

The Holy Spirit And The Trinity (Part Two)

The Meaning of the Spirit

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Last Sabbath it came to mind that spirit is the most important element in regard to the whole salvation process. As an indication of this, mankind is surrounded by truth about God, and yet we are not inclined to believe it, accept it, and use it. I want to go to a couple of examples of this to show you God witnesses this to mankind in Romans 1:

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [or suppress] the truth in unrighteousness.

You cannot suppress what you do not have. Truth about God is available, and it is being suppressed.

Romans 1:19-20 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them [or to them]; for God has shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and [divine nature]; so that they are without excuse.

That is quite a condemnation. God is not saying that He has revealed spiritual truth, or let us say, saving truth to these people, but even what He has revealed to them in regard to Himself—His power as Creator—that has been rejected. How much of mankind believes the theory of evolution? That is an outright rejection of God.

Romans 2:14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature. . .

Now where does "nature" come from that would enable them to **do**—to keep, to observe—some of the law of God? Where does that come from?

Romans 2:14-15 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law [It had never been revealed to them like it was to the Israelites.] do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, [it was never given to them like it was given to the Israelites] are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts. . .

Paul is saying that mankind is in the image of God, and there is within man a knowledge of that.

Romans 2:15 . . . their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another.

Excusing themselves of what? I know what it is. It is that they do not obey the law better than they **know** that they should be doing. The average Joe on the street knows enough about sin and enough about the law of God to be able to keep the law of God better than he does. He does not need to be converted to keep it better. He would not keep it the way a converted person would be expected to keep it. But you see that knowledge is being rejected because there is no inclination to accept it and really make it a part of one's life.

Go back to Acts 14 and we will see how God approaches this from a little bit different angle. Paul was being questioned by these people because they wanted to worship him. Verse 16 is talking about God.

Acts 14:16-17 Who in times past suffered [or allowed] all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good.

What have we seen so far?

1. We have seen that God has revealed Himself as Creator to the world in a general sense.

2. God has revealed His law to mankind in a general sense as well, in order that they might understand enough that they would keep it better than they do. Their conscience is smitten when they know that they are not living up to it.
3. He left mankind witness so that they know that He does **good**.

His providence is also known to man. Why do the unconverted keep Thanksgiving? To give thanks to God for His providence. They know. The things of God are not all that hidden.

Acts 14:17 Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

So mankind is surrounded by truth about God (and we would have to be included in this), and yet we were not inclined to believe it, to accept it, and to use it. We see then a witness, not only of creation, but of God's goodness and man's nature. This principle of God's revelation of Himself reaches into virtually every aspect of life, and yet there is a powerful impulse to pass over it or outright reject it that is unfortunately successful most of the time.

II Corinthians 11 adds to man's dilemma here, the way God looks at it. This time Paul was speaking to **converted** people.

II Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

In this world's religions, the simplicity is made complex by the same rejection process, and it is responsible for the multitude of denominations calling themselves "Christian." The people keep splitting. We are seeing this happening in the church of God, and at least on the surface the problem seems to be technicalities in regard to doctrine. That is only a small part of it. The real problem, brethren, is in the area of spirit, because all other groups have truth, but something is powerfully influencing us to divide apart.

I want you to recall and to begin thinking of this a little bit more specifically of the eight quotes that I gave you in my last sermon on this subject from the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. They were primarily from there. They were actually from two different works, but most of those were from the *Catholic Encyclopedia* that dogmatically stated that the Old Testament has absolutely **nothing** about any trinity. "Zilch, nada. nothing," is the phrase that I used. They did not say that, it was me who just said that, but they put it in scholarly language. There is nothing there about any trinity.

The same reference works went on to say that the New Testament is so vague about a trinity that they have constructed it on what they **think** is the sense of the Scripture, and one of those references (again it was a Catholic Encyclopedia, and I have to commend them for their honesty) said the doctrine was constructed out of what they called "Christological speculation." They admitted that they are guessing on this doctrine.

This sermon is going to be a review of some of the material that I gave during that sermon on Pentecost, beginning with the basic biblical usage of the word "spirit." Remember that word in Hebrew is *ruach*, and in Greek, *pneuma*. The English word "spirit" is a virtually perfect synonym for both of those words. We are also going to look into some reinforcing scriptures that I did not use at that time, and again I am going to say to you by way of qualification that this sermon is not going to answer every question. I am trying to get narrow and specific on this subject, so it is probably going to take a number of sermons as I have time to put them together to cover it adequately.

Turn with me to John 3 to probably the best known scriptures in the entire Bible, at least in evangelical Protestantism. Here in John 3:6 is the Bible's basic usage of the word "spirit." It is about as clear as you are going to get. Notice how simple this is.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh.

Do we all agree on that? Okay.

John 3:6-7 And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be born again.

Verse 8 is the one I am heading for here.

John 3:8 The wind blows where it lists, [or wherever it wishes, or wherever it wants to] and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it comes, and where it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.

What we have here is an elementary example of how the Bible, with one exception, uses "spirit." That one exception is when a **being**, a personality, is indicated. Spirit, *ruach*, and *pneuma* are the English, Hebrew, and Greek words used to convey what is invisible, immaterial, internal, activating dimension, agent or power. The one exception to that usage is when a **spirit being** is indicated. Spirit indicates an invisible, immaterial, internal, activating dimension, agent or power

While we were in the WCG, under Herbert Armstrong, we were taught that the Holy Spirit is the power of God. That is a correct but incomplete, too-narrow concept. The Holy Spirit indeed does empower, but so does man's spirit. The difference between the two lies in the quality of what they empower us to do. Spirit is unseen. It is like the wind, as Jesus clearly stated. Wind is Jesus' illustration of spirit.

Wind is air. That is what wind is. Wind is air, which we cannot see. Nobody has ever yet seen air. What we **do** see is what air **moves**, or what it carries, like smog, or dust, or ash, or moving tree limbs, or whatever. If you happen to be watching *Twister*, it might be a cow, or it might be a gasoline transporter or something. You do not really see the wind moving it. You only see the object flying through the air. Like the invisible wind, unseen spirit causes other things to happen. Now get that. *Like the invisible wind, unseen spirit causes other things to happen.*

Now in reference to a person, spirit activates, motivates, inspires, generates, initiates, begins, begets, impels, spurs, encourages, provokes, triggers, influences, originates, produces, spawns, creates, and fathers what we literally see in the way of conduct and attitudes on the outside.

This even applies to God. Turn with me to Isaiah 4, and you will see very quickly that the period of time that he is prophesying about is right after the return of Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 4:2 In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

They escaped out of the tribulation. They escaped out of the Day of the Lord.

Isaiah 4:3-4 And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remains in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem. When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.

Spirit is used here in reference to that which is within God. It is being used to help us understand the attitude motivating God's action. What is seen on the outside, externally, is judgment; but spirit is seen as an internal, invisible force, impelling, motivating, generating judgment, with fire representing a punishing, purging, purifying purpose. So from God, a spirit motivates Him to **judge**. That is the way spirit is used in God's Word.

Isaiah 11:1-4 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, [This is the same period of time being spoken of.] and a Branch [Jesus Christ] shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and [Notice what the spirit will do.] shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the L

ORD: [and the effect:] and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Each one of the qualities of the mind is named to encourage us that this One, Jesus Christ, will give judgments of the very highest quality. So spirit is the general word used to indicate those internal, immaterial, and unseen qualities of mind that energize and activate.

As we continue to see this, we will see, both from God's Word and also from our own experience, that they can be good or evil, edifying or destructive, clean or foul, generous or miserly, selfless or selfish, cheerful or depressive, positive or negative, and on and on it might go, but always spirit affects. It moves. It activates, generates, creates, and impels in the direction of its force.

Brethren, why are cheerleaders used at football games and at basketball games? Is it not to generate a spirit? Can you **see** the spirit that is energized? You cannot. It is invisible. It is unseen. And that simple usage is no different in principle from what we are going to see here in the Bible.

Let us go to Exodus 23. Again the subject is judgment. Here is part of the law of God.

Exodus 23:2 You shall not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shall you speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest [twist or pervert] judgment.

Here we are going to call on your experience in life. There is a spirit created in groups that tends to pull those groups along with it. It is a form of mob psychology. "Birds of a feather flock together." A milder form of this same process motivates people to conform to certain current fashions and music, taste, dress, or whatever.

There is today a cliché that is used which says to "go with the flow," which urges us not to resist the power or the direction of the spirit of an event, but rather choose to yield to it. So they say, "Go with the flow." "Don't resist it. Go right along with it." See, choose to do that.

The choice should depend on its direction, but far too many yield to what is popular or what feels good at the moment, rather than what is right. Sometimes we have to resist the spirit, or the flow, or the power of an event. Those of you who are a little bit older ought to be able to relate to this somewhat. It is very well-known that Adolph Hitler used large crowds, martial music, aggressive speaking, and dramatic lighting to create a spirit, and he was able to win the hearts of an awful lot of people in Germany so that almost the whole nation walked in lock-step, following that spirit.

Advertising follows the same course, only in a much simpler fashion, and in most cases for it a lot less serious, but they try to create an aura about the product. They are creating a spirit that might energize you and me to purchase their product. Restaurants create ambience to put you into a mood so that when you eat in their restaurants, without saying a word, the ambience in that restaurant, everything from the kind of music they play to the décor, to the lighting, to the dress of the waitresses, everything is coordinated to produce the kind of spirit that they want you to eat your meal in and have an enjoyable time. Are you beginning to get the idea of what this word "spirit" means, and how it is used?

It is very clear from I Corinthians 2 that man has a spiritual dimension to his mind that imparts, that is, it empowers man with the understanding of the physical and material that is woefully lacking when dealing with the things of the spirit realm. We find in other places that this is largely because mankind has been deceived. Those of you who are older in the truth probably heard Mr. Armstrong say this verse six zillion times, that it says in Revelation 12:9, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world."

You probably thought that Satan deceived the world through misinformation. He did, but we are going to see it was not all because of misinformation, but there was a spirit dimension to this that made people virtually unable to resist.

Men can sort out fact from fiction. We are intelligent enough to do that. But what if people are given truth but they do not have the mind that inclines them or impels them, or motivates them to accept it? I can guarantee you they will not accept it. Does not God have to lead us to repentance before we will really accept His Word? Does this not mean that He works in a way to make our minds willing to accept truth? You had better believe He does it. I am going to prove that to you as we go along here. So how is it that Satan has managed to do this? We can be influenced by spirits other than God's if we have no defense against them, and mankind does not, at least ordinarily.

Turn with me to another well-known scripture here in Ephesians 2. I want to spend a bit of time on this verse because it is quite instructive in regard to spirit. It has been a major player in enabling Satan to pull this off over the entire world.

Ephesians 2:1-2 And you has he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.

In verse 2 Paul is describing what lies behind what he mentions in verse 1—death. We were dead in trespasses and sins. Death is the ultimate in bondage, but what is responsible for, or behind death? The answer is: trespasses and sins. What is it that is behind, or is responsible for, or motivates sin? This is what verse 2 is about, and Paul names three things. The first one is that we walked according to the course of this world. I spent a number of sermons on this, but I will remind you that "course" means "the thoughts, the tendencies, the deeds, the pursuits, the inclinations, the passions, the fashions of the world." We conducted our lives according to the system of things that we were born into that does not give serious consideration of God and His way. It has values and ways and systems that are alien to God, so we walked according to it. That is what is behind sin. That is what lies at the foundation of death.

The second thing that he mentions here is that we conducted our lives "according to the ruler of the air," "of the kingdom of the air." That is the way one translation has it. It can be translated either "of" or "in," which is

kind of interesting. We conducted our lives according to the ruler of the kingdom **of** the air, or "**in**" the air. It is here that we are beginning to touch on spirit.

What did we say at the beginning of this sermon? Why did Jesus use that illustration of wind? Because wind is air, and air is invisible. Now take that thought and feed it right back into this verse. That phrase indicates "according to the principalities and powers who operate in the unseen world." In Ephesians 6:12, Paul brings the "principalities and powers" back into the thought-flow of the book, and that we are wrestling against them.

Point 1, of where sin and death come from, is that we walked according to the course of the world.

Point 2 is that we submitted through the unseen rulers, the principalities and powers who operate in the unseen, i.e., spirit world.

Point 3 is where we make a diversion from the normal interpretation given in most cases. My explanation is different, but I am convinced that it is correct. I came across this accidentally while researching for my article on "Goodness" which is going to appear in the next *Forerunner*. I want to say at this point that understanding "spirit" refers to "the prince," the prince of the power of the air, "the spirit," so we have automatically said that "the spirit" there is Satan the devil. No it is not. Well, that is not entirely wrong; it is not just quite as accurate as it should be.

The Greek grammar will not permit that understanding that we have held these many years, because it does not agree with the context of Paul's sentence. I originally ran across this in a commentary by an Englishman by the name of Martin Lloyd Jones. I am not going to quote from his explanation of it, instead I am going to quote from another commentary, *The Message of Ephesians* by John R. W. Stott, and he is another Englishman. It comes from Page 74.

Since the words 'the spirit' are in the genitive, they are not in apposition to 'the prince,' which is in the accusative.

There is the problem. They are not in apposition. I will define that for you. Apposition is not a word that we run across very often. Apposition means, "by the side of," or "parallel with." In other words, "**the spirit**" does not explain "**the prince**." Is that clear enough? It is not *synonymous* with. It is not *parallel* with. It stands on its own entirely. It is the third reason.

Since the words 'the spirit' are in the genitive, they are not in apposition to 'the prince,' which is in the accusative. We must rather understand 'the ruler of the kingdom of the air' is also 'the ruler of the spirit which now works in disobedient people.' Spirit then becomes an impersonal force or mood, which is actively at work in non-Christian people. Since Scripture identifies the Devil not only as the source of temptations to sin, but also as a lion and a murderer, we may safely trace all evil, error, and violence back to him in the end. When he and the mood he inspires. . .

Did you get that? "The mood he inspires"? So it is not completely detached from him, but yet on the other hand "the spirit" and "the prince" are not one and the same. Continuing the quote:

When he and the mood he inspires are said to be at work in human beings, the verb, *energio*, is the same as that used of God's power which raised Jesus from the dead.

Let me summarize that. "Spirit" here is **not** a personality. It is a powerful mood that impels, influences people to follow it into sin. This spirit works in the disobedient. It cannot be seen, because it works in the mind. It is a mood, an attitude, and it has power. It energizes and brings forth conduct that produces sin and death. We can sum this up by saying that Paul is telling us that before God intervened in our lives, we were controlled from within by an evil principle of life that was contained within the system, that it is not Satan himself that was in us, but his spirit.

Satan is the source and the governor of this evil principle. He hates God, hates His creation, and has but one purpose in his life, and that is to destroy God's creation by dominating man. Now how did he manage to gain control

over virtually all of mankind? It is not hard to understand once one understands how spirit works, and to know that Satan has lived all the while that mankind has been on earth. All he had to do was infect Adam and Eve with his foul spirit. He **fathered** it in them, and this has greatly helped lead them into sin. He **begot** it in them, with their permission. They permitted it. They used their free moral agency to submit to it, and they were hooked. Then he did it to Cain.

Remember at this time there were probably only four people on earth. That was all of mankind. And then one by one, all of their progeny. They unwittingly aided him, because they passed it on as well, because they were now infected with it. They passed it on much like it was a contagious disease, and all of those infected with it have continued to pass it on, and today Satan remains alive and he is continuing this same process, and he is aided and abetted by all those similarly affected in much the same manner as passing along the measles.

This has resulted in something. Turn with me to John 8, where Jesus asked:

John 8:43 Why do you not understand my speech? [“Why don't you get it?”]; even because you cannot hear my word.

Could they hear the sound of His words? Of course they could, but the rejection principle was at work, and they were not getting it. Now He is going to tell us why.

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil. . .

The Devil had infected them, fathered them, fathered his spirit in them, and that spirit rejected God's word. It happened to each and every one of us.

John 8:44-45 You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own [or out of his own mind], for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, you believe me not.

It is a very simple process. He has accomplished this by perpetuating the original infection. Brethren, it is **wonderful** that his powers are no where near as great as God's, or we would *really* be in trouble. God has given us His Spirit in order that we might be equipped to rightly discern and to make good choices. Now coincidentally, God will use the same basic process when He restores His government, beginning in Jerusalem after Christ returns, the same process in principle that Satan used.

The process will parallel the river of waters flowing from under the throne to heal the whole earth and restore its beauty; only it will not be water. I do not mean that the water is not going to go out; I am talking about this conversion principle. It will not be water; it is the Holy Spirit of God. Water is only a type of the spiritual process of the change of mankind, the submission to the Spirit of God. The spirit beginning in Jerusalem is going to be carried by people whose hearts, whose minds have been healed. We will see this I think before we get to the end of this sermon.

The sermon takes a little bit of a jog here, but it is still connected. The Holy Spirit is the essence of God's mind. That is precisely where His power over all things in His creation resides, that is, in His mind. The sovereignty over His governance of and His use of in carrying out His purpose for His creation begins right there, in His mind. The Holy Spirit is the fundamental nature of God's mind.

God's awareness of what is going on in His creation is so broad, and yet so precise, that no thought can be withheld from Him. He can react, or act instantaneously by sending forth His Spirit in order to ensure that His will is done.

We share with Him a tiny measure of this awareness, but it is usually confined to one very small area like a single room. Now partly because we are so limited to such a small area of awareness, we do not always understand what is going on. Sometimes brethren, we make some very bad judgments. But it is also clear in I Corinthians 2 that God's and man's spirit can interface with each other.

I Corinthians 2:9-10 But as it is written, Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us [meaning the church, the converted] by His spirit: for the spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

Paul is going to name three areas of importance to all who are converted. In verse 10 he names one of them, that revelation comes by God's Spirit. In verse 11 comes the second.

I Corinthians 2:11 For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the spirit of God.

By the Spirit of God our minds are illuminated. God is not merely revealed. We are illuminated about Him. Understanding begins to come. The third one is in verse 12:

I Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, [We just read of that in Ephesians 2:2.] but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

This verse is talking about inspiration. It takes all three of these things for us to be motivated, but it all comes by the same spirit: revelation, illumination, inspiration. These verses then prove that God's Spirit and man's spirit can interface with each other. They are so compatible that a begetting and a birth process are clearly shown in the Bible.

We will now go back again to Psalm 104. I want you to think of this in terms of God's spiritual creation.

Psalm 104:30 You send forth your spirit, they are created: and you renew the face of the earth.

It says "face of the earth," because the context is primarily physical and material. That is exactly what happened when the earth was destroyed in Satan's warfare. God sent forth His Spirit, and the face of the earth was renewed. Now what we have just read in I Corinthians 2 is applied to a spiritual process of revelation, illumination, and inspiration for the purpose of creation. God sends forth His Spirit, and creation begins; spiritual creation begins. "Let us make man in our image." That occurs to those to whom He invites directly, **personally**. God puts the touch on you so that He begins to be revealed, so that He begins to be illuminated before you, and so that you and I are inspired to do things.

There are three major differences between God's Spirit and our spirit. The most obvious one is that God's is holy. Holy means different. But as you begin to follow the word through its usage in the Bible, the real application of "holy" begins to become clear. It is not merely different, it is peculiar. It is a "cut above." It is transcendentally pure, and infinitely good in all that it motivates and energizes. Is Satan's spirit that way? Is man's spirit? Not at all.

Point No. 1 here is that God's Spirit is holy.

Point No. 2 is the amount of knowledge that it is capable of transmitting and using, and that knowledge is virtually, as far as we know, infinite as well.

Point No. 3 is that God is infinitely wise and mature, and therein lies His morality, His character. Three kinds of power: purity, knowledge, and character.

Herbert Armstrong also taught us that God is not just the great Creator, but He is also the great Educator. The motto of Ambassador College was "The Word of God is the foundation of knowledge." The Word of God is not all knowledge. It is not the sum of all knowledge. It contains **the** knowledge, the central, to the correct application for the operation of life, and therefore the fulfillment of God's purpose. With that thought in mind, let us go back to the marriage chapter there in Ephesians 5, and we will pick up a principle there in regard to the use of life.

Ephesians 5:28-29 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself. For [a conclusion] no man every yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church.

There is a glimmer here of a major principle. Nobody wants to be a failure in life. A person may be ignorant of what true success is. They may not have the will or the patience, or even the full opportunity to attain to what they perceive as success. But everybody wants to be a success at what they set out to do, and we will do what we feel is in our power to achieve what we think is best for us, so that we can be happy, so that we can be prosperous, whatever our vision happens to be. **We do not set out to fail!**

Let us add another thought to this. Since we find that we are free moral agents, we are free to do whatever comes to mind; therefore we are free to rape, to steal, to commit murder or adultery, or whatever, but we are also empowered to go in the opposite direction, and do anything in between that, that is the worst, in whatever we consider to be the perfection of character.

With this thought then, with that in mind, what are the most important pieces of information or knowledge that a person needs to have in order to be a **true** success? Well, we just read of them there in I Corinthians 2: revelation, illumination, and inspiration about God.

I will put it this way. First of all *we need to know, and know that we know that God IS!* Do we? Or do we have doubts about it from time to time? Second, *we need to know **that God** as our Creator, our Savior, our Redeemer, our High Priest, our Friend,* everything that His names imply that He is. Do we? Now remember, the better equipped we are in these things in God's revelation of Himself, the illumination of what He is doing, and the inspiration that we need to carry on to success, the better off we are going to be.

The third thing we need is *we need to know what He is doing so that we can get in harmony with it if we really want to be a success.* In other words, we

need to know why we were born. Now why? So that we might use our free moral agency to take life in that direction in as perfect alignment with God's purpose so that we can truly succeed. Now how does God get us to do this? **BY HIS SPIRIT!** That is the missing dimension in life. There has to be a replacing of Satan's spirit, which is a mood, an attitude that is inclined to destroy and to fail, and replace it with a spirit that is joyous, happy, light, positive, selfless, and on and on it goes; otherwise we can never be a success because we will always be held in bondage by a mood. Am I coming through clearly? There is a lot more to say.

There is a cliché that knowledge is power. Well, that is a true saying, but with this rider, that knowledge is power only if it is used; otherwise it is power **waiting** to be used, and when it is used, [here is the catcher], knowledge can be used for good or evil, selflessly, or selfishly, cooperatively, or competitively, to enslave, or to free. Again we could go on making this list of contrasts longer and longer, but you get the point, do you not? The choice is ours, because now you are equipped by the Spirit of God to make the right choice. The knowledge is coming, and the inclination, the spirit to do it in, ought to be there too. Are you quenching it? Or are you going with the flow with that spirit? The choice is ours.

There is a sidebar to this, and I want you to go to another familiar scripture, but it is important. Jesus is speaking.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickens.

The spirit makes alive, because remember we were dead following the spirit of this world, ...the spirit, that inclination, that mood that we read of in Ephesians 2:2. The reference here in John 6:63 has to be made back to the holy spirit.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickens [that makes alive]; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit.

Is that not interesting? Words are spirit.

John 6:63 The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Words are spirit, and because they are **His** words, they give life.

Knowledge is nothing more than words. I said earlier that the Holy Spirit is the essence of God's mind, and what does God reveal to us? The knowledge of Himself, and the knowledge of what He is doing. The knowledge is really necessary to come to know Him. Knowledge is always the essence of somebody's mind. It does not matter whether it is God's, Satan's or a demon's, or some other human being's. It may be written in a book, and the original author who said those words might have lived two thousand years ago.

Herbert Armstrong is dead, but his spirit lives on in the things that he wrote, the knowledge that came out of the experiences of that man's life in his relationship with God and others, you see, that he came in contact with. His spirit lives on in the form of words. None of those words are anywhere near as good as Jesus' words. Jesus said His words are spirit. Herbert Armstrong's words are spirit. John Ritenbaugh's words are spirit, but my words are not always life. Herbert Armstrong's were not always life. Jesus' words **always** were life. They quicken. They make alive. Knowledge coming out of a person's mind, while it is in their mind, is invisible, it is internal, it is immaterial, but when it hits somebody else's mind, it activates, it generates, it motivates, does it not? Yes it does. Hang onto that thought.

Now what if a person is ignorant of the knowledge essential to true success? Then they are completely at the mercy of the cultural forces around them, that is, their environment, and in that is this "zeitgeist" that I spoke of a number of times in that series on "The World." "Zeitgeist." "The spirit of the times." That is the literal translation of that word. In our Creator's wisdom He has **willed** that this be so, that we be born into an environment that is alien to Him, and alien to us. He has thought it **good** that we have to face this before our calling.

We find in John 6:44 that Jesus said, "No man can come to Me except the Father which has sent Me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day." Sometimes that calling can be dramatic, sudden, painfully embarrassing as Paul's was on the road to Damascus. Sometimes it can be long and drawn out and done in virtual solitude, like Moses' forty years in the wilderness as a shepherd. Sometimes it can be as uneventful as a child growing up in the church to converted parents, as according to I Corinthians 7, those children are sanctified already. However it comes, God is directly and personally interfacing with us to reveal or disclose Himself, as Paul said, "by His Spirit."

This is probably a good time to stop. What I was going to go into here was to show you what the mechanism for this calling is. Again, the Bible is very clear about how this occurs. I have been telling you that God directly interfaces with us, and the next time I will have to show you scriptures that show that, and how they show it, and how it is accomplished.