teachers who are gifted by the Holy Spirit, but “the ultimate authentication of the teaching comes from the Spirit,” Ibid., p. 105.
- B. The Holy Spirit parentally guides the believer, Romans 8:15:
 1. The Holy Spirit leads true believers, what confirms that they are true sons of God.
 2. The book of Acts provides several examples of how the Holy Spirit thus guides believers, Ibid.:
 - a. In Acts 8:29, the Spirit led Philip to join the Ethiopian eunuch’s chariot so he could evangelize him.
 - b. In Acts 10:19-20, the Holy Spirit directed Peter to go to the door of Simon the tanner’s house where he was staying so he could meet the envoy from Cornelius and go and evangelize Cornelius’ household.
 - c. In Acts 13:2,4, the Holy Spirit directed the elders of the Church of Antioch of Syria to separate Saul and Barnabas for the missionary work to which the Lord had called them.
 - d. In Acts 16:6-7, the Holy Spirit circumstantially led Paul’s ministry team to evangelize Macedonia.
 - e. In Acts 20:22-23, the Spirit repeatedly testified through Christian prophets to Paul that if he went to Jerusalem, he would face bondage and affliction there.
 3. Thus, the believer should always feel free to ask God for His practical guidance on issues of concern.
- C. The Holy Spirit parentally assures the believer of his salvation status, Romans 8:16:
 1. “The Greek word for children” in Romans 8:16 that claims the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God is *tekna* instead of *huioi*, “sons,” and *tekna* “emphasizes the fact that the believer shares in the life of the Father.” (Ibid., p. 106)
 2. “Because of this, he also shares as an heir in the possession of the Father,” Ibid.
 3. Accordingly, this assuring ministry of the Holy Spirit is designed to build confidence of the reality of the believer’s salvation toward offsetting doubts of the reality of his salvation and of the Christian faith.
- D. The Holy Spirit parentally prays with the believer for edifying results, Romans 8:26:
 1. When we believers pray, we do not know how to pray as we ought, so the Holy Spirit Who is within us makes intercession in our behalf before God the Father with groanings which cannot be uttered.
 2. In addition, Ephesians 6:18 reveals that the Holy Spirit guides and directs our prayers, guiding us in our hearts as we pray in addition to His unutterable groanings in our behalf.
 3. Thus, Paul directs us always to pray with confidence, cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Lesson: *Special, parental ministries of the Holy Spirit toward us believers in Christ include His teaching us the truths of Scripture regarding Christ and even of Bible prophecy, His guiding us through the application of Scripture and circumstantial evidence in our lives and ministries, His assuring us of our salvation status to settle us in the reality of our salvation and the reality of the Christian faith, and His assisting us in our prayers.*

Application: *May we rejoice in the Holy Spirit’s special ministries to us and rely on Him for His edifying blessings.*