

Speaker: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor

CWP: 1. Love God – Love People – Be Discipled – Make Disciples

- **NEEDS:** Ask the Spirit to help/provide/heal/deliver in whatever needs YOU have _____
- **Pray:** CAMP – Impact, safety, fun, belonging! Many “YES” to be given to JESUS!
- **Pray** for SC to grow in knowing Jesus through Scripture. (Bereans – daily study 😊)
- **Pray** for SC to be known for their LOVE inside/outside the Church → “no one stands alone.”
- **Pray** for SC members to engage the Great Commission, “each one, reach one.”
 - Pray, by name, for those you know who need to know Jesus!
- **Pray** for rest, wisdom, & unity, for our Small Group Leaders as they disciple, serve, and minister to our people.

PRAY FOR OFFERING

Intro: There are Christians today who reject the idea that God speaks to us subjectively in our thoughts... The claim is that speaking through Scripture is all we need.

Reflect: When you read a book, what is the sound of the voice? The Author? No, your thoughts. Is it true that we could ALL read the same book and have different thoughts about what it says? TRUE. Which is why we encourage studying the Word, becoming familiar with what it says, regular church attendance, and learning from others, etc.

My Point: Even with reading the Scripture alone, you still need to test what you are reading, to ensure you aren’t reading your thoughts into the text (eisegesis)

Exodus 28:3 (NASB 2020) ³ You shall speak to all the skillful people whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may serve as priest to Me.

Exodus 31:3 (NIV) ³ and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—

1 Corinthians 12:8 (NIV) ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,

Ephesians 1:17 (NIV) ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

How do you suppose this wisdom is to be understood? The same who created our minds, hearts, and spirits communicates to us through them as well!

Last week we dove into what the Spirit speaks (*reveals*) to us about

Sermon Title: The Gifts of the Spirit: Recognizing the Spirit's Voice

How would you know IF the Spirit was giving you some type of message? How could you be certain?

When people claim to hear God, one of the first objections I hear is, “How did He speak to you? Did you hear Him say it out loud?”

Today: We are going to look at how we can recognize when the Spirit is speaking to us, and we shall start by recognizing His voice in Scripture.

CAVEAT: In many cases, such as my own, when I first sensed the Spirit speaking, I simply KNEW it was Him. I have led others in prayer, and without teaching them how, they experienced the same. If God wants you to know something, He is NOT limited by our lack of knowledge. That said, Paul laid out multiple guidelines that TAUGHT the church in Corinth how to handle hearing God speak, including how they were to listen to the Spirit in their SMALL GROUPS. (1 Cor 14)

A. Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost (title from Craig Keener's book, 2016)

God speaks to people through the Bible in two different ways:

Universally -- to everyone prescriptively & descriptively

- **Romans 15:4 (ESV)** *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope*
- **2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV)** ¹⁶ *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,* ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*
- **Descriptively** – Telling us what happened. Describing both good and bad events that teach us about God, morality, salvation, etc.
- **Prescriptively** – Telling us what we are to do. Universal commands, expectations, etc.

Personally -- to specific people, with specific messages for specific situations at specific times.

- **Acts 8:29 — Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch.** The Spirit's Voice: *"The Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over and join this chariot.'"*
 - There is no command directing a believer to approach a specific chariot at a specific time.
- **Acts 10:19–20 — Peter on the Rooftop.** The Spirit's Voice: *"While Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, 'Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them.'"*
 - The Spirit updates Peter's theology & tells him 3 men are waiting for him!
- **Acts 16:6–7 — Closed Doors in Asia and Bithynia.** The Spirit's Voice: *"...having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them."*
 - The Great Commission commands believers to go to all nations, but the Holy Spirit showed them where to go and where not to go.
- **Acts 13:2 — The Sending of Barnabas and Saul.** The Spirit's Voice: *"The Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'"*
 - The Spirit identifies two specific individuals by name for a specific assignment.
- **Acts 21:10–11 — Agabus Prophesying over Paul.** The Spirit's Voice: *"Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"*
 - The Spirit spoke specifically about what was to happen to Paul.
- **Luke 2:25–26 — The Promise to Simeon.** The Spirit's Voice: *"And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ."*

- Old Testament prophecies promised *that* Christ would come, but the Spirit subjectively revealed a unique personal timeline specifically for Simeon's lifetime.
- **1 Kings 19:12–13 — Elijah at Mount Horeb.** Elijah hears a "*still, small voice*" (or "*gentle whisper*")

Pentecost tells us this is the NORM for us! The Spirit continues to speak to us today. He will often take a specific passage of Scripture and apply it to our lives.

God wants to speak to you, so that you know Him more. This is both personal and corporate.

For example, my wife loves our church. She feels a distinct call for the people here. I am included in this! BUT when she says she loves me to my face, my heart melts, and I am ready to do anything for her! I'd pick up a rattlesnake and kiss it for her! (eew)

Stefan's: Reading Mt 16:18: Jesus says to Peter, "You are Peter." Spirit spoke to me, saying, "You are Stefan," and set me free from major insecurities! Or, reading Ezk 37: "Come Spirit from the Four Winds." Spirit called me into ministry.

B. One Meaning, Many Applications

How do we tell the difference? *Howard Hendricks, "Interpretation is one; application is many."*¹

One Meaning (exegesis): as you read Scripture. Each book, passage, paragraph, sentence, down to the words, has ONE meaning. This was written to a specific audience, recorded, and then, as Paul says in Rom 15:4 and 2 Tim, was recorded for our benefit. It is written FOR US. And is helpful for teaching, warning, correction, encouraging, directing and much more! Prescriptive & Descriptive.

- **The Berean Method: How to Study Your Bible → COMING SOON!**

Many Applications (hermeneutics): the Bible is dynamic! The Spirit may take verses and apply them directly to your situation. E.g. promises, warnings, direction, correction, healing, building up, encouragement, and MORE – *Spirit Hermeneutics!*

The Holy Spirit may use a verse outside of its original context, but it will never contradict the original Context.

MEANING: Deuteronomy 25:4 (NIV) ⁴ Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.

- God cares about animals! And it was inhumane to not allow an ox to eat while it was working.

UNIVERSAL APPLICATION: 1 Corinthians 9:9 (NIV) ⁹ For it is written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned?

- Paul uses the same verse to tell those at Corinth that he has a right to be paid for ministering!

UNIVERSAL APPLICATION: 1 Timothy 5:18 (NIV) ¹⁸ For Scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

¹ Howard & William Hendricks, *Living By the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible* (Kindle: Moody Publishers), 300.

- Paul uses it again to tell the church to pay and support their Elders who “direct the affairs of the church.” (v.17)

SPIRIT APPLICATION (personal): The Spirit may take any of these passages and apply it to YOU. For example, if you are a business owner reading this and the verse jumps off the page, you may be convicted of not paying your employees well. So you confess this to God and begin working on fairer compensation.

Where we must be careful → Just because the Spirit gives YOU a promise or applies it in a particular way to YOU, does not mean this is UNIVERSAL to everyone.

Example: The Spirit spoke to Lou and me through Ezra 4. The Jews are rebuilding Jerusalem and are stopped by the surrounding nations. Ezra appeals to the Persian king and is granted permission, along with the help of those who had previously stood in his way (exegesis – one meaning). The Spirit gave us a promise that He would help us get a mortgage for our first house when it seemed impossible! (Spirit application)

C. Practice: Discovering the Holy Spirit’s Voice in Scripture

Craig Keener: *"We don't have to choose between solid Bible study and supernatural Spirit-led experiences. Solid Bible study is the very launching pad for authentic Spirit-led experiences."*

1. **The Foundation (address your heart) →** Read, Reflect, Respond to God’s Word (Ps 1:1-3; 119:9-1; Jms 1:22)
2. **Bring your needs to God:** Search what Scripture says about your needs & situation
3. **Ask the Spirit to speak to you directly & personally about your need & situation**
4. **Test the “message of wisdom” (thoughts) received against Scripture**
5. **Respond in faith to what the Spirit reveals:** loving obedience! (Jms 1:22)

Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost

(Title from Craig Keener, 2016)

Bridging Bible study with Spirit-led application.

The 4 Pillars of "Spirit Hermeneutics": Discovering the Holy Spirit’s Voice in Scripture

- **One Meaning, Many Applications:** what the Holy Spirit meant when He authored the text is the objective measuring stick. Our subjective impressions must conform to the written Word.
- **The Spirit is NOT a Shortcut for Bible Study:** The Holy Spirit works through diligent Bible study, not by replacing it.
- **Reading with the Right Heart & Expectations:** Assume the Author of the text, who spoke to those in biblical times, will speak to you through His word and through “utterances.” Only come to Him in humility and with a willingness to respond through loving obedience.
- **The Word and Spirit Inseparable:** Bible study without the Spirit leads to dry intellectualism; spiritual experiences without the Word lead to unguided emotionalism.

Craig Keener: "We don't have to choose between solid Bible study and supernatural Spirit-led experiences. Solid Bible study is the very launching pad for authentic Spirit-led experiences."

Learning to Recognize the Spirit's Voice in Scripture:

1. The Foundation (addressing the heart) → Read, Reflect, Respond to God's Word: Psalm 1:1–3 (NIV)

¹ *Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,* ² *but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.* ³ *That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.*

- For example, are we meditating on God's Word, or on social media?
- Meditating is more than reading; it is reading with the intent to know the Author; it is reading that instructs the way that you live, reading that, upon discovering truth, reflects on that truth, and responds with loving obedience.

Psalm 119:9–11 (NIV) ⁹ *How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.* ¹⁰ *I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.* ¹¹ *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

- Living out → obeying
- Hiding in our hearts → meditating on the truth, rejecting thoughts and beliefs contrary

John 7:17 (ESV) ¹⁷ *If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.*

- Determining to trust Jesus through loving obedience is foundational for obtaining wisdom. E.g. humility, teachability, surrender, faith, etc.

2. Bring your Situation & Needs to God in Scripture: What does the Bible say?

Step 1: Ask the Spirit to give you wisdom about what you are going through: James 1:5 (NIV) ⁵ *If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.*

Step 2: Ask with expectation that God will speak! James 1:6 (NIV) ⁶ *But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.*

Step 3: Search the Word for what it already says "One Meaning, Many Applications":

Remember: Each verse has *one original meaning* (God's truth), but the Holy Spirit uses that truth to give *many applications* tailored to your current situation.

- **Anger → James 1:19–20 (NIV)** ¹⁹ *My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,* ²⁰ *because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.*

- **Anxiety → 1 Peter 5:6–7 (NIV)** ⁶ *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.* ⁷ *Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.* **Philippians 4:6–7 (NIV)** ⁶ *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* ⁷ *And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- **Salvation → Romans 10:9–10 (NIV)** ⁹ *If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* ¹⁰ *For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*
- **Assurance of Salvation → Romans 4:4–5 (NIV)** ⁴ *Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.* ⁵ *However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.* **Romans 8:15–16 (NIV)** ¹⁵ *The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”* ¹⁶ *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.*
- **Generosity → 1 Timothy 6:18 (NIV)** ¹⁸ *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share;* **2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)** ⁷ *Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*
- **Favouritism → James 2:1–4, 9 (NIV)** ¹ *My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism.* ² *Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in.* ³ *If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,”* ⁴ *have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?* ⁹ *But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.*
- **Godly Community → Hebrews 10:24–25 (NIV)** ²⁴ *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,* ²⁵ *not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*
- **Purpose in Work → Colossians 3:23 (ESV)** ²³ *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,* **Exodus 31:1–6 (NIV)** ¹ *Then the Lord said to Moses,* ² *“See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,* ³ *and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—* ... ⁶ *Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you:*
- **Sin → 1 John 1:9 (NIV)** ⁹ *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.;* **Proverbs 28:13 (NIV)** ¹³ *Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*
- **Sexual Purity → Matthew 5:28 (NIV)** ²⁸ *But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*
- **Serving others → 1 Corinthians 12:7 (NIV)** ⁷ *Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.* **Romans 12:6–8 (NIV)** ⁶ *We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith;* ⁷ *if it is serving,*

then serve; if it is teaching, then teach;⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

- **Suffering → Romans 5:3–5 (ESV)**³ *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. **Romans 8:17 (ESV)**¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*
- **OTHER:** _____

3. Ask the Spirit to speak to you directly and personally about your need and situation

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through His Word and apply it to your life. “Jesus, what do You want me to know about my circumstances, issues, struggles, etc.?” E.g. promise, conviction, strength, direction, correction, encouragement, etc.

Write down any verses, thoughts, impressions, etc. that you sense.

4. Test the Impressions & Thoughts Received: “message of wisdom”

1 Corinthians 14:29 (NIV)²⁹ *Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. (safety when testing in community)*

First: Scripture Test - Does it conform to, or contradict Scripture? (may require Bible study)

Second: Character & Tone Test - What is the nature of the “message of wisdom” received:

James 3:13–18 (NIV)¹³ *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.¹⁵ Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.*

- **Heavenly Wisdom:** pure, peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy, good fruit, impartial, and sincere.
- **Earthly & Demonic Wisdom:** bitter envy, selfish ambition, denies truth, self-centred.

Third: Community Test - (1 Cor 14:29): Have I weighed this impression with wise, spirit-led believers in my church community?

- What do other mature Christians sense?
- **Acts 5:28** “it seemed good to the Spirit and us”

Fourth: Respond - Hold onto the GOOD and discard the BAD

1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 (NIV) ¹⁹ *Do not quench the Spirit.* ²⁰ *Do not treat prophecies with contempt* ²¹ *but test them all; hold on to what is good,* ²² *reject every kind of evil.*

If it passes the tests: Hold on to the GOOD! **If it fails the tests:** Reject the BAD!

5. Respond in Faith to what the Spirit reveals:

James 1:22 (ESV) ²² *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

- Draw near to God! Turn from sin, encourage someone, receive God's encouragement, take a step of obedience, etc.

NOTES:

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