

## PNEUMATOLOGY (93)

**Positive Manifestation #3** - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through a passion to know and understand the Word of God.

The Spirit of God moves in the spiritual people of God to be sanctified by the Word of God (John 17:17). No one who does not have a supernatural passion and drive to know and understand God's Word is truly being developed by God's Spirit, no matter how religious or spiritual one pretends to be. The Spirit of God has a profound connection to truly understanding God's Word (John 16:12-15). It is stated plainly in this text of John that the Holy Spirit "will guide you into all truth" (16:13). It is the Spirit of God who is able to search the deep things of God and reveal them to spiritual people of God (I Cor. 2:11-16). When the Holy Spirit is truly developing one into becoming spiritual, there will be a supernatural internal drive to study to rightly divide and understand God's written Word. When a believer that is Spirit-controlled goes to church, he goes with the full expectation of carefully studying and understanding God's Word. When this does not happen, the Spirit of God is grieved and thus so is the believer.

**Positive Manifestation #4** - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through the leading of the Spirit in the life of the believer. Romans 8:14

It is the potential for every believer to have God's Holy Spirit lead that believer into paths which have been sovereignly chosen by Almighty God. God has designed a human being so that he is incapable of leading himself into these paths. To become spiritual, one must be led by the Spirit. There is no command in Scripture that demands a N.T. believer be led by the Spirit, but in order for one to be spiritual this must occur. Jesus Christ, Himself, was led by the Spirit (Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1).

One text that is extremely important is Romans 8:14. The Greek word for "sons" (υἱός) is not one that refers to one young (παῖς) nor is it one that refers to one's parentage (τέκνον) as being a child of God. This word is one that refers to a mature son who stands in a privileged position of being destined to receive full inheritance (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 334). In other words, the teaching of Paul here is that in order to be a mature son who will receive a full inheritance, he must be led by the Spirit. Every saved person is a son of God, but not every saved person is a mature son of God destined to receive full inheritance. In order for that to happen, he must be led of the Spirit.

In this dispensation, we have the potential privilege of having God's Spirit directly lead us. This is a far better system than the O.T. system which included dreams, visions, voices and tests. The child of God in the N.T. Grace Age has God's Spirit in him/her who desires to lead the believer to the greatest levels of maturity in accordance with God's will for that life and the key to having God's Spirit do this is a **willingness to do God's will**. Dr. Chafer said, "The will of God indeed is not primarily a matter of a Christian's being in one place or another; it is rather of his being willing to do God's will. All else is then easily adjusted" (Vol. 6, p. 228).

Now the question comes, how may one be aware or conscious of what God wills? Or another way to ask this is how does one know whether or not the Spirit is leading?

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We know from a passage such as Philippians 2:13 that God desires to work out his will in the life of the believer—"for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer has done an excellent job of answering this question, and we would like to cite his conclusions: "God leads, not by signs or outward things, but by means of the willing, expectant mind. He sways the judgment itself, and then one becomes clear and convinced about the course God would indicate. The voice of men may be heeded only if God has sent them to His child for that purpose. As for the time after one has been led, there is then the need of resting in that which has been determined for him. The guidance must be so convincing it will not be doubted in days that follow when, perchance, times of testing may come. That leading which takes one to his particular field of service must be of such a definite nature that suffering and hardship can be endured without any questioning of the step by which one reached the place of testing. Finally, one who is yielded to God must account himself in the will of God when he is unreservedly willing to do God's will. If the position one occupies in life or service is not what God desires, surely He can, providing that one is yielded, move him out into the place which He does choose" (Vol. 6, pp. 227-228).

One of the passages that teach us some important principles concerning Spirit-leading is found in Acts 16:6-40. From this important event in the life of the Apostle Paul, we may observe the following:

1. The Spirit of God was in the process of leading Paul before Paul knew where the Spirit was leading him. Acts 16:6-7
2. The Spirit of God was in the process of leading Paul by preventing Paul from going where He did not want him to go. Acts 16:6-7
3. The Spirit of God was in the process of leading Paul as Paul was totally absorbed in desiring to minister the Word of God. Acts 16:6
4. The Spirit of God ultimately made it very evident to Paul where God wanted him to go and Paul and those with him had a real sense of this leading. Acts 16:9-10
5. The Spirit of God led Paul to a place of ministry which immediately started to bear fruit. Acts 16:14-15, 16-18, 30-31
6. The Spirit of God led Paul to a specific place and when Paul carried out his ministry, he found himself faced with serious satanic opposition. Acts 16:19-21
7. The Spirit of God led Paul to a specific place where he wound up being beaten and jailed. Acts 16:22-24
8. The Spirit of God gave Paul the supernatural ability to cope with the suffering and minister during the suffering and eventually delivered him from the suffering. Acts 16:25-40

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From this remarkable passage we learn much about Spirit leading:

1. If you have a desire to do God's will, the Spirit is leading you right now, right where you are.
2. If you are being led of the Spirit, you have a desire to minister in some way right now.
3. If you are being led of the Spirit, you will face trouble, trial, turmoil and opposition.
4. If you are being led of the Spirit, you will have supernatural power to cope with all negatives.
5. If you are being led of the Spirit, you will be fruitful because God is using you.
6. If you are being led of the Spirit, you will eventually be led out of the trouble.

**Positive Manifestation #5** - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through a life of faith.

Let us dogmatically and categorically state this reality; one who is constantly questioning himself or herself as to whether or not he/she is saved **is not** one being led by the Holy Spirit of God. There are entire churches of people who claim they are saved one time and then need to be saved another time who cannot possibly be led by God's Spirit. The reason for this is because God has given His Spirit to one who has believed and part of the benefit of this is assurance of this reality.

The following biblical statements prove the point:

1. Romans 8:16 - "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."
2. Galatians 4:6 - "And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"

From these passages it becomes very clear that one who is led of the Spirit has a Spirit-produced assurance that he is truly a child of God and is truly saved. Any person or church who continually doubts whether they are saved is not a person or church being led by God's Spirit. Dr. Chafer said concerning this: "Like the leading of the Spirit, the Spirit's work of actualizing, being so definitely in the realm of experience, can be distorted by those who lack a right instruction and knowledge of God's ways with them; nevertheless, the leading and the true witness of the Spirit must be recognized and maintained regardless of perversions. It is a matter of scriptural record that a believer will be made aware of his sonship relation to God by the witness to, and with, his human spirit by the indwelling Third Person. It is indeed the usual attitude of those who comprise the great company of spiritual believers to have peace in their hearts about personal salvation. They may have various problems in the sphere of their daily life, but, unless most abnormal, they do not entertain uncertainty about their own acceptance with God" (Vol. 6, p. 229).

Confidence that one is a child of God and confidence that one has everlasting life is a confidence produced by the Spirit of God. This is truly a very positive manifestation that one is spiritual.

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**Positive Manifestation #6** - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through a life of prayer.

Spiritual people are praying people. Those who are being developed by the Spirit of God will have a Spirit-produced desire to pray. There can be absolutely no question or doubt about the fact that there is a definite connection between the believer, the Holy Spirit and prayer.

- 1) Romans 8:26-27 – “And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”
- 2) Ephesians 6:18 – “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.”
- 3) Jude 20 – “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit.”

Even though there are great mysteries between our intercessory ministry and the Spirit’s intercessory ministry, one fact is very evident; people who are becoming spiritual will also become prayerful. Spiritual people are moved by God’s Spirit to take prayer seriously. People with no passion or conviction to pray are not those who are really spiritual, regardless of how religious or pious they present themselves to be.

**Positive Manifestation #7** - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through spiritual gifts.

The good and acceptable and perfect will of God is that the believer develops to the point where the Holy Spirit can supernaturally work through an individual by means of a special spiritual gift. This section will discuss the matter of spiritual gifts in question and answer form:

**Question #1** - Where in the Bible do we find the subject of spiritual gifts?

There are four major N.T. passages: 1) Romans 12:1-8; 2) I Cor. 12-14; 3) Ephesians 4:7-16; and 4) I Peter 4:7-11.

In order for a proper doctrinal understanding of spiritual gifts to occur, these passages must be carefully considered. Notice that the basis for this information is not the book of Acts !

**Question #2** - What is a spiritual gift?

A. There are some major misconceptions concerning this question right here:

1. A spiritual gift **IS NOT** a spiritual office. i.e. Pastor/teacher is gift; Elders/deacons=office
2. A spiritual gift **IS NOT** a natural talent. i.e. Natural talent given by God through parent
3. A spiritual gift **IS NOT** a spiritual ministry. i.e. Gift of working with youth or elderly
4. A spiritual gift **IS NOT** a spiritual opportunity. i.e. Opportunity to give, not proof of gift.

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B. There are some key biblical words clearly connected with the subject of spiritual gifts: Several key words show up in I Peter 4:10-11:

1. Gift ; 2. Serving ; 3. Steward ; 4. Grace ; 5. Strength .

The word “gift” refers to a free gift or endowment given by God .

The word “serving” (form of word deacon) refers to a minister who serves others.

The word “stewards” refers to one responsible for managing as an administrator.

The word “grace” refers to a grant from God which is undeserved and unearned .

The word “strength” refers to special power and ability from God.

C. There are many good definitions given of a spiritual gift:

- 1) Dr. Walter Elwell defines it–“Gifts of God enabling the Christian to perform his (sometimes specialized) service” (*Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p. 1042).
- 2) Dr. Paul Enns defines it–“The ‘grace gifts’ that are sovereignly given to believers by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation as a special ability for service to God and to others, particularly believers” (*Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 636).
- 3) Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer defines it–“...a gift is a divine enablement wrought in and through the believer by the Spirit who indwells him. It is the Spirit working thereby to accomplish certain divine purposes and using the one whom He indwells to that end.”
- 4) Dr. Charles Ryrie defines it–“...a spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service” (*Basic Theology*, p. 367).
- 5) We define spiritual gift as–**A spiritual gift is a gracious and divine grant from God in which He entrusts to a believer a special ministry stewardship called a gift, and supernaturally develops, empowers and enables that believer to use that gift to accomplish many things in ministry to others.**

In any true understanding of a spiritual gift, the emphasis will always be on the grace and strength which comes from God, not on any natural ability of one’s self.

### **Question #3** - Who gets a spiritual gift?

The biblical record is very clear that every believer receives a spiritual gift.

Romans 12:3 says gifts are given to “every man,” “to each .”

I Corinthians 12:11 says gifts are distributed to “each one individually.”

I Peter 4:10 says that “each one has received a special gift.”

Every believer has a spiritual gift; however, not every believer knows what his or her gift is and not every believer is actually utilizing his or her gift and some will never discover what theirs actually was.