

The Witness of the Spirit

I. A look at Romans 8:16

We cannot know we are sons of God...
unless God tells us (Ro.8:16)

- Paul addresses Christians
- He is not telling them how to become children, but how to remain children
- The Christian who grows in righteousness and diminishes in sin can know he is God's child

Many claim salvation assurance comes from a still, small voice

- Passage does not say this [1 K.19, Elijah]
- Those who 'hear God's voice' contradict NT
... and others who claim to hear it
 - Holy Spirit cannot contradict Himself
 - New York: 200 years ago – 'outpouring of Holy Spirit' – results: 1000 converts . . .

1/3 went to
Presbyterians

1/3 went to
Methodists

1/3 went to
Baptists

- Contrast first century: 1 Co.1:10-13 . . . 4:7

Those who claim a still, small
voice contradict NT

- New York's three groups: human denominations are not NT pattern

Those who claim a still, small
voice contradict themselves

- Feelings, emotions, impulses, preachers ... change with time
- We demand objective standard: highway signs; clocks, etc.

How does God bear testimony?

- Ro.1:16, *gospel*: God's power to save . . .
 - No one is saved by Holy Spirit without the Word
 - Spirit reveals; we react, Ro.6:3-5
 - We know if we have complied ... (6:3)
- Ro.6:11, 13, 16, 19 – tells us how to live
- Neh.9:30, God → Spirit → prophets
- Jn.16:13, God guided twelve...into all truth
 - Promised to twelve, not to all people

How does Holy Spirit bear testimony?

- 1 Co.2:6-13, 16 –
 - **6-7:** ‘we’ [apostles / prophets] speak *wisdom of God.*
 - **10:** ‘us’ [apostles / prophets] through Spirit.
 - **11:** no one can read God’s mind.
 - **12:** ‘we’ [apostles / prophets] receive Spirit from God that ‘we’ might know . . .
 - **13:** ‘we’ [apostles / prophets] speak what Spirit teaches (1 Co.14:37)

How does Holy Spirit bear testimony?

- Mt.28:19 – why send apostles to preach gospel if HS speaks directly to every sinner?
- Paul in Corinth: Ac.18:4-5, 8, 11

How does Holy Spirit bear testimony?

- Eph.3³ I have briefly written already,
4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ
 - Paul received his information from Holy Spirit
 - How did Ephesians (we) learn it? (v.4)

How does Holy Spirit bear testimony?

- Hb.10¹⁵ But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will **write** them”
 - **Written word of Spirit is witness of Spirit** (Jer.31:31-34).
 - Last will and testament in writing.

How does Holy Spirit bear testimony?

- Rev.2¹ To the angel of the church of Ephesus write ... ⁷ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches
 - One who hears written word is listening to Holy Spirit
 - If all received direct revelation, it would not have been necessary to announce these things to them
 - Ac.2: did Peter have to reveal NT to fellow apostles?

I. A look at Romans 8:16

II. Those who seek
'experiences' deny Word

Word has power to produce faith

- Mt.22³¹ But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying...
- Lk.8¹² Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved

Satan has more faith in the Word
than some professed believers

Word has power to produce faith

Lk.16²⁷ Then he said, I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment. ²⁹ Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. ³⁰ And he said, No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent. ³¹ But he said to him, If neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.

Word has power to produce faith

Mt.8:5-10, centurion understood power of words – especially words of Christ

Mt.12:22, Lord's miracle (exorcism)

- Jews show how wrong the rich man was (Lk.16) –
 - Jews attribute miracle to satan, 24
 - Jews demand better sign, 38
 - Why expect rich man in torment to know best way to save the lost?

Dr. Steele (1)

‘In vain do I study my Bible for relief. It discloses the conditions of forgiveness, but I can rest only in the certified fact. This fact must constitute a personal revelation to me. It must be certified that I have been taken out of the class of the wicked, on whom God frowns, and that I have been classified with the righteous, on whom He smiles. This fact I cannot derive from any process of reasoning upon the general truths of the Scriptures. Inference in respect to a point so vital is not sufficient. . . .

Dr. Steele (2)

‘A criminal awaiting the hour of his execution on the scaffold cannot infer his pardon from a study of the general statutes of the State. This must be specially revealed by the governor. A certificate, signed and sealed, must be put into the prisoner’s hands before he can enjoy the bliss of undoubted assurance.’

Dr. Steele – **CONSIDER**

1. 'We must have personal revelation...'
 - a. How does he try to prove it? Words!!
 - b. How can he reject Mormon claims?
2. Prisoner receives governor's certificate??
 - a. It's as worthless as NT!
[If God's letters give no assurance,
why does governor's certificate??]
 - b. Governor must come personally...
3. Many claim salvation by faith...but demand **sight**.

John Wesley's journal

'In the evening I went very unwillingly to the society in Aldersgate St., where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation ... assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death; and I testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart.'

Where does God tell us how we should feel in order to know we are forgiven?

Eunuch rejoiced...but this was not the basis of his salvation

- His salvation was grounded in the objective word of God (Ac.8:35, 36-38 = 2:38)
- Ac.7⁴¹ And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands...
- “Faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and full of comfort” – ct. Ja.2:24

