

SO - THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT (Lee Wildman)

“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”

- Are you good with a sword? You need to be with this one! You can be with this one.
- The word of God is powerful and alive. (**Heb. 4:12**)
 - ❑ It was then and it still is now.
 - ❑ It lets us know our thoughts and intentions.
 - ❑ It will cut us to the heart. (**Acts 2, 7**)
- It is the weapon the Holy Spirit uses – a spiritual weapon. (**2 Cor. 10:4**)

Is the Spirit telling us what to do in all matters as he did in the 1st century?

- Where to go to preach and who to preach to? (**Acts 8:26, 29; 13:2-4; 16:6-7, 9-10**)
- When I will die? (**Luke 2:25-26**)
- Does God tell us where to work? Go to school? Live? Career to choose? Who to marry?
 - ❑ “How can I know God’s will?” (Mennonite tract)
 - ◆ “True, God does lead through circumstances and he does speak by His Spirit, but many people misinterpret these signs....”
 - ◆ Checklist of 10 questions to ask to know if it’s God’s will – most are based on scriptures (sword of the Spirit) and it warns about the last two (open doors, inner peace) because they are “so subject to our own interpretation - we can convince ourselves God is showing us His will through” these means.
- Does God answer our prayers? Do we believe in providence? Certainly!
 - ❑ But even then, we have to be careful to say that we can always know for sure.
 - ◆ “Who knows...?” (**Esther 4:14**) “Perhaps...” (**Philemon 15**)
 - ❑ What are our motives for praying? Selfish? Happiness? Ease? Comfort? Work out God’s greatest purpose for our lives and of others? (salvation)
 - ◆ The Holy Spirit speaking to Paul and Simeon had to do with our greatest need.
- God has given us principles to live by - help govern our decisions on unspecified matters.
 - ❑ We seek advice, wisdom, counsel, we research and we plan.
 - ❑ We make choices and live with the consequences, both good and bad.

The Holy Spirit is still working today.

- Yes, I believe the Spirit is working in my life today.
 - ❑ He is still telling me what to do.
 - ❑ If I am listening to and obeying the word of God, he still works in my life.
 - ❑ I am being *led by the Spirit* (**Rom. 8:14**) when I believe and obey the word of God.
 - ❑ We are convicted by the Spirit when we are convicted by the words He revealed.
 - ❑ The gospel is God’s power of salvation – it is the message revealed by the Spirit.
- He gave the apostles and prophets the word of God. (**Eph. 3:5**)
 - ❑ How? We might not know exactly, but we have evidences that he did give them the truth. He confirmed the word that they spoke and wrote with signs and miracles. These signs and wonders included the gifts of the Spirit. (**Heb. 2:3-4**)
- We give him the glory/praise for what he did and continues to do because of what he did.
 - ❑ Someone says “the NT talks so much about the Spirit.” We should not be surprised.
 - ◆ It does in Acts, the epistles, especially Romans, and in Revelation – “hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (to all 7 churches)
 - ◆ He was doing his work of revelation and confirmation in the 1st century.

- Consider this - the gospels talk so much about Jesus and what he did.
 - ◆ We love and praise Jesus for what he did – he doesn't need to do more.
 - ⇒ Does he need to die again? Be raised again? Do more miracles?
 - ◆ We love and praise the Holy Spirit for what He did which is enough.
- Jesus had something very pointed to say to some who wanted a sign. (**Matt. 16:4** - evil and adulterous generation – they were going to believe and do as they pleased)
 - He had done enough miracles to convince them that he was the Christ.
 - ◆ And the greatest miracle – the resurrection – was still to come.
- God sent lying spirits to those who had no intention of doing what the Law or prophets said. (**1 Kgs. 22:20-22**) Can he do the same today? (**2 Thess. 2:9-12**)
 - How many today are just sure that God/Holy Spirit are telling them to do this or that but who at the same time are paying little if any attention to what He has told them to do in scripture? They believe God is answering their prayers with a yes and it appears to be so.
- Does the Holy Spirit abide or dwell in us? Certainly. (**Rom. 8:11**)
 - Does God the Father abide in us? Does Jesus Christ live in us?
 - ◆ See **John 14:23; Galatians 2:20; Romans 8:10**
 - ◆ Does the Holy Spirit dwell in us the same way the Father and Jesus do?
 - Subjective feelings do NOT indicate his presence in us.
 - How things are working out in my life (blessings) do not always indicate his presence.
 - When the word abides in me (when I believe and obey), the Holy Spirit abides in me.

Does the Spirit help me to understand the word? Do I pray for him to help me?

- Does the Holy Spirit have to operate on my heart/make my heart receptive before I can understand His words? Sounds like Calvinism to me.
- Two people disagree about a passage and its application – they both ask for help from the Spirit and then come to different conclusions – can both claim the help of the Spirit?
 - The sword can be misused – the word can be twisted, misapplied, and misunderstood.
- He revealed the word so that when we read it, we can understand. (see **Eph. 2:18; 3:1-5**)
 - If we want to do God's will, we can know His will. (**Jn. 7:17**)
 - ◆ *“Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.”*
(**2 Tim. 2:7**)
 - What part of 'no' do we not understand?
 - ◆ We can pray for help but the bible will still say the same thing.
 - ◆ A woman told the preacher that she had prayed and God had told her that her marriage was ok. The preacher said he also had prayed and God had told him ... then he read Matthew 19 to her!
 - We have to do the hard work of studying, seeking, defining, applying, seeking wisdom, learning from experience – there are no short cuts to reading and studying the word of God. We have to spend time learning how to wield the sword of the Spirit.
 - It's not the things we don't understand that bother us, it's the things we do understand.

Are we listening to the Spirit of God?

We are if we are letting His sword, the word of God, into our hearts!