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Market Street Fellowship  
Ryan McMaster

### **The Spirit of God Teaches Us All Things**

For the last several months I've been pretty steadily reading through the works of Isaac Pennington, Francis Howgill, and now, this past week, reading the Journal of George Fox. All of these guys were what are called "early Quakers," but really, these guys were just knowing Christ.

What has hit me so hard with reading them, or what I've been challenged by in my own heart is how single-minded they are. What I mean is that they don't seem to be concerned with the mind of Adam, the nature of Adam. That is something that I seem to give a whole lot of time and thought to, even still. I constantly seem to give my energy to that man... But they just really seem to be able to hold onto the cross and let it define everything. So I've asked myself as I've been reading what they are sharing, what is it that needs to be done to live in that same way? What am I missing? What am I not doing that they are? And like many of my questions, they usually end up being answered by one thing. And I don't mean the answer is really even the answer to the question, but what I mean is that LIGHT answers all questions. If it's a "good" question, the Light will answer it, and if it's a "bad" or wrong question, the Light will answer that too.

The Light is the answer to everything.

For some reason, Friday night at our group, I had a bunch of questions floating around in my head. That kind of scares me when I let my mind start trying to relate to God and let my mental comprehension become what I would call "light." That scares me because I know that the question isn't really necessary.... I don't think its bad to ask questions, in fact, I think it can be helpful if I ask the right person. The right person being someone in the body that is willing to know Christ and share out from that knowing. Because inevitably, the question that I ask usually turns into and answer that doesn't really answer my question.

For example, if I were to ask "what is the square root of 4?" Thinking that the answer to that would lead to some understanding of spiritual life, I would wait for someone to tell me that the square root of 4 is 2, then my spiritual understanding would be complete. I would have the knowledge that I was looking for. But that's where I've been realizing I seem to fall so short of letting spiritual truth really work in my heart. Don't get me wrong, I don't think that the Lord hasn't been working in my heart, and I've shared this a lot lately, so sorry for saying it again, but I personally feel like a few people in the New Testament that just don't get it. A few examples of that:

1. The woman at the well: she has a misunderstanding of the reality of the relationship, that knowing God is bound up with what we believe about a time, a place, a tradition. Jesus puts that all away in one statement by saying that true worshippers will worship in Spirit and in Truth.
2. Paul's audience when he tells them they should be eating meat:

Hebrews 5:12-14, "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

3. The young rich ruler when he wants to know the answer of what to do and Jesus tells him "no one is good:" This guy was looking for a specific answer of what he could do that would give him eternal life. I think he was looking for something in addition to the Law that he had followed his whole life. If Jesus would have told him that He just needed to participate in one more feast, I think he would have been good. He probably would have said, "yes, I understand, I will go do that and that will be it. I have figured it out." But Jesus offered him something He didn't want to hear. He didn't want to hear that he had to give up his life. Which is essentially what Jesus was offering him. This guy had many things, many possessions, was very rich. And Jesus told him to sell it all and follow Him. For this man, his life was bound up in this world, this temporal existence where he was doing quite well for himself. But when the Lord told him that he had to lose his life to find it, he couldn't accept it. I think this man really just wanted to hear an answer to the question that he had already formulated in his mind. I think most of our questions to the Lord revolve around us wanting Him to confirm our desires.

I think most, if not all, of the struggles in my heart revolve around my desire to have some THING answered by God, rather than losing my life, to find His.

We spent some time last night talking about being quiet before the Lord. It started with a long conversation about prayer, and it was good. I think that prayer can be lined up with and understood right along with the Spirit of God being the Life of the believer. I think in the absence of prayer, true prayer, is also the absence of true Light and Life. Spiritual realities don't exist in parts. I mean, we don't come to know and understand the Life we are in (the spiritual life) by discovering a thing, grabbing hold of that thing, then looking for another thing. We don't do that in this creation. We live in the presence of night and day, spring and summer, water and dry land, plants and animals. Those things exist together, they are inseparable. In this creation, natural things are all and in all. That's what this creation is. In the spiritual creation, the new creation in Christ, spiritual reality is "Christ all, and in all." The whole creation of Christ is His Life, the Life is the creation. The new creation that we are, that is His Life working in us, is also one creation, filled with all of these aspects that are perfect and they are all Christ. What else does it mean to say that Christ is all and in all? We are one body, one mind, one new creation, one life, one spirit, one truth.

I was asking myself the other day, what is the key then? What is it that we are striving toward? What is the upward calling, and how do we continue on and know it? How do we seek the Lord, how do we find Him and see Him? What is it that is given to us that makes us know as we are known? How do we come to experience and see with His Light and start to know with His mind? How do we love with His love? How do we carry the cross? How do we know and experience anything real that God has freely given?

I think there are two things to say in response to those questions:

First, all of those questions and the reality of Christ our Life is given to us by the Spirit of God. We don't "get this" by any other way than being brought into a reality of Life by the Spirit of God opening the eyes of our heart and showing us where we are in Christ. There is no other "way." Jesus Himself is "the way."

John 14:26

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

John 16:7

Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

God isn't giving us a Life that is absent of Himself. His life IS our life. In the absence of His life, we have no life.

John 5:40

But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

John 6:53

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

Back to John 14:26, the Spirit of God will teach you all things. Paul says in Galatians 1:11-12 "But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ."

So that's kind of the main thing that has been working in my heart lately, the fact that God is only known by the Spirit of God teaching us Christ. By revealing Christ in our hearts. We are being saved by that reality working out in us.

So the first thing in response to those many questions about how we know the Lord is BY THE SPIRIT. The second "factor" in this knowing is something that Julie G has been talking about, that in our weakness we are strong. I think another way to see that or put it is that we have to have the heart of a child. I think they are synonymous. Children have these qualities that we lose as we become grown men. They have qualities that we desire to have again. They are innocent, they are sweet, they are open to learning and impressionable. They are weak and very needy. When it comes to the Lord, the natural man seems to be totally opposite in every way.

When I think about having this kind of heart, the heart of a child, I think about all the times that man's heart is described as being hard. It seems that the description of a hard heart is just the same thing as a heart that doesn't want to know God or accept His rule, or His place, and in turn, our place.

Of all the things that man is good at, I think that a hard heart is his best, and most easily achieved accomplishment. It is the way that man hides from God. We are unwilling to see the

truth, therefore we hide from it. We put a veil over our own heart and deceive ourselves and pretend that we know and that we have some kind of good life, some kind of goodness in our nature and that we are pleasing to God. We have every excuse/reason/purpose for our life to mean more than what God has offered us in Christ. We are just like the rich man that goes away from Jesus full of sorrow because he had many things. We just don't want to let the truth work in us because we are so naturally minded and so full of desire for the things of this world, the passing, worthless things of the world.

I don't think most people regularly consider that everything we will do in the earth is passing and worthless. Its probably safe to say that I know we don't consider that. I spent some of my time this week listening to Ecclesiastes and although those words are black and white in the Bible, man has no real desire in himself to listen to what Solomon is actually saying. I mean, we kind of agree with what he is saying, probably in a philosophical way, but are we really seeing what he is saying? The world goes on and on only caring about the natural, extremely temporal and passing moments. We live in a constant state of craving more and more to satisfy the natural man.

Ecclesiastes 2:

I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure"; but surely, this also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter—"Madness!"; and of mirth, "What does it accomplish?" 3 I searched in my heart how to gratify my flesh with wine, while guiding my heart with wisdom, and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the sons of men to do under heaven all the days of their lives.

4 I made my works great, I built myself houses, and planted myself vineyards. 5 I made myself gardens and orchards, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. 6 I made myself water pools from which to water the growing trees of the grove. 7 I acquired male and female servants, and had servants born in my house. Yes, I had greater possessions of herds and flocks than all who were in Jerusalem before me. 8 I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the special treasures of kings and of the provinces. I acquired male and female singers, the delights of the sons of men, and musical instruments[a] of all kinds.

9 So I became great and excelled more than all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me.

10 Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them.

I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure,

For my heart rejoiced in all my labor;

And this was my reward from all my labor.

11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done

And on the labor in which I had toiled;

And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind.

There was no profit under the sun.

I think the true, pure heart of a child is willing to be whatever the teacher is willing to make it. The heart of a child accepts what the teacher is giving it. It really doesn't have a choice. So the heart of someone who accepts darkness as its teacher ends up being filled with darkness, and

accepts it, loves it, lives in it, nurtures it, and seeks out more darkness. The heart being taught and filled with light continues to seek and desire light. The one is hard, the other is soft. The one is under the rule of darkness, under the power of the prince of this world, the other is under the rule of Light, under the power of Christ.

The heart of Pharaoh was hardened, was unable to accept Israel. That heart was judged and then destroyed in the sea. The heart of Moses was one that gathered up a people out of the land of darkness and brought them into the judgment and out of death through into a place where they were in need and God offered up a place that was flowing with milk and honey.

We are being offered that same reality. Israel wasn't leaving Egypt in order to go to a land that they had to slave away in and establish their lives. The land that God had prepared for them was already established. Cities were there, livestock and vineyards were already there, they simply had to enter in. But even their journey resulted in a stubborn heart, a heart that longed to go back to Egypt, a heart that was hard toward what the Lord was offering. They knew what was back in Egypt and they were, in their hearts, wanting to go back to it to be satisfied. They were unwilling to listen to the Lord and accept, and see by faith, that the Land was their inheritance. We can do that in our hearts. The Lord is offering an inheritance in Christ that we simply have to willing to let Him show us. But we have to let HIM show us. We have to stop assuming that we know anything. He takes us in, He teaches us, He is the strength that conquers the land. In our weakness, our soft, child like heart, He can bring us in and give us His life.

So earlier I mentioned that we had been talking about being quiet and still before the Lord. The Spirit of God being the teacher, and I think what Paul says in Romans 8:26 says that so clearly:

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

I spent some time trying to expand on what Paul is talking about here in Romans, but I just couldn't get it out clearly. So I'm going to leave it alone, but say that if we can just let the Lord show us the reality of prayer, we will see that, like all things, He is the author.

He has given us this author of everything and planted Him in us. He has planted Himself in us. He has given us a Life, and this life is teaching our souls. I think we can conceptually talk about these things in the church. We can mentally agree with "Christ in you," but if we really stop and give that some thought, do we really think Paul was trying to say that all you have to do is conceptually agree with this statement? Or do we, as Paul says, want to "know as we are known." Knowing as we are known is not a small thing. Knowing as we are known happens when the seed that is planted in us, in our soul, starts to take ground and destroy the seed that is planted by the enemy. We don't read the bible to figure that out... we can read that in the bible, but the reality of that happening in our heart, in our soul is not by reading words. The Word of God, the Word that was in the beginning, the Word that was with God and was God, is written on our heart, to give us the knowledge of the Life. The Word is not written on pages, it is written in you, and it isn't known by studying pages, it is known in you. It is not known by using

natural eyeballs to read natural ink on natural pages, it is known by seeing with spiritual sight and knowing the spiritual word. We can't argue with that... that is not open for debate. Jesus couldn't be more clear.

"True worshipers will worship in Spirit and in Truth."

John 3:3

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Implying that if you aren't born again, you can't see the kingdom of God.... so if the Kingdom of God could be seen with natural eyes, anyone could see it.

Revelation of Christ is the key to this whole thing. Revelation given by the Spirit of God. This isn't a process that requires our steps, our efforts, our work. The work of God is that we would know Him.

I have a bunch of verses here, all from Paul, that talk about the Holy Spirit. I don't think they can be more clear. I just want us to see that the teacher of Life in us is by the Spirit of God. That isn't something that we assume is happening, that is something that has to happen with us knowing as we are known. We have to experience the Spirit of God tending to the seed that is planted in us. We have to know in that way, we have to know in an inward way. That's all we have to know folks! We don't need anything else. We really don't. We need to know Light. And light isn't a correct theology or a bunch of moral good behaviors. Light isn't a way we conduct ourselves, or how many good things we do for society. Light is inward, and Light is Truth, and it destroys the dark nature that is the reality in our soul without the seed of Christ. We don't just decide one day that we believe a fact about Jesus and then when our body dies we get to meet Him. We are born again, inwardly, and inwardly we must be mindful of the seed that has been planted in our heart. That seed must grow and take root. That seed is not us. That seed is Christ. That seed is what God is after. That seed is the gift of God. That seed produces the fruit, it branches out, it fills up. The Spirit of God is the helper, the one who reveals the Truth. He is not a concept, He is a person.

So here are some verses, and I will close with them:

1 Corinthians 2:13

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches **but which the Holy Spirit teaches**, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

1 Corinthians 6:19

**Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?**

1 Corinthians 12:3

Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and **no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.**

Ephesians 3:5

which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as **it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:**

1 Thessalonians 1:5

For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance

2 Timothy 1:14

That good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Titus 3:5

not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, **through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit**

Ephesians 6:18

praying always with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit,** being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints

Galatians 5:16

I say then: **Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.** 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Ephesians 4:25

Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,"[e] for we are members of one another. 26 "Be angry, and do not sin":[f] do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil. 28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.