

Week 4 - We Must Follow the Anointing of the Spirit

Monday

Scripture Reading: Jer. 31:33-34

“But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My law within them and write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.” (*Jeremiah 31:33-34*)

The New Covenant

Up until now we have seen that, in order to be useful vessels in the hands of the Lord, in order to be vessels of honor, we firstly need to deal with sins and the world. We need to be purified of sins and the world in order for us to become these vessels. However, the final goal of God's work does not consist only of dealing with the negative things. God's goal in purifying us is absolutely positive: that we might be filled with the Holy Spirit. If we are filled with sins and the world, how can we be filled with God? How could God fill us with Himself if we are filled with so many other things?

Hallelujah! We have discovered that all the barriers can be removed. We saw that in our Christian life, the most important and essential practice in order to be fully purified is to have fellowship with God. On one hand, when we have fellowship with God we receive His light and see our true condition, either in relation to sin or with respect to the world. On the other hand, we receive God's dispensing. In reality we have fellowship with God because we love Him and always want to be in His presence. Hence, every sin, matter, person or activity that interrupts the enjoyment we have in His presence will be exposed as we are in fellowship with Him.

God's desire is that man would have fellowship with Him. Hence, Jeremiah 31:33-34 reveals that we, who in the past were strangers to God and to His promises, are allowed to become His people and also to enjoy having fellowship with Him. This is the new covenant. This passage in the Scriptures says, "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Jehovah: I will put My law within them and write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. And they will no longer teach, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for all of them will know Me, from the little one among them even to the great one among them, declares Jehovah, for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

We are no longer under the old covenant, but under the new covenant. In the old covenant only a few had the privilege of having fellowship with God. Today, in the new covenant, we can all know the Lord, from the youngest to the oldest. We can all have fellowship with God. In the old covenant our sins were only covered, but in the new covenant our sins are forgiven. Now, when we have fellowship with God our sins are exposed and we are able to confess them. In the new covenant we are not purified by the blood of goats and calves but by the blood of Jesus. In the old covenant, although the children of Israel thought they could keep the commandments by their own effort outwardly, their inability to keep them was fully exposed. In the new covenant we can please God inwardly by the law of life that is written in our mind and on our heart. The old covenant was something of the letter, whose glory was fading away, but the new covenant is incomparably superior. It will never fade away because it is of the Spirit and its glory is permanent.

As we consider this reality, we must ask one question: "Since we are living in the time of the new covenant, what is our problem?" Our problem is that, although we are saved and living in the age of the new covenant, we have the mind-set of someone living in the old covenant. Even though the Spirit of God lives in our spirit, we still live by our own outward efforts, trying to improve our behavior. When we hear the word of God, we only hear it with our understanding. It is difficult for us to pray over what we have heard and rare for us to take that word in our spirit. This is why it is common to hear very enthusiastic testimonies such as: "I was touched by this word!...These words were exactly what I needed!" However, after a few days, everything is the same as before. Why? It is because those who testified only touched the letter of the word and not the Spirit. If the word we hear is not accompanied by prayer, it is not absorbed by our spirit. As long as the word is in our "memory", we try to fulfill what we have heard. But once we forget what we have heard, everything is the same as before.

Key Point:

New covenant

Your Key Point:

Question:

What is the difference between a living in the old covenant and a living in the new covenant?

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Scripture Reading: Gal. 3:13-14; John 16:7; 2 Cor. 2:14-16

“In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (*Galatians 3:14*)

The Promised Spirit

God knows that we need the Spirit. This is why He promised the Spirit in Genesis. The apostle Paul tells us clearly that the blessing promised to Abraham referred to the Spirit (Gal. 3:13-14). How could the nations be blessed with believing Abraham? They could only be blessed by receiving the Spirit through faith and not by the works of the law.

It is by the Spirit that we can know the Lord. Jeremiah the prophet was told that no one would need to be taught to know the Lord because all would know Him. God also uses figures in the Old Testament to show us how important the Spirit is. One of the figures He uses is the anointing oil, so that we may understand the Spirit's function and application in our lives.

In the book of Exodus we see that the function of the oil is to anoint and consecrate all the items of the Tabernacle (Exo. 30:26-29). We also see that it was used to anoint the high priest and his sons (v. 30). This typifies the anointing of Christ and the entire church.

The anointing oil was compounded with a hin of pure olive oil plus four spices (vv. 23-24). Spiritually speaking, this simple composition is very significant. We may speak about it in relation to the ingredients of which it is made, in relation to the quantities of each ingredient and in relation to the way in which the ingredients are grouped.

In the Bible, the pure olive oil typifies the Spirit of God (Psa. 45:7; Isa. 61:1). The number four of the four spices typifies the creatures, of which man is the head (Ezek. 1:5; Rev. 4:6). Number one in the Bible typifies the unique God. The holy anointing oil was composed of the mingling of one plus four, which signifies that the unique God in Jesus and through the Spirit, was mingled with man. Without this mingling, man would still be under the frustration of the old covenant because his fallen human nature would not be able to fulfill its demands. The four spices were grouped in three complete units of five hundred shekels. The first was composed of five hundred shekels of flowing myrrh; the second, of two hundred and fifty shekels of fragrant cinnamon and two hundred and fifty shekels of fragrant calamus; and the third of five hundred shekels of cassia. In past studies we have seen that myrrh refers to the precious death of Christ, fragrant cinnamon refers to the sweetness of the death of Christ, fragrant calamus refers to the power of the resurrection of Christ, and cassia refers to the effectiveness of that power. The number three represents the Triune God, and the fact that the second unit of five hundred shekels is composed of two units of two hundred and fifty shekels, indicates that the second of the Trinity had to be "divided" so that the Spirit could come (John 16:7).

When we add the pure oil to the other spices we obtain a fragrance. The pure olive oil has a very mild smell, but when the spices are added, what an aroma! In 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, Paul tells us that we are a fragrance of Christ to God. How can we give off such a fragrance? We receive the sweet-smelling fragrance of Christ through the knowledge of Christ. The more we know Christ, the more we receive His Spirit. Through the Spirit, Christ's humanity as well as His divinity is applied to us. In the Spirit we have both the "oil" and the "spices." What comes out of our natural being is not pleasing to people; it is just like a bad smell. Nonetheless, through our fellowship with the Lord, the "bad odor" is subdued by the ingredients within the Spirit and the odor we give off is the sweet-smelling fragrance of Christ.

Key Point:

Compounded

Your Key Point:

Question:

What are the “ingredients” of the Spirit?

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Wednesday

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17; Zech. 4:6

“But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.” (*John 7:39*)

The Process of the Spirit

The composition of the holy anointing oil typifies the process that the Spirit of God passed through to become available to all of us. In Genesis 1:2 there was the Spirit of God. Later on in the Old Testament we find the title "the Spirit of Jehovah" several times. When we come to the New Testament we see the Holy Spirit. In Acts and the Epistles we find other titles such as the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7) and the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9). Does this refer to several Spirits? No! How, then, can we explain the different titles that have been given to the Spirit?

We may understand this matter through the type of the holy anointing oil. In the beginning of the Bible we only saw the Spirit of God, typified by the hin of oil. Then other elements were added to the Spirit of God, such as Christ's incarnation, human living, death and resurrection. We do not find these elements in the Spirit of God in Genesis. Consequently, John 7:39 says, "But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified." Jesus was glorified through His death and resurrection (Luke 24:26). In His resurrection, He became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). Hence, 2 Corinthians 3:17 says, "And the Lord is the Spirit."

Have you realized that all we need in order to live a normal Christian life, is to be in our spirit? God wants to apply the Spirit in your life much more than you are aware. He doesn't want you to just have the knowledge of the Spirit. As an example, you know that you should not love the things in the world, yet you do. Instead of applying the Spirit who dwells in you, in which is the cross of Christ and through which you were crucified to the world and the world to you (Gal. 6:14), what do you do? Many of you stay in your thoughts: "I don't want to love the world, I don't want to...", and you make an effort and become frustrated. What is the way out?

The Lord said in Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit." Today, in the new covenant, we can please God by the Spirit which has been given to us. Why do we still live in dryness if the Spirit has passed through a process and is now compounded with God Himself who became flesh, had a human living, passed through much suffering, was crucified, died, was buried, resurrected, ascended and was glorified? The answer is very simple: it is because we do not apply the all-inclusive Spirit. Suppose your skin is very dry and cracking open; you must apply cream, right? This is how you should be with the Spirit. All we need to do is apply the Spirit. Hallelujah! The Spirit is the best ointment that exists!

Key Point:

Ointment

Your Key Point:

Question:

What is the way to be delivered from the frustration of trying to be a good Christian?

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Thursday

Scripture Reading: Rom. 8:9, 16

“The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.” (*Romans 8:16*)

Applying the Spirit

Even though you have this "ointment," which is the Spirit, we must ask, do you know how to apply Him? Have you applied the Spirit? When we see young Christians who are static, inert, with no reaction to God's word, testimonies or hymns, we ask ourselves, "If this young person has the Spirit of God, why doesn't he apply Him? When we speak about applying the Spirit, we can see that there is a spiritual battle going on. You can go to a meeting of the church, listen to the words that are being shared, yet not touch the Spirit in the word of God. Why does this happen? It is because you do not know how to use your spirit. You need to realize that God's Spirit is in you, in your spirit (Rom. 8:9, 16). All that God is, has, has done and can do is within you, but you need to exercise your spirit to touch the Spirit that is in the word.

What generally happens when you come to a meeting is that you sit in the same seat as usual and begin to use your mind, "This hymn is no good...I don't want to pray...that brother doesn't know how to pray...I've already heard this message..." If you are like this, it is no wonder that you go out the same way you came in: spiritually dry and lifeless.

If we do not use our spirit when we seek God, it will seem that God is very far away from us. If we do not apply the Spirit He has given us, we will be His debtors. It was not easy for God to enter into humanity. It was not easy for the unlimited, infinite God to live thirty three years of sufferings and restrictions. It was not easy to die on the cross. Nevertheless, He passed through all of this and resurrected, ascended to the heavens and was glorified, so that He could live in us. Now, He, as the Spirit of the reality of all He has passed through, is in our spirit. If we do not use the Spirit or apply Him, we will be like a son whose father went on a trip and left him enough money to buy everything he needed, but he didn't use what he was given. When the father returned, the son was miserable, dirty and unkempt. How grieved and concerned the father was! We grieve the Lord in the same way every time we do not apply the Spirit, the inexhaustible inheritance He has left for us.

We should apply the Spirit to the matter of loving the world, which is a problem for the majority of young Christians. Actually, the main problem a young Christian has is not using his spirit. The Spirit of God is in his spirit and in the Spirit of God is the power to overcome the world. If, instead of trying to not love the world, you seek to be filled with the Spirit, the world will spontaneously lose its attraction. The reality of the cross, which kills our love for the things of the world, is in the Spirit. You do not need to go back two thousand years or go to Palestine in order to experience the cross of Christ; you only need to turn to your spirit and say to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, the world has been so attractive to me, but I turn to You as the Spirit! Lord, saturate me with Yourself!"

Another thing that is common among the young people is the lack of motivation. Especially on Mondays, many young people are "low." When you talk to them they say, "Oh, I'm not good today, I'm discouraged." Have you been in this situation? How can you get out of it? You don't want to be there, but you don't have the strength to get out of your depressed state. In that kind of situation, it is time to exercise your spirit because the Spirit who gives life, who raised Jesus from the dead, is in your spirit. You can turn to your spirit and say, "Lord Jesus! Hallelujah for Your resurrection! Lord, through Your resurrection You overcame death. By Your Spirit in my spirit I can come out of the realm of death. There is power in Your Spirit for me to be freed from all discouragement. Lord Jesus! Come and fill me with Your Spirit now!"

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How many times have you felt accused by Satan? Remember: one of the ingredients of the holy anointing oil was cassia, a spice that was used to repel serpents. This is also in the Spirit that lives in you. Just as light repels darkness, the Spirit repels Satan's accusations. You can tell Satan, "Satan, get out of here. There is no place in me for you or your accusations. I only need to turn to my spirit and touch the Spirit of God. The Spirit of reality is in my spirit. So, Satan, get out of here and take all your accusations with you."

You may also find yourself in a situation that has no exit: you look on all sides and at all the people and don't find any way to get out of your difficulty. Seemingly, in your eyes, there is no solution to the problem you are facing. At that moment, you need to exercise your spirit to touch the element of the Lord's ascension that is in you. Pray to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, there were so many situations on this earth that tried to trap You, but you were above all of them. Lord, I don't see any solution to the situation I am going through, but I want to experience Your ascension right now. I don't care if I still have problems, I just want to be on top of them. Lord Jesus, fill me with Your Spirit once again. I want to be in the place You have put me, I want to be in the heavenlies.

Key Point:

Apply the Spirit

Your Key Point:

Question:

How can you apply one of the elements of the Spirit to a difficulty that you are facing?

Week 4 - We Must Follow the Anointing of the Spirit

Friday

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 4:7-8

“...exercise yourself unto godliness. For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.” (1 Tim. 4:7b-8)

You Must Exercise Your Spirit

All we need to do is exercise our spirit. As with any exercise, at first it may seem strange. You may feel some unrest, but you should not stop. First Timothy 4:7-8 says that we should exercise ourselves unto godliness. Godliness refers to the things related to God. In order to exercise yourself in the things related to God, you need to use the proper "organ." If you want to be an athlete, you must exercise the muscles of your legs and abdomen. If you want to be someone who exercises in the things related to God, you must use your spirit.

In the world today, there is a generation that is actually worshiping the body, doing rhythmical gymnastics, aerobics, body-building, etc. First Timothy 4 says that bodily exercise has a little benefit, so we should not pay too much attention to it. What we want to emphasize is the exercise of our spirit. Who is exercising their spirit? Very few are really doing it. However, the exercise unto godliness is profitable for all things because it has the promise of the present life and that which is to come. For this reason, we hope that the young people will exercise their spirit.

Because of not using our spirit for so long, this organ has atrophied in us. The Spirit is in our spirit, but we cannot make our spirit function normally. When an arm or a leg has been immobilized for a long time and then becomes mobile again, it is difficult at first to use it as we did in the past. We need some physiotherapy. Physiotherapy consists of doing specific, frequent and progressive exercises in order for the limb that has been immobilized to return to its normal function. In the same way, our spirit needs some "spirit-therapy" or "pneuma-therapy." Our spirit has atrophied because we mainly use our body and our soul. We have paid very little attention to our spirit. It is time for us to begin to exercise our spirit frequently and progressively.

Key Point:

Exercise

Your Key Point:

Question:

Why should you exercise your spirit?

Week 4 - We Must Follow the Anointing of the Spirit

Saturday

Scripture Reading: Gen. 4:26; 1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 22:16; 2 Tim. 2:22

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7)

Ways to Exercise our Spirit

When we pray we are exercising to have fellowship with God, and this is to exercise our spirit. When our conscience is touched and we immediately deal with the matter that was contrary to God, this is also to exercise our spirit. An example of this is when we are among friends and are speaking loosely. We may begin to feel something inwardly; we may sense an "alarm" going off inside of us telling us that we should stop. If we hear the "alarm" and don't obey, we are not exercising our spirit. The next time it happens it will be even more difficult to obey. But if we obey when we hear the "alarm" of our conscience, then we are exercising our spirit. The next time, we will be even more sensitive when we are speaking what we shouldn't and will stop immediately. Why? It is because our spirit will be stronger.

Another way to continually exercise our spirit is to call on the name of the Lord Jesus. Of course, calling on the name of the Lord shouldn't be something we do only with our mouth. Romans 10:9 shows us that we confess with our mouth and believe in our heart. When we call on the name of the Lord Jesus we should also use our spirit. To call on the name of the Lord Jesus is something very real and practical, but very few do it. Satan always wants to keep us quiet, keeping us from practicing this. He wants to shut the mouths of all the Christians. In Genesis chapter four we see a contrast between Cain's descendants and Seth's descendants. Whereas Cain and his descendants were pursuing something that would replace God, Seth and his descendants were depending on the Lord because they saw that they were weak. The name of Seth's son, Enoch, means weak. Then they began to call on the name of the Lord (v. 26).

As vessels of clay, we are weak. However, to have the Spirit in us signifies that we have a treasure within us (2 Cor. 4:7). God knows that we are weak, but He has given us His Spirit. Today we can be strengthened through the Spirit who lives in our spirit. This is the same Spirit who was indwelling the Christians at the time of Acts. They were not discouraged even though they were persecuted for the Lord's sake. At that time they didn't even have the New Testament. They didn't have the resources or facilities that we have today, but their lives were victorious. What did they do? Were they better than we are? Was their flesh better than ours? No. They simply used their spirit and called on the name of the Lord in every place (1 Cor. 1:2). We see this clearly in Stephen's experience in Acts 7:54-60. While he was under violent persecution he was praying and calling on the name of the Lord. How could he bear being stoned? He was not weakened by being stoned; rather his manner, words and prayer weakened his persecutors. The Bible says that in that hour Stephen was calling, "Lord Jesus." Though his body had fallen asleep, he was victorious in his spirit. His testimony must have impressed Paul. Later, this same Paul became one who called on the name of the Lord (Acts 22:16). He even advised his young co-worker Timothy to be with all those who called on the name of the Lord (2 Tim. 2:22).

The Lord is rich to all who call upon Him. Has He changed? If the Lord is so wonderful, powerful and available, why are we still living a life that is so miserable, weak, dry, hungry and desperate? The Lord is the Spirit and He is now in us. We need to know His work within us. The more fellowship we have with Him, the more we will be filled with the Holy Spirit. The more fellowship we have with Him, the more enriched we will be with His elements and will experience life, vigor, freshness and newness inwardly.

Key Point:

Call

Your Key Point:

Question:

How were the early Christians able to be victorious even though they were being persecuted?

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Sunday

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 3:5; 1 John 2:20; Col. 3:15

“And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him, abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.” (1 John 2:27)

We Must Follow the Anointing

Because the Holy Spirit lives in us, He is moving within us. We call this moving of the Spirit in us the anointing. In the Old Testament we have seen that the anointing oil was related to God's work. Everything that was anointed was separated, sanctified and consecrated to God. Every thing, object and person that had been anointed was no longer common. The priests, kings and prophets were anointed so that they might serve God. God anointed people for the purpose of enabling them to serve Him.

We see in 2 Corinthians 3:5 that the sufficiency of the apostles came from God. They realized that without God, they could do nothing in God's work. What about you? Have you tried to do something for God without having Him as the proper content of the work? Have you endeavored to use all your strength to do something that God did not want you to do? God's work is not by strength, but by His Spirit.

In God's work in our daily life we should learn to follow the anointing. It is written in 1 John 2:27, "And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him, abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him." Here we see that the anointing teaches us all things. If we are lacking this kind of experience, it is because we have not taken care to have fellowship with God in everything; we have not exercised our spirit.

We usually only seek God's leading when we have no way out. We only go to God when we are in a very difficult situation and we pray in a desperate way, "Oh Lord, I need Your leading so much..." We think that in our everyday situations we do not need to seek God or follow the inward feeling He gives us. For example, when we are going to buy clothes, we are only concerned about how much money we have and if we like the clothes we want to buy. If these two requirements are met, we buy what we want. It is the same in choosing a career. We only think about what is popular, what only takes a short time or what others want us to study.

This can also be applied to other situations. For example, where to go for vacations, what to do on the weekend, and so on. Many young people miss the opportunity of having the rich experience of listening to God speaking to them and teaching them which way to go. This often happens because, as soon as a doubt arises regarding what to do, they quickly seek an answer by asking someone, "Brother, what should I do?...What course should I study?...What do you think about this?"

There is nothing wrong with consulting someone who has more experience, but you must not miss the experience of listening to what God thinks and what God wants in a given situation. I want to help you consult with God in everything you are going to do. The Spirit is in us, we only need to apply Him. How many rich experiences we would have if we would only follow the teaching of the anointing which is within us. If in every situation we would seek to see or understand what the anointing wants to teach us, how full of life we would be! You can pray like this when you go shopping, "Lord Jesus, how about we go shopping together?" You can also ask Him, "Lord, is this color alright?" We may do the same when we want to choose a career or go on a trip, "Lord Jesus, how does this career seem to You? Can I choose this one?" "Lord, where can I go for my vacation?"

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How long should I stay there?"

Hallelujah! Today we have the anointing that comes from the Holy One (1 John 2:20). We have this wonderful Spirit within us. God expects us to use all that He has given us. If we do not care for or make use of the inward feeling moving within us, we are debtors to what God has invested in us. Furthermore, our life will be like a desert; it will be routine and valueless. God gave us a spirit so that we would use it. If we do not use it, how can we hear His voice? If we are always reasoning in our mind about what we should do or where we should go, we will lose the sweetness of God's speaking, God's direction, God's leading and God's anointing. When you use your spirit and follow the feeling of the inner anointing, you will enjoy an inward peace and strength. You will know exactly when God is speaking to you and will discover what pleases Him and what His will is.

It may seem to you that following the anointing of the Spirit is somewhat difficult. You may even think, "How do I know if it was God who spoke to me?" Don't worry; just exercise your spirit. By exercising your spirit you will know when it is God who is speaking to you. This will fill you with inward peace and joy.

Colossians 3:15 teaches us that the peace of Christ arbitrates in our hearts. If this entire generation of young people would exercise their spirit, they would set a "nuclear power plant" into action: "Make way...because no one can stop them." You will experience the remaining glory which does not fade away. You will be filled with God and the fullness of God. You will be saturated with the Holy Spirit. When anyone touches you, it will be like touching "fresh paint." People will realize that you are not common. The more you follow the teaching of the anointing in the small things in your daily living regarding how to dress, how to cut your hair, your attitudes, your speaking, etc., the more you will develop the sensitivity of life and the more you will know God Himself. Praise the Lord!

Key Point:

Follow the anointing

Your Key Point:

Question:

Why do we often have a hard time finding God's will for the big decisions of our life?