

A Primer On Spirit

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Isaiah 44:1-5 "Yet hear now, O Jacob My servant, and Israel whom I have chosen. Thus says the LOORD who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you: 'Fear not, O Jacob My servant; and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring; they will spring up among the grass like willows by the watercourses.' One will say, 'I am the LOORD's'; another will call himself by the name of Jacob; another will write with his hand, 'The LOORD's,' and name himself by the name of Israel.

Now we are going to go back for three verses in the New Testament. The first one is in Luke 24, right near the end of the book. Jesus is speaking

Luke 24:49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.

Acts 1:7-8 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 2:1-4 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

These four scriptures tell a story from beginning to fulfillment. First was an intriguingly wonderful promise full of hope given in Isaiah. Second, Jesus gives an order that indicates a fulfillment that is not far off in Luke 24. In Acts 1:7-8 it is for them to know it is

very close, and the fourth one is fulfilled a few days later.

However in real time between what Isaiah said and when the promise was fulfilled, well over 700 years had passed. And that is a long, long time by our living standards. Seven hundred years ago Europe was still in the Dark Ages and it would be for another 180 years till Columbus sailed for the West Indies.

But there is good news too because Jesus said that the gates of the grave will not prevail against the church. In other words it will never die out. The church consists of those having God's Spirit and because people are continuing to be converted, the Holy Spirit has been given continuously since the church began.

Now God obviously does not consider time in the same manner that we do. And what is this wonderful instrument that He withheld for such a long period of time and is the source of exhilarating promises as given through Isaiah?

This is a mysterious subject to many largely because we deal almost exclusively with material things. Material things are those that we can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell. Spirit has none of these characteristics. So I am attempting in this sermon to fill in some possible gaps in our understanding.

A number of factors came together this past month or so that led to me giving this sermon subject. One is the series of sermons I titled, "What's So Bad About Babylon?" You might recall that I said at the time at the beginning of the series that I had given sermons on that subjects nine or ten times, but it kept evolving. The sermons kept evolving hopefully with more understanding. It used to be one sermon and then it was two sermons, and now it is at least three sermons long for me to fill in the gaps that I missed the first time that I went around.

As I was preparing the second and third sermons of that series the possibility began to dawn on me that since Babylon the city no longer exists as a nation, either, perhaps God's intention regarding the symbolic woman's identity had far more to do with spirit than any material nation or institution of men. That is, it is a spiritual aspect of the mystery that first must be revealed.

As I was meditating on this possibility I remembered that this was Herbert Armstrong's basic approach to solving the identity of the mark of the beast. He came to the conclusions that the mark of the beast has a spiritual identity that has its source in faith. That is, because one believes God.

When John the apostle was given a vision that he reports on in Revelation 13, he undoubtedly literally saw a mark on those worshipping the beast. Now people may indeed literally be given a mark as the beast rises to power in that time to come. But what is important to those of faith is knowing God, believing God, and literally keeping the commandments—and most especially the Sabbath—in order to avoid receiving the mark.

This understanding has its source in spiritual realities that clearly identifies an important truth that anyone truly called of God would recognize, but the uncalled would either overlook or quickly reject as unimportant. Thus Mr. Armstrong concluded that the mark of the beast would clearly identify the breaker of a specific commandment.

Since God Himself says that keeping the Sabbath identifies Him to His children and at the same time identifies God's children to Him (that is in Exodus 31), spiritually that mysterious mark would in reality be a day of worship different from the Fourth Commandment.

I find interesting these things regarding the Sabbath, intriguing. These things regarding the Sabbath are the last things He said to Moses before handing him the two stones written with His own hand on Mt Sinai. And thus the mark of the beast is a spiritual thing, Sunday worship, which is the day the world observes in defiance of Him.

Now a second factor that brought the subject of spirit to mind was a series of commentaries I gave regarding *zeitgeist*. Those commentaries helped clarify to me how something of a spiritual nature influences human attitudes and decision making without the people even being aware that they are being manipulated. That is the dangerous thing and what really concerns me is the indisputable fact that men in positions of commercial and political influences in the United States are aware of this power and are deliberately using it to advance their agenda by means of campaigns to focus people's inclinations about important issues in a favorable-to-them direction.

One of the simplest and easiest understood uses of what I am talking about here is the advertising business. An easily understood usage of this influence is the use of music in movies to establish a mood. All it is, is a sound and we go up and down. And when we go up and down to the mood of the music our minds are affected by what is going on on the screen. You are witnessing and being subject to the power of spirit.

Now the usage of spirit is potentially *very* dangerous. And it is used almost constantly in the United States and also Britain and I might say all of Europe, by means of electronic communication through radio and television which is so widespread, easily available,

and very effective. If the source promoting that spirit is evil, it can enslave one's mind to practice evil. In other words, you have got to listen carefully and you have to fight it. I am not overstating this. If we are not aware of our susceptibility we can be swayed toward evil and not even realize it.

I just gave this brief off-the-top-of-my-head commentary. Why do you think these people do not care? They are being manipulated to not care. They are being confused, so that they say, "Who can figure this all out?" and they just leave it. Do you think this is not deliberately being done? I have told you before, I have read it a couple of different times, Franklin Roosevelt said, "Nothing happens in Washington DC without it being planned." To them, politics is war for the purpose of running the nation! They are using spirit to fight against you and me without having to kill us with a gun with bullets. They manipulate the mind.

Every once in a while you will see an email and this email will tell you who is the father of this kind of thing. It is actually a man named Bernays who was the nephew of Sigmund Freud. He is really the father of the advertising business in America.

Now early in May of 2012 I received a letter from a man inquiring of the usage of the word spirit. I responded with an answer that required the man to have at least an elementary understanding of the term spirit and how it is used biblically. I have no doubt that this man was sincere in his use of his knowledge and convictions but he responded in a way that gave me a strong indication that he did not have a foggiest idea of the breadth of spirit's biblical usage nor its practical applications to Christian living. He was familiar only with one usage beyond the term "Holy Spirit," and that is the composition of a being. That is, an angel is a spirit being. Beyond that, the fog thickened and he was incapable of understanding vital elements of the knowledge of God.

Let us go back all the way to the beginning of the book, Genesis the first chapter. We are just going to touch on something here very briefly.

Genesis 1:1-2 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

Now perhaps it is indicative that the importance of the term "spirit" in our knowledge of God and His way is that in God's handbook of instruction to mankind—its first appearance is in the Book's second verse, only 29 words deep into the English version. Was God Himself hovering over the face of the earth? No, it was the thought processes

emerging from the mind of God that was involved in this operation. It was not anything material. It was thought that took place only in His mind as He witnessed what had happened and He planned what He was preparing to do.

That is all it was. His thought, His Spirit. Now let us look first at the important foundational facts. We must understand what the term spirit means in Hebrew, Greek, and English. What I am about to say is actually helpful and encouraging. It is helpful and encouraging because the similarities between these three words from three different languages are *very* similar.

The Hebrew word transliterates into the word *ruach*, while in the Greek it transliterates into *pneuma*, and in English the term is 'spirit.' Each of these three different words—three different sounds—communicate exactly the same concepts though. Bullinger's *Companion Bible* commentary states that the Hebrew word *ruach* appears 389 times. The Greek word *pneuma* appears 379 times in the much-shorter New Testament. That totals a 768 times it appears in the Bible.

Neither of these words is translated always into the English word 'spirit' but that high number indicates that the term spirit is very important to our understanding. The *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* provides an easily understandable basic definition of the roots of both *ruach* and *pneuma*. It says that the root of both *ruach* and *pneuma* suggests a movement of air. That is all it is. Spirit is a movement of air. That is the only thing that they can come up with that describes it.

That is very basic, but it tells us a couple of vital things about spirit. Air, which we cannot see, suggests that whatever spirit is, it is invisible. You cannot see it. Just like you cannot see air. Though spirit cannot be seen, its effect can be seen even as air itself cannot be seen but one can see it doing things, even as simple as moving leaves on a tree.

The phrase "movement of air" suggests force or power, even if it is just moving leaves on a tree, movement is taking place and it takes just a minute amount of power but it is spirit that is moving it.

E. W. Bullinger in the *Companion Bible* adds some important defining characteristics. He says that the fuller meaning of the words can only be understood from their use within context. However there is one root idea running through *all* the passages. Now here it comes. Spirit, very simply, is an invisible force. It cannot be seen, but it is doing something.

Let us define it first. It is an invisible power that motivates to do or not to do. It applies to people and this is where it is very important to our lives. We are people. Spirit is an invisible power that motivates to do or not to do. Therefore, in whatever sense these terms are used, though invisible, spirit is revealed as being there by its manifestations which can be witnessed externally by man through his senses as created by God. In other words, we can see what is happening. We cannot see who is doing it because whoever is doing it is invisible. But we see what is happening.

There is another important factor. Spirit's influence can also be known internally, in someone's mind, by man through his thought processes. This takes discernment as to what is causing this thing, whatever it is, to happen. And what this means is that spirit can be discerned by those who know what to look for by means of their own thought processes. In other words, by looking at a person's body language, listening to a person's vocal inflections, watching a person's demeanor.

I will expand on the terms, usages, that we might grasp how and when spirit exerts its power. And I will be giving you many symptoms that will help convey the kind of context the term spirit might appear in.

The Readers Digest Oxford Complete Word Finder provides the following usages. I am using an English language source, first of all because that is what I had available. Even though it is in English and two of these words are in a different language but as I said at the very beginning they all three mean the same thing.

So getting it out of an English source will also provide the meaning of *pneuma* and *ruach*. Here they are. Here is the way the word spirit may be used in an English language, Hebrew language, or Greek language source.

A: "Spirit is the vital animating essence of a person, thus indicating, depending on the context: breath, life, vitality, vital spirit, soul, consciousness, psyche, self, and heart essence." In other words, all of those factors might at some time in a context be translated "spirit."

B: "It is the intelligent, nonphysical part of a mind of a person." In other words, given the context, the word spirit might indicate a person's mind.

C: "A supernatural being such as an angel or a ghost." We will go right on, that one is clear.

D: "A prevailing mental or moral condition or attitude." This is an important one. "A prevailing mental or moral condition or attitude, a mood, inspiration, notion, feeling, inclination, frame of mind, impulse, atmosphere, temper, nature, sentiment, humor, inclination, tendency." All of those words, given the context, are synonyms for the word "spirit."

E: "A person's mental or moral nature or qualities. In this case, character." Spirit can be a synonym for the word character, disposition, heart, mind, will, or bent.

F: Here is the last section and this also is very frequently used. "The real meaning as opposed to lip-service and thus we use the phrase the spirit of the law. The sense of something, signification, intent, purpose, aim, implication, message, essence, core, heart, substance, marrow."

If you are thinking with me, I hope I am crowding your mind with ideas. In a way, the word spirit is so important to our language, our communication, our understanding, it is almost unimaginable. It is used and can be used so frequently. It is very meaningful concept and it really pays to think these things through. We have a tendency to say, "Well, the word just means this." This word does not just mean this. It is very broad. Do you know that every one of those synonyms that I gave you, at some time in your life, is going to motivate you to do or not to do something, and you are being affected by spirit? That is why I say we have to learn to think things through as to what is going on.

John 4:24 God is Spirit: and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

This touches on one aspect of spirit that I am only going to spend a brief amount of time on. I want you to notice that the verse says that God is spirit. It does not say God is a spirit. There is no article in the Greek sentence here and the usage is in reference to His composition. Thus God Himself is immaterial and invisible, but we know from many places in the Bible that He clearly has form and shape. He is not like a disembodied ghost at all. But He is nonetheless composed of spirit.

So another way of proving this to yourself so that you are solidly in understanding of this

is that we know He has form and shape because we have form and shape. We have arms, we have legs, eyes, and so forth and so on and we are in His image. So though God is composed of spirit, He has form and shape just like us. So physically we look like Him. He is not disembodied at all.

So let us go to another place.

II Corinthians 3:16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

The first use of spirit in verse 17 is again referring to composition, but the definite article is there in the Greek because it is referring to a particular spirit being. In this case it is the Son that is referred to. It is *not* referring to the third person in a trinity. What we are looking there about spirit in verse 17 is the one in whose physical image we already are. Jesus Christ was the model we were made after, as well as the Father.

The second use of spirit there though is, as we are going to see, the Holy Spirit. The largest number of usage of spirit in scriptures appears to be in reference to an action of either God's mind or ours. We are going to take a look at revealed knowledge very important to you and me that appears in reference to us. We are going to go to Job 32. Elihu is the speaker and he said:

Job 32:7 I said, age should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

That word breath in verse 8 could just as easily have been translated spirit. And it would read this way and still be correct: "But there is a spirit in man: and the spirit of the Almighty gives him understanding."

In Genesis 1:26 it states that God says:

Genesis 1:26 Let us make man in Our image and after Our likeness.

But there is much more needed by us to meet these requirements than merely looking like God. This God-given spirit that Elihu says we have been given is what makes man

human and at the same time in the material image of God. And equally important, it enables humans to have a spiritual link with our God who is Spirit and who has a spirit, the Holy Spirit.

This statement by Elihu tells us a great deal and yet it is still incomplete. This spirit is not another being within us but an immaterial quality that empowers. Remember that. It is immaterial quality that empowers. It is a spirit tool. This spirit in man is not a material internal organ like the liver, stomach, or digestive tract. It is an immaterial quality that imparts the power of intellect and imparts the ability to think and thus make use of the material tools that God has created to enable us to operate as human with the potential to be God as He is.

We are indeed fearfully and wonderfully made with a brain, with eyes, ears, hands, fingers, a nose that smells, and skin that feels. Now this spirit cannot perform the functions of even one single human cell, *but it empowers them to function*. The spirit cannot see, it cannot hear it, cannot taste, smell, or feel. The brain sees through the eyes, it hears through the ears. The spirit in man performs the function that enables communication within the brain itself and between the brain and other tools that God has equipped our body with, therefore enabling us to think and use those tools.

It is the spirit that enables us to be self-aware to a far, far, far greater extent than any animal and it provides the potential to be aware of the greatness of our Creator and to actually worship Him. No animal can worship God. They do not even have the slightest inclination to do it, but we do it.

Now animals have the same material tools. They have a brain as humans do, but they are not human and they are nowhere near on the same level intellectually as humans.

It is this immaterial power that God has given that makes the other gifts He has given operable as humans and in His image. The spirit imparts the power to think spatially, to have foresight, to remember, and to make use of language and to experience emotion, to build, to sing, to experience joy, and plan, which clearly sets mankind apart from animals. It is the spirit that enables man to invent a bicycle, an automobile, an airplane, a house, or a rifle to do whatever is need to overcome an animal's natural bodily superiorities and thus reign over other creatures. No animal regardless of how bodily powerful they might be, how fast they can run, how sharp their sense of smell is or sight or hearing or how courageous in battle, is empowered by a spirit like man.

This is what makes us different. You have never seen that spirit and yet you are using it every single day and hardly any time passes in your life that you are not using it. If only

to think, if only to dream, if only to plan, if only to remember. **What a gift!** It is awesome.

And what power there is in it. As we continue through this you will see. It is this God-given immaterial and invisible power that more than anything else enables man to be in the image of God to some degree—even intellectually and even before a person is converted. People can already think about God and even have God-like thoughts even though they are not converted.

Now let us move on to another illustration that helps to understand and define spirit. Never forget that spirit's basic definition is an invisible, immaterial force whose manifestations can be seen. You do not see the spirit but you do see what it does, what it is capable of.

Let us go back to a scripture that was used this morning. This one is awesome. I have touched on it a little already. Jesus is speaking and He says:

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Considering the depth of the context preceding this verse, the use of the first 'spirit' is somewhat misleading because its capitalization implies a person. Jesus Christ never intended us to infer a person out of that use of spirit. Now that first phrase is translated more correctly, and I will give you the correct sentence out of the New Testament commentary. What Jesus really says is: "the spirit is that which makes alive." Spirit is not capitalized there. The spirit, small 's,' the flesh does not help at all.

We will explain that. The way to understand this is to consider the long context of chapter 6. This is the one in which Jesus used all kinds of figurative language in order to instruct people regarding to His importance to their life, His importance to our life. And Jesus through the whole thing is making a comparison. Basically what He said is, physically eating does not impart spiritual life. Physically eating does not impart *eternal* life. That is even better. And thus spirit, in this verse, is indicating Holy Spirit and not a third person in a trinity doctrine but rather the additional power that God gives on conversion. That spirit *does* impart life but just like the spirit in man it is also immaterial and invisible but it is far, far more powerful.

Now Jesus adds to this by saying that that spirit is what imparts eternal life. So it is the second one that I am focusing on for this illustration. The words that Jesus said, whether it was said to them back in the first century or whether it is read by us as He

said them back in that period of time, Jesus' words are spirit. Do you get that? Words are spirit. Now considering the context and the purpose and the spiritual depth of the words He used in his teaching, Jesus means that His words, if they are believed, they become spirit influences leading to salvation.

We are going to expand on this truth that words are spirit. Do you understand that your words are spirit? Anybody's words are spirit? They are not Holy Spirit like Jesus' were, but they are nonetheless spirit. Anybody's words are spirit. And you are going to believe it before I am done.

What are words? They are the essence of someone's mind. You cannot see them, you cannot see them when they are said. You cannot see them when they come out of the person's mouth, they are invisible, immaterial. You cannot see them when they go into your mind, but what do they do to your mind? Here is the power. See, not everyone's words have the purpose or depth that Jesus' did but we use them for communicating concepts of all sorts and they have the potential to cause powerful effects. A word is not material and it is a matter of fact that words are nothing more than symbols. Words are nothing more than letters on a page, or a sound that has meaning and power when communicated.

Now what they mean in a given context is where their power lies. They are invisible, immaterial concepts, invisible within the recesses of one's mind and sent forth to another mind where they become the energizing and influencing source of thought processes. Thought processes planted, taken from one person's mind and planted in another. And when they go into another person's mind they can inspire one to be motivated. Exhort to some action. They can depress the one who hears. They inform, they destroy reputations, they mislead, or they calm down. They can create faith, love, hope, determination, courage, endurance, fear, enthusiasm, morality and repentance, because as they go into your mind they are instructing, they are causing you to begin to take action, one way or another or to stop what you were going to do.

You never saw the word. You heard it but you never saw it, but as it began influencing your mind, its power was exerted. That is what Jesus was talking about. When you hear or read Jesus' words it empowers you to do something, usually spiritual. We will get back to that again.

And so you are talking to someone and their words make you weep, they anger you, or cause you to be reconciled. Or make you convicted of a sin. They give you solutions to problems and you take action, or they create new problems. Or they make one become aware of needs. That is where spirit's power is. It is in *words*. If the words are also

accompanied by a visible anger, the words are intensified, are they not? Or a voice that is raised or lowered in volume. Gestures can intensify a word's influence.

Psalm 104:30 You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; and You renew the face of the earth.

What is being described here is the same process a man goes through when he invents or builds something. He plans in his invisible thoughts and then sends them forth as an activity. Maybe it causes him to draw up a plan, a blueprint. They cause him to move into an activity. He saws the board, he hammers the nail into the board, and on and on. Invisible influence from words and they are all from something immaterial and invisible unless they happen to be written. But it is what they mean is where their power lies. Now all of this because of spirit—an immaterial, invisible force that moves us to do or not to do, to accomplish something or desist from going any further. But let us carry this a bit further. This time we are going to the book of Matthew.

Matthew 15:16-20 And Jesus said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not yet understand, that whatsoever enters the mouth goes into the stomach, and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, murders [initiated by spirits], adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. [All of these things are formed into action by words which motivates and influence. And he says:] These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

I mentioned during my sermon on the first day of Unleavened Bread that the source of sin is spirit. Now Jesus clearly taught, as we just read there, that it is right in our heart. In this case it is the spirit of the liar and murderer, Satan the Devil. So turn with me, we will see this directly stated in the book of Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you has He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, just as the others.

It is Satan's spirit that permeates this world invisibly influencing evil thoughts in human beings. Covetous thoughts, angry thoughts, getting even thoughts, thoughts of destructive gossip, prideful thoughts elevating the self, murderous thoughts, deceitful thoughts, thoughts of revenge and stealth. Every one of them invisible but containing influential power to move one to action, forcing a choice unless we quash it.

Satan is a spirit being that is responsible for tempting Adam and Eve towards sinning. He used words as a major part of his ploy to lure them into sin. His temptations can come on anyone at any time and we must be on guard. We read in Ephesians 6 to be aware of the fiery darts of the wicked one. The fiery darts of the wicked one, brethren, are words.

They get inside our minds and reside in our hearts and motivate us to do something—unfortunately often evil. And so he is the one responsible for being the driving force behind the organization and continued existence of the world. He and his fellow demons and the system they dominate all work to draw us into his way of life which is anti-God or anti-Christ.

Spirit, brethren, plays ***the major role*** in his deception. Words that motivate because they find a home in our minds.

Let us go to Romans 7. If you are following with me please let me encourage you because this can be very discouraging. *The solution to this is God's words.* In a sense it is that simple. There is one more little function here that needs to be entered in but let us go to Romans first. We all are familiar with this chapter and Paul's lament here about himself:

Romans 7:14-17 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If then I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good, but now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Even as a converted person there were the remnants of what he was before he was converted. And so it was still there and it is still in us. And it is battling to surface in our moods, in our attitude, in our actions, and it incites action invisibly, immaterially through the words that are still there. But we can stop it!

Now this is right where *zeitgeist* enters the picture again. It is a German word that

means “spirit of the times” and because it is of the world it is very rarely a good spirit. It indicates the attitude prevalent in a given period of time in history in a city or even in an entire nation—a mood that impacts upon the citizens on a large scale. It motivates or moves people's behavior in a given direction. It could be an apprehensive spirit, a fearful attitude of impending doom, or an upbeat, confident, aggressive, count-me-in approach to business ventures or risk taking, or patriotism.

Now God has permitted Satan to spread knowledge of the pervasive destructive power of the spiritual reality to men of very evil thinking. And that evil thinking is generally used to control the masses for the purpose of bending them to the governing will of the dictator. Adolph Hitler was very good at using it to entrap the German people into virtually blindly following him, thus overlooking or simply not believing what was happening in their otherwise beautiful and prospering nation.

In America, large numbers of people conceive that murdering the unborn is good! That is spirit's power put to a very evil end. And they sincerely believe that murder of the most helpless of all humans is good. How did they ever come to be this way?! All it took was a series of lies containing greatly exaggerated statistics virtually endlessly repeated with a certain inflection and carnal logic contained within the repetition that made one feel they were not wise or accepted if they did not go along and take advantage of the opportunity.

You see, something is needed to counteract this. And in a way the answer is so obvious. What is needed to counteract all the lies that are flying around in this nation right now is spirit that is good, that is clean, that is pure, that is right, that is honorable and good.

Turn with me to John 14. The last night of the human Jesus life.

John 14:23-24 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My word [remember, His word is spirit, there is power there and if we keep it, if we believe it and if we use it]; and My Father will love him, and We will come to Him, and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep not My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

It is the Father and the Son who lives in us by Their Spirit, and we are exhorted to resist the Devil—that is in Ephesians 4:30—and to not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Now what is the difference between God's Spirit and all other spirits that may have the possibility

of influencing us in the right direction? In a sense, brethren, we have a good spirit on this side and a bad spirit on this side and we are in the middle and capable because we have a spiritual content in us of being influenced from either direction. We in a sense are in a position of command and we are the ones that are charged with the responsibility by God to say yes to the one and no to the other and follow through allowing ourselves to be motivated to by the invisible influence of one or the other.

So what is the difference between God's Spirit and all other spirits? In one sense it resides in one word. *God's Spirit is holy*. That is it. Satan's spirit is also an invisible influence but it is *not* holy. God's Spirit can influence us if we permit it but it is holy. God's Holy Spirit is the essence of Their minds. It is Their thoughts, Their words, Their character, Their attitude, Their perspective, their power that emanates forth from Their minds to ours because They will it so. Will we allow it?

The major difference is that their spirit is always and forever holy and that is what sets it apart. Holy exudes *purity*. It is always clean, good, righteous, upbuilding, full of love, and so forth. God never plays dirty. There are no fiery darts of twisted words that come from God. Words influence.

Turn with me to a final scripture. This makes it so clear.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is [here we are on the day of Pentecost, the day of firstfruits. First of all] love [no murder there, no deceit there, no trying to get even, no retaliation. It is love], joy [happiness, upbuilding], kindness, peace, long-suffering, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

So the term "holy" not only simply implies being different and distinctive, but it also indicates cleanliness and transcendental purity. And having its source in God its intent is always issued forth in these characteristics that we just read. The purpose of His Spirit is never to enslave, always to liberate, never merely to kill, always to produce life on the God level, never to just destroy, always to share.

How do we grow in the quantity and the quality and the use of that spirit? Well, the answer is actually very simply stated. It is by spending time with Them that Their spirit is imbibed. Spending time in Their Book, spending time praying to Them and when you are around Them you pick up what is the essence of Their mind. You hang with the dogs, you become a dog. You hang with the King, you are going to become a king.

A Primer On Spirit by John W. Ritenbaugh (<http://www.cgg.org>)

So this relationship that Jesus Christ established for our benefit, is made possible by Him and we keep it going by submitting to Their word as the opportunities arise and always making every effort to spend as much time with Them as we possibly can. That way the spirit will always be good.