

“The Leading of the Spirit”

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” Romans 8:14

First Peter 1:4 declares that all believers have an inheritance reserved for them in heaven, an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and that does not fade away. For many, the thought is that we will not realize this inheritance until we get to glory. Perhaps this sentiment has been perpetuated by the words of the hymn that reads: *“On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand and cast a wishful eye, to Canaan’s fair and happy land where my possessions lie.”* Unfortunately, it conveys the idea that somewhere - out there - are my spiritual possessions and one day I will enter into the good of them when I cross over to Glory. Yet in Ephesians 1:11 we clearly read that we have *“obtained an inheritance”* (past tense). What this declares is that in Christ, I presently have an abundance of blessings, an overflow of spiritual resources that are mine now to assist me in my walk with Christ. It is mine because I am an heir of God and co-heir with Christ. I have been adopted into the family of God with all rights and privileges and am accepted in the Beloved. *“For all things are yours...and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s”* (1 Cor. 3:21-23). In other words, I do not have to wait till the by and by before I can appreciate at least in measure that which is mine in Christ. Indeed, the fulness of that inheritance will take place when I see the Man in the Glory, when faith will give way to sight and when I shall know even as I am also known. But until that Day, I will have to fight the good fight, run the course that God has set for me, and keep the faith as it has been delivered to us in His precious Word.

Missing the Forest for the Trees?

One of many blessings in that spiritual benefit package includes the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Not an influence but a vital member of the Triune Godhead, the Holy Spirit’s work is to call to remembrance the things of Christ, to take what is of His and declare it to us. The Spirit opens the unfathomable riches of Christ and gives us an understanding of God’s Word – that which is closed to the natural man - and reveals these truths to the heirs of salvation. To cap it off, He seals us till the day of redemption, forever securing our eternal destiny. There is so much more, but just this is tremendous in itself - what an inheritance is ours!

As a young Christian, someone once handed me a bumper sticker that read: *“The Christian’s retirement benefits are out of this world!”* I proudly displayed that sticker on my first car until the bumper fell off. Unlike my car, it reminded me of a future day of reward and glory. In retrospect, however I do wonder if many believers like me can be guilty of looking down the road and missing the forest for the trees. Are we missing the enjoyment of what is available right now instead of enjoying and entering into the privileges that we have in Christ? Are we *“casting a wishful eye”* and gazing off into the spiritual distance without realizing what lies at our feet to help us on with our walk with the Lord?

Out on A Limb?

I once heard a preacher say that due to extreme (and often biblically inaccurate) teaching regarding the ministry of the Spirit, many Christians do not take full advantage of His ministry in their lives. They are so worried about being tagged as a fanatical that they *“fail to go up the tree”*, much less *“go out on a limb”* for the Lord. Yet a simple check in the Scriptures, shows that the Lord’s people were fully aware of the activity of the Spirit in their daily lives. In Luke 2:25-27, the Holy Spirit is seen coming upon Simeon as he was in the temple. Afterwards, the Spirit revealed to him that he would not die before he saw the Lord’s Christ. With that, Simeon made the profound declaration of the Gospel message. Simeon was very much aware of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in his life at that moment. How aware are we of the active ministry of the Holy Spirit, of His leading in our life on a moment-by-moment basis? The next time that someone comes to your mind as you are busy in the middle of your regular schedule, perhaps it is the moment that you should take a moment to pray, call, send an email or jot a quick note and send it to the brother or sister who needs a word of encouragement.

My mother is in Glory now and has been for just over two years. A year or two before her home call, she had taken sick and had to be hospitalized. One night, as I was working at my desk during this time, I had a very strong impression to pray for her. The time was around 7:30 PM. I was busy with a pile of desk work but regardless, I paused to pray since this impression was so strong. There were no voices, no vision, no wind – just

an impression in my heart to pray right then and there for her. The next day, when I visited her in the hospital, I bumped into the night nurse, who related to me that a serious medical issue that took place with my mother the night before. Her sobering comment to me was: *"I thought we were going to lose her"*, to which I replied: *"And what time was that?"* Her prompt reply was also sobering: *"Somewhere around 7:30 PM."* It made me more aware than ever before that the ministry of the Spirit is very much a reality in the life of the Christian.

Get up that Tree

The leading of the Spirit is perhaps more obvious than we think. But if we are the children of God than we can also be sure that that we will be led by Him since it is the benchmark of true faith. Take it from a person who works hard to organize and to have things "just so" that there always needs to be some latitude for the Spirit to change our course even if it is at the last minute. If we are aware of these things, we will be more in tune with the leading of the Spirit.