



Oakland International Fellowship

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## # 11. The Word of the Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21)

### Section 3: Christian Service Handout

Followers of Jesus Christ live by 'the Book', the Word of God. Thus the Holy Spirit's work in and through the Bible occupies a central place in a believer's faith and practice. Satan attempts to confuse God's people by causing us to doubt and lessen the authority and reliability of God's Word. Still, it is God who faithfully and patiently guides us by His Holy Spirit in full agreement with the Word of God – a divine and gracious responsibility.

### A) The Holy Spirit's part in shaping the Scriptures? (2 Peter 1:19-21)

19 "And so we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:19-21)

1. There has been historical tension between what the Spirit intuitively brings to our mind and the Word of God, the Bible. We are not to differentiate the two as if they are somehow in conflict, but when there is a difference in values or teaching, the **"more sure"** Word of God must take priority. Human feeling, thought and will must learn in obedience to the Holy Spirit to trust and follow the truth of the Bible.
  - "The prophetic word"** (v. 19) is a clear reference to the Scripture and the important part prophecies have in its formation. Acts 1:16 states, "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus." Note: the OT is the focus here, though this same principle holds true for the NT as well.
  - "No prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation"** (v. 20) counters any attitude of asserting private interpretation over against the wisdom of believers down through the ages. For us to rightly 'understand' the Bible, we must collectively be willing to 'stand under' its authoritative teaching.
  - "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"** (v. 21) provides the reason we can completely trust the scriptures. The Holy Spirit has historically worked through ordinary men in very extra-ordinary ways. The Holy Spirit illuminates the writers of the Bible so as to preserve God's message speaking through it, making it fully trustworthy.
2. The 3 basic approaches to the inspiration of Scripture within Christian orthodoxy (Selection from Wikipedia)
  - **"Dictation theory:** God dictated the books of the Bible word by word as if the biblical authors were dictating machines."
  - **"Verbal plenary inspiration:** This view gives a greater role to the human writers of the Bible, while maintaining a belief that God preserved the integrity of the words of the Bible. The effect of inspiration was to move the authors so as to produce the words God wanted. In this view the human writers' individual backgrounds, personal traits, and literary styles were authentically theirs, but had been providentially prepared by God for use as his instrument in producing Scripture."
  - **"Dynamic inspiration:** The thoughts contained in the Bible are inspired, but the words used were left to the individual writers."
3. Significant terms used to explain the unique nature of Scripture.
  - ~ **Logos / Rhema:** The two Greek words used to describe Scripture are 1<sup>st</sup> 'logos' which focuses upon the inspired word of God and Jesus as the 'living word'; and 2<sup>nd</sup> 'rhema' refers mainly to the spoken word.
  - ~ **Inerrancy / Infallibility:** These are theological affirmations that the Bible is incapable of failing in matters of truth, morality or doctrine (teaching). Scripture gives reliable guidance in all matters of faith and practice.
  - ~ **Translation / Paraphrase:** A translation seeks to give the apparent understanding of the text according to its original language – OT from the Hebrew and NT from the Greek. A paraphrase is not a direct translation of the original text but a close restatement of it in an attempt to clarify its meaning for contemporary relevance.

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." (2 Tim 3:16-17).

**Summary:** Scripture is God-breathed. The Holy Spirit illuminated the mind and soul of the biblical writers, so that believers may trust the Scriptures as the divinely inspired “Word of God”. Spiritual disciplines (daily ‘Quiet Time’, group Bible study’, and ministry of the Word in the preaching and singing of worship) facilitate the delivery of God’s truth to our lives as we learn to follow after Christ. The Holy Spirit applies biblical truth / wisdom into our hearts and minds, enabling believers to be constantly Spirit-filled.

## B) The Spirit’s word is Christ’s word

**10 “Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, 11 inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. 12 It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.” (1 Peter 1:10-12).**

1. The Holy Spirit is integrally related to the Bible while being essentially related to Jesus Christ.

- “The Spirit of Christ in them”** (v. 10) is a clear reference to how God worked in the saints in the Old Testament times. The Spirit would not only inspire the prophets to say certain words from the Lord (i.e. composing Scripture) but to know, understand and love the scripture’s message.
- “They were serving not themselves but you”** (v. 12) speaks of Old Testament prophets sowing the seed of truth that would later be “harvested” by New Testament believers.
- “Preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit”** shows that this same Spirit of Christ was named the Holy Spirit and works in NT believers too.

*“And he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10).*

2. Scripture tells us to discern between true and false prophets who claim to speak in the power of God’s Holy Spirit.

*“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.” (2 Peter 2:1)*

- **“False prophets”...“also be false teachers”** indicate we cannot trust everyone – even those with charisma or in positions of authority (i.e. teacher) within the ‘visible’ church. We must always consider whether what they say and do is in agreement with God’s full counsel as taught by the Holy Spirit in His ‘Word’ (Scripture). Thus the scriptures provide us with an objective way of examining what the Spirit is, or is not, doing in a person’s life.

*“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign of a wonder, and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them,’ you shall not listen to the words of that ... (Deut. 13:1-3)*

*“And if you say in your heart, ‘How may we know that the Lord has spoken?’ – when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.” (Deut 18:20-22)*

- Today the Spirit of God still prods His people to speak, believe, hope in and follow the Word of God.

*“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (Col 3:16)*

**Summary:** The Holy Spirit reveals the work and person of Christ in the OT and NT. Our relationship to Scripture is both mystical and practical. The Spirit of Christ created Scripture, reveals its truth and holds the key to rightly interpreting and applying it to our lives. Christians must discern God’s Word as heart, mind and soul are filled with the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, so that we are transformed into the likeness of Christ.

## Discussion Questions

1. Do you believe the Bible is the authoritative voice of God directing your life? Why or why not?
2. Share one way in which the Holy Spirit has spoken to you. How do you know it was the Spirit of God?