

## DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL RECEPTIVITY WITH WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT

What does the Holy Spirit do as he indwells us?

He helps (counsels), John 14:16

He communicates the presence of Christ, John 14:18

He brings things to remembrance, John 14:26

He teaches, John 14: 26, John 6:45

He convicts, John 16:8

He guides, John 16:13

He speaks/declares, John 16:13

He glorifies Jesus, John 16:14

He comforts, Acts 9:31

He imparts wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, Ephesians 1:15-23

He enables us to know the love of Christ that supersedes knowledge, Ephesians 3:14-19

He “bears witness with our spirit” that we are Children of God, Romans 8:16

He enables us to understand the things freely given us by God, 1 Corinthians 2:12

He comforts us, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

He gives us insight or understanding, 1 Timothy 2:17

He shows us truths or reveals things to us, Philippians 3:15 teaches us

The first step in deepening our Spiritual Receptivity is becoming convinced that listening to God is not something strange or odd. It is not something added or extra. It is the normal, natural, plain, pure, sweet, sane and sensible means by which God builds our relationship with Him and leads us in life.

If God is so actively at work in us to communicate and impart knowledge and understanding, we must develop a discerning balance in our approach to him.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-20 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. <sup>15</sup> See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. <sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Do not despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup> but test everything; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup> Abstain from every form of evil.

### 1. DO NOT QUENCH THE SPIRIT

*What does that mean? How would we do that?*

*What was the context at Thessalonica and how might it apply to us?*

## 2. TEST EVERYTHING

Acts 6:3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

**1. First, any impression that is not in harmony with the Bible isn't from the Spirit of God. Reject it.**

2 Peter 1:20-21 ... knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**2. Second, any perceived impression, leading or insight that doesn't promote the fruit of the Spirit isn't from the Spirit. Reject it.**

Galatians 5:22-23 <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

**3. Third, any perceived impression, leading or insight that doesn't promote the wisdom of the Spirit isn't from the Spirit. Reject it.**

Isaiah 11:2  
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 the fear of the LORD.

Proverbs 1:1-2  
The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

<sup>2</sup>To know wisdom and instruction,  
to understand words of insight,

**4. Fourth, any perceived impression, leading or insight that might affect others ought to be confirmed by others. Confirm it.**

Proverbs 11:14 says, Where there is no guidance, a people falls,  
but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.

### **3. HOLD ON TO THE GOOD**

If you seek to be a person who is discerningly receptive to God and is led by God in life, you will find that when some of your leadings are put to the test they don't hold up. But you will also find a lot of good that you would have missed if you had not been willing to learn to listen to God. What you have to do is test everything and hold on to the good. The truth is there is no sure way to prove that a particular perceived inner impression is from God!

There are only three alternatives. One is to say that since you can never be sure, you'll just reject the whole idea as impractical. The second alternative is to accept every inner leading and insight as from God. The Bible and experience tell us that both of those alternatives are wrong! The third alternative is to test every inner impression to the best of your ability, measuring it by the teaching of the Bible and its harmony with the fruit of the Spirit, which reflects the nature of God. Then lay aside whatever seems weak or worthless or wrong, but hold on to the good!

*If you listen to God you will find that the commandments and teachings of God in the Bible come alive in you with new power. And that is good!*

*Sometimes God will lead you in very specific ways. And that's good!*

*Sometimes God just wants to tell you how much He loves you. And that is good!*