

The Spirit Of Christ

A New Name

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. Romans 8:9

For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, Philippians 1:19

Seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 1 Peter 1:11

As the Spirit of Christ the Holy Spirit comes to us and operates within us and through us as One that is familiar. It is good that the church decided after long consideration of the scripture that the Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son. The reason that His presence and His gifts and ministries seem familiar to us is because He is the Spirit of Christ who is not only fully God but also fully a man. The Old Testament people of God did not know the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. In order for this to happen the Son had to become a man and live and minister as a man by the power of the Holy Spirit here among us. When the Holy Spirit comes to us and works through us as the Spirit of Jesus Christ, He is fully “at home” in us. Therefore, when He suggests something to us or wants to act through our minds and hearts and bodies, He does not do it as a foreigner.

This emphasizes the fact that the humanity of Jesus is also a key factor in the ministry of the Holy Spirit through people under the new covenant. The feelings and actions of the Holy Spirit in and through us are spiritual and also fully human at the same time. They are so friendly that often we do not realize that they come from Him, and as a result we suppress them as we humans are the ones that are in control of their release. “For the spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet.” (I Cor 14:32) For instance, the Holy Spirit, who lives within us as the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ, quietly whispers to us something about a person that could not be naturally known. We speak it out as a Word of Knowledge and it is received with wonder and thankfulness and the person who spoke it is praised as a prophet or the like. But we may say, “But it was so easy.” We need not expect it to come in a trance or other unnatural event. Because He is the Spirit of Christ He interfaces with people naturally. There is no strangeness about Him. So when we are not sure if a thought is ours or His, it is because He participates in our thought processes naturally. This is not an indication that He is not God. We should not expect there to be a strangeness in His tone or attitude. He works in cooperation with us.

Only occult experiences which are satanic operate unnaturally in people; this is because evil spirits come uninvited. Evil spirits come to tempt us and they try to sound inconspicuous and they even have a familiarity with human minds and bodies. But their presence is not ever gentle; they have no respect for human kind. The Old Testament talks about “familiar spirits” which specialize in interfacing with the human understanding. They try to imitate the voice of the Spirit of Christ. At worst we must ask for discernment to recognize these spirits and we must “test the spirits”.(I Jn 4:1) In matters of doctrine evil spirits will not call Jesus Lord or admit that He has come in the flesh. Just because it is possible to be misled by evil spirits, we still can not expect the Spirit of Christ to impress us unnaturally in order for us to take heed because we are the Body of Christ. If an individual is unsure where some knowledge or leading is coming from, the other members of the Body are there to help.

Also, it is important that we learn to function in the Spirit on a continual basis. If we are functioning in a carnal manner, the voice of the Holy Spirit will be difficult or even impossible for us to hear. That is a major part of the entire relationship which is our responsibility, the desire to walk according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh “For the carnal mind is enmity against God.” (Rom. 8:7)

Take another example. Often the Spirit of Christ leads believers through what they see or hear externally. Some sight or words may make a particular impression on our minds. We wonder why some simple everyday things seem to be highlighted to us. It is the Spirit of Christ within showing us something. I know a man who went to Africa as an evangelist and people started bringing orphans to him. He looked for a place to get rid of the orphans. Then one day he saw a dump truck with many men in the back. He knew that they were being transported to work because that is how they often transport workers there. But he was impressed that it would be a terrible waste to throw away so many good men. He understood why he had that impression and kept the orphans and became well known as an orphanage founder and director in that African country.

The Spirit of Christ speaks in simple ways. When a person is first filled with the Holy Spirit every movement of that Spirit within him seems magnified. It is all startling. After a while things quiet down inside. Sometimes they wonder if they are still filled. Refillings are, of course, good and necessary. Sometimes, they wonder if they have sinned and the Spirit of Christ has deserted them. This too is possible. But many times they do not understand that we are designed by God to host this gentle Spirit. Jesus said that he was “meek and lowly in heart” and they would “find rest for our souls.”(Matt. 11:29) The Spirit of Christ is just like Christ. We must walk with Him in peace. When He empowers us or guides us or speaks through us, it happens easily and naturally.