

The Spirit of Confusion

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Everything I've learned about the spirit of confusion I learned from the Holy Spirit – I've never heard anyone preach a message about it nor have I ever read anything in a book on the subject. However, this spirit, along with the spirit of fear, is one of the dominant spirits that the Dark Kingdom uses to stymie the advancement of the Spirit of God upon the earth.

I know from experience every month that these two spirits are mightily used by the devil to stop God from answering people's prayers. Many people when they get to Heaven are going to ask the Lord, "Why didn't you answer that prayer I prayed when I had that critical decision to make?" To which the Lord will answer, "I did but you were fearful and (or) confused and so you didn't recognize the answer when I sent it."

When we published the second edition of *Mysterious Secrets of the Dark Kingdom* last year, I elaborated quite a bit throughout the book about a key strategy of the devil – *control* – both direct and indirect. If he can control a church or a ministry then he can stop the flow of the Spirit in that ministry. When the Lord spoke to me in 1991, only a few months after we first published MSDK, and said that "there are more people in America today in need of deliverance than there are in need of healing" I knew He was not just speaking about unbelievers. In fact, the spirits of confusion and fear are mightily at work within most churches even though we have clear Scripture which says that God has not given us a spirit of fear. Most Christians and ministers do not recognize the operation of this spirit in their own lives. Eve will write about the spirit of fear next week.

I've related many times how in 1985 as I was preparing to do our radio broadcast, *Kingdom Living*, I was praying over America and saw a vision of a graph which showed America's rapid downhill slide. When I saw the vision I asked the Lord, "Lord, why has this happened?" In the vision the Lord Jesus

spoke to me and said, “A nation is like a person – the more it opens itself up to the devil the more he will come in and occupy. The two greatest spirits in operation in the earth today are religious spirits and deceiving spirits.”

Now at that time He did not say anything about the spirits of confusion but clearly they work with both of these spirits. I want to show you some of the ways they operate so that you will be able to recognize them in a church or ministry meeting. Also, I’d suggest you take a close look at the New Testament, particularly Acts, and you will see the blatant operation of this spirit against the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles. *Why* is this spirit assigned against the work of an apostle? Because the apostles are called to establish order and as the Lord told me in 1996 “to bring order out of chaos” because the Church is in chaos. Many churches and ministries are in the shape they’re in because the spirit of confusion is rampant in their midst and it’s difficult to bring order when there is confusion.

Now I want to discuss a few verses of the Scriptures for you to see from the Bible how this spirit operates and then I want to give you a few examples that we see all the time, especially in ministry.

1. Confusion does not come from God – it comes from the devil. I Cor. 14:33 says, “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace.” I think you know that *peace* is not only one of the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit that He is attempting to cultivate in us but also it is one of the ways that He leads us in the will of God – whenever you don’t have peace about something you’re planning to do then don’t do it!

I remember about 10 years ago a good friend of mine, a medical doctor and minister from Mississippi, invited me to come to Washington, D.C., to meet the President of the nation of Benin, one of the countries CCI is called to in West Africa. There was a delegation of black ministers here that had orchestrated the meeting. I replied as I always do, “Yes, I’d like to come. I’ll pray about it.” Yet, I prayed for weeks about attending and I never could get peace about it. So, I phoned my friend the day before he left for Washington and told him I could not get a release to come for some reason (now, understand the Lord never spoke to me anything about this but I did not have *peace* about going; in my own case, because I minister in so many dangerous countries, I’ve found this is normally because there is danger and the enemy has set a trap for me).

Remember this and it will help you avoid pitfalls – don’t get confused – trust your spirit not your head! My head told me, “This is important; you

need to meet this guy because he will be able to open up the whole nation of Benin to ministry.” So there was an attempt at confusion but I knew what my spirit was saying so I did not go.

The next evening my friend phoned me in Montana and he was laughing. He said, “Well, brother Timmons, I guess you’re the only one that truly heard from the Lord. We’re all here in Washington but the President of Benin is not here! He had to cancel the trip!”

Because *confusion* and peace cannot readily mutually co-exist I think we can see another reason why the devil seeks to sow confusion in a local church as well as the Church at large.

2. James 3:16 is a very enlightening verse: “For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” One of the reasons there is confusion in many churches is because all over the world so many churches see themselves in competition with one another so there is envy, jealousy and strife – all of these are evil spirits that *allow* the spirit of confusion to operate in a congregation. As a result, because the Holy Spirit does not agree with this but rather agrees with the Word, He is not able to bring unity and peace.
3. In several instances in Acts 19-21 we find that the spirit of confusion was able to operate in an assembly as well as whole cities at one time!

Now, let’s talk about some of the ways the enemy is able to sow the spirit of confusion within a church.

1. False teachers/prophets, etc., i.e., false Five-fold ministries. Now I think it’s quite obvious that false teachers sow a spirit of confusion because they are often teaching the “doctrines of demons” (I Tim. 4:2, *et al.*) or the doctrines of men or a combination. God gave us His Spirit and we should always be aware of what the Holy Spirit is doing down in our belly when sitting under a teaching, ministry, personal prophecy, etc. In addition, the Lord gave us His Word and we should always measure any preaching we hear against the infallible Word of God.

Remember, I’ve said it many times before, God has not changed, the devil has not changed and man has not changed. Just because we’re under

the New Covenant doesn't mean things are any different than Israel under the Kings – most prophets and other Five-fold ministers are *false*. That doesn't mean they're necessarily bad people; it just means you need to be mature in the Spirit and the Word to differentiate.

2. The Anointing Factor – it's not what a minister calls themselves that determines their office. Frankly it doesn't matter what you call yourself if you're not *anointed* by the Holy Spirit to stand in that office then you're not what you claim to be. This was Paul's argument against those he labeled "false apostles" in his day – they did not have the anointing hence they were unable to produce "the works of an apostle," i.e., signs, wonders and miracles.

There is much confusion sown because of this today because almost everyone is calling themselves an apostle today. Let me pass something the Spirit of the Lord said to me 12 years ago this month in Helena, Montana, when I was looking up churches in the phone book. He said, "Never judge a ministry or a church by how big it is, how much money they have or how many people – you only judge it by the anointing." In other words, the anointing is God's stamp of approval on a ministry or church – nothing else. However, because most Christians are not able to do what Paul said and judge not "after the flesh" but "by the Spirit" they tend to think God is blessing something simply because it's large or in demand by people when He may not even be involved in it.

One of the brothers in South Africa was struck with the truth of a statement I made to him in an email last month about "Spiritual Gifts" – actually I preached about this in the messages on *The Spirit of Elijah*. I said, "Many people are gifted but they're not anointed." There's a big difference. God gives each of us gifts and callings and these are "irrevocable" or "without repentance" (Ro. 11:29) but that doesn't mean He's anointed you. It's up to you more than God how strong your anointing is.

In addition, as we teach our people we're training, you need to be able to recognize *specific* anointings, especially in Five-fold. I remember over 20 years ago ministering in a church in Buda, Texas, that I had never been to before. I noticed after praise and worship that the man with the pastoral anointing came to the pulpit and gave some announcements yet he was not the pastor! He was an elder (of course this is another area

that causes confusion because in the New Testament elders were always Five-fold ministers). The pastor of the church did not have any Five-fold anointing resting upon him. Imagine what confusion this type thing causes in so many churches because people are set into offices by men and congregations when they are not anointed by God to stand in that office.

New Year's Eve of 2007 I was attending a service with a friend from Virginia at his church. During the worship I got up and went to the back of this large church. When I returned he said he thought perhaps I'd left but I said, "No, I just went to the back of the church." Later I told him why I'd done that – it was to locate a specific woman who was anointed for praise and worship. Not one person on the praise and worship team that night was anointed to be there yet there were three women in the congregation who were! You can imagine how this causes confusion.

A similar thing happened at my younger brother's church in the Houston area back when we lived there. I attended Lakewood but he attended a Spirit-filled church closer to his home on the SW side of Houston and I knew his pastor but had never attended that church. At the time it was about the 5th or 6th largest Spirit-filled church in Houston. He asked me one day to come over for Sunday dinner. He said, "I'd like you to come to our church and tell me what's wrong with the praise and worship – there's something wrong but I can't put my finger on it." So I agreed and my wife and I went. I never said anything until he asked me after church as we were eating if I knew what was wrong. I replied, "Yes, the pastor's wife is leading praise and worship and she's not anointed to do it." You see, often when this type thing occurs if you're sensitive to the Spirit you will recognize it immediately in the service, like in this case it was just as real as being at a concert piano recital and recognizing the maestro hitting the wrong note in a Beethoven concerto.

3. Ministry Model – one of our burdens at CCI here in the USA is to build a ministry training center according to the vision the Lord gave me in West Africa in 1988. One reason there is so much corruption in ministry today is because of the spirit of confusion operating in so many ministries and churches so that young people (young in the Lord, not necessarily chronological age) who may be called to ministry must run the gauntlet of a plethora of ministries where their ministry model is not that demonstrated by the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts. This causes

confusion among these young ministers and can lead to their following the same corrupt ministry model that they see.

Frankly, even today, most Christians are ignorant about how so many ministries, especially those on television, operate. They do not adhere to the Lord Jesus' or Paul's model of ministry. This causes confusion in a church because – more often than not – they are invited by the pastor because they are a BIG NAME MINISTRY and he hopes to draw a larger crowd. But the Spirit of God who is supposed to be in charge of the local church is never consulted about this ministry coming.

4. Learning to follow the Holy Spirit – the last point I wish to discuss has to do with another problem with the ministry model I mentioned above but it applies to almost all ministries today – I only know of a handful who do not operate this way and it's wrong as I will show you from Paul's ministry model.

Whenever young ministers in Africa ask me how to have a greater anointing in their ministry I always respond the same way – learn to follow the Holy Spirit. Yet most ministries do not operate that way. Their criteria for taking a ministry assignment has nothing to do with the Spirit of God but rather if their calendar is open on those dates. Then, if they have an extra week or so during that time, they will phone other churches in that area and invite themselves saying, "I'm going to be in Winterhaven, Florida, the middle of next month at Pastor Jones' church, would you like me to minister at your church?" If that pastor does not know them (they haven't networked like people do in business yet) they might say something like, "Well, send me a CD of some of your messages" or "Can you send me a letter of recommendation from Jack Hayford?" (or some other well-known minister).

I preached about this in a message about religious spirits back in 1991. This is the very thing Paul was talking about when he spoke about the "super apostles" and "letters of recommendation." Well, it's still with us.

Listen, Elijah wasn't *looking* for a place to preach; Paul wasn't looking for a place to preach! *Paul's calendar was wide open* when he first tried to preach the gospel in Asia but the Word says, "They were kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia." (Acts 16:6)
When a minister goes where he's not sent it causes confusion in that

church because there will be no anointing and it will eventually cost that minister greatly who is in disobedience to the Lord.

If you'll (1) trust God, and (2) learn to follow the Holy Ghost then you will do well and your anointing will increase. The truth is, my brothers and sisters, most Christians don't learn to do either of these two things. If God calls you to full-time ministry then He will provide for you – you don't have to try to open doors that the Spirit of the Lord may not want you to open just because your house payment is due next month.

Remember Paul's own testimony from Acts 22:18-21 how after his conversion he thought in the natural that the Jews in Jerusalem would accept his testimony because he had persecuted the Church but the Lord Jesus appeared to him in a vision and told him plainly, "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem; for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." Yet Paul, because he was immature spiritually right after his conversion, responded: "Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those that believed on thee ..." and that he was there at Stephen's martyrdom. You see, it sounds logical that they would have accepted his testimony but the Lord knew better.

Now I want to close this week's teaching with a *principle* that I've learned about the Lord many years ago that ties in with this teaching. The Lord Jesus Himself spoke much about "making righteous judgments" – being able to recognize and see the truth. The only way to do this is by the Spirit. The principle I discovered is that the Lord will often send a *sign* but it's a spiritual sign that contradicts the physical sign most people see. Which one are you going to believe? Don't be confused; follow the Spirit!

So if we want a ministry that will bring forth good fruit we need to learn to follow the Head of the Church and His Spirit in fulfilling our ministry calls and gifting. Then we won't be guilty of sowing the spirit of confusion in a local church and we won't be bound by confusion ourselves as we seek to follow the will of the Lord in our own lives. Can you say, Amen?