

PNEUMATOLOGY (89)

When a believer is spiritual he will experience victory over his flesh. The Spirit of God will be leading that believer to a continual lifestyle which is not controlled or governed by the fleshly things which are against God's Word and will.

Foe #3 - The devil.

Satan is very real and he wages a very real war against the believer. Peter said to believers, "your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (I Pet. 5:8). We are called to "resist him" standing "firm in our faith" (I Pet. 1:9) and we are called to "Be strong **in the Lord**" (Eph. 6:10). There can be no question that Satan realizes that God's Spirit lives in the believer and therefore he is out to shoot his fiery darts at the believer and if a believer is spiritual, his assault will be fierce.

It is important to realize that God has given us armor to withstand any satanic attack and it is not a flesh and blood armor (Eph. 6:11-17). Since we do not know precisely how Satan will attack for he is scheming, the spiritual believer can expect that his resistance by use of these weapons will eventually cause him to flee. The believer who is spiritual will see victory not in the sense of escaping warfare, but in the sense of withstanding the warfare with a love for God, His Word, truth, righteousness, and prayer.

When we are experiencing victory over these foes, we will also be experiencing a Spirit filled life.

In other words, on the negative side we have victory over enemies or we defeat enemies, but on the positive side the Spirit of God manifests Himself through us in several ways:

Positive Manifestation #1 - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through the fruit of the Spirit. Gal. 5:22-23

There are nine superhuman qualities that cannot be produced by any human ability which are clearly a manifestation of the Spirit of God. They are: 1) Love; 2) Joy; 3) Peace; 4) Patience; 5) Kindness; 6) Goodness; 7) Faithfulness; 8) Gentleness; and 9) Self-Control.

Now the word "fruit" is singular, not plural. What this means is that these nine graces form an indivisible whole. As Dr. Chafer observed, "The Holy Spirit will not produce a few of these and not all of them. If any are present, all will actually be present" (Vol. 6, p. 201). Following the outline of Dr. Chafer, we would like to present a synopsis of each manifestation:

Fruit Manifestation #1 - The manifestation of love.

If ever there is a manifestation misunderstood, it is this one. Love is the antithesis of hate, so the Christian who is manifesting this love "will love what God loves and hate what God hates" (*Ibid.*, p. 203). When a believer hates what God hates, he is supernaturally manifesting Spirit love. Now this particular fruit manifestation will evidence itself in several ways:

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1) It will be a love that has a heart for lost people in the world. John 3:16; I John 2:2

True evangelistic zeal, or soul-winning passion is not produced by human exhortation or manipulation, it is produced by the Spirit of God. The passion will be to present the truth of Jesus Christ and His cross work to others so that men might be saved. When you have this desire, it is God's Spirit producing this in you.

2) It will be a love that is exclusive of the world and its system. I John 2:15-16

One who manifests this love will hate the world's system which moves people away from the truth of God.

3) It will be a love that is inclusive in the church. I John 4:12

Those who are manifesting true spirit love will have a heart to love those brothers and sisters in the church, especially the local church (I John 3:16-17). When one is more concerned about others in another church, that one is not manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.

4) It will be a love that includes a love for Israel. Jer. 31:3; Rom. 9:1-4

5) It will be a love that is willing to make sacrifices for others. I John 3:16

6) It will be a love that is pure. Romans 12:9

God loves what is pure. Dr. Chafer writes: "However, love, means, among other things, capacity to be indignant and to react in judgment upon that which is opposed to it unlawfully" (p. 205).

7) It will be a love that has a passion for God's Word. Psalm 119:97

Now let us clearly remember, these things cannot be achieved by human effort but can only be produced by the Holy Spirit of God. When the Spirit is producing this love through a body of believers, there will be an attractiveness to the world that will magnetically draw them in (John 17:21-23). This is true individually in our personal lives and true collectively in our church life.

Fruit Manifestation #2 - The manifestation of joy. John 15:11; I John 1:4; I Pet. 1:8

The joy being discussed here is not something that can be human produced or even increased or decreased by human will. This is a joy that the Spirit of God produces in the heart of the believer which supernaturally enables one to manifest a joy in the Lord, even when experiencing suffering or sorrow. It is the nature of God to be both sad and glad at the same time and it is the Holy Spirit who produces this same type of joy in the believer.

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Fruit Manifestation #3 - The manifestation of peace .

There must be a distinction made between peace “with” God (Rom. 5:1) and the peace “of” God (Phil. 4:7). Peace with God comes by faith in Jesus Christ; the peace of God comes by the work of the Holy Spirit in one who has believed on Christ. What we are talking about here is a supernatural tranquility that is produced by the Holy Spirit that is beyond human understanding. This peace is produced by the Holy Spirit in the heart of a believer regardless of chaotic and disturbing memories, circumstances or conditions.

Fruit Manifestation #4 - The manifestation of patience .

The actual word “patience” in Greek is one that carries with it the idea of bearing up patiently especially when experiencing troubles and difficulties (*G. Abbott-Smith*, p. 276). The Spirit of God will supernaturally manifest Himself by causing one to patiently persevere through trouble. People who run or quit or leave during trouble and difficulty are people led by the flesh, not the Spirit (Romans 12:12).

Each manifestation of the Spirit is contrary to the natural, unspiritual, fleshly elements of the human heart. In other words, it is the natural element of humans to be impatient, not patient. The patience of God is unequalled. He patiently puts up with Christ-rejecters and God-mockers and draws many to Himself. God also patiently puts up with us after we believe, when we do and say such foolish things. Patience is a virtue that is expected to appear in the individual believer and in the church (Eph. 4:1-3). Passage after passage teaches the believer about the importance of developing this quality—I Thess. 5:14; II Tim. 3:10; 4:2; Heb. 6:15. In fact, waiting for the Lord to return requires patience.

Fruit Manifestation #5 - The manifestation of kindness .

The word “kindness” is a Greek word that refers to a person who is kind, pleasant and gracious (*G. Abbott-Smith*, p. 484). We could call this a tender concern for others. This does not mean that the Spirit-controlled person does not have the capability of becoming angry or that he does not have the potential for righteous indignation; what this does mean is that he will have a continual kindness that is full of grace and mercy. In Romans 2:4, this same word is used in reference to God and contextually means that God, in His kindness, is still giving people time to repent and is not yet pouring out His wrath.

Fruit Manifestation #6 - The manifestation of goodness .

Goodness is a vital virtue of the character of God. It is more than just the antithesis of badness. In various Scriptures, “goodness” is linked to righteousness (Rom. 5:7), grace and compassion (Exodus 3:19), prosperity and provisions (Nehemiah 9:25, 35), and perhaps the most famous of all, it is linked to mercy or lovingkindness (Psalm 23:6). We may conclude from this that God’s goodness includes all that He is and all that He does which is good and excellent. When the Spirit is producing this, the believer will manifest that which is good according to that which the Bible identifies and classifies as good. This will be evidenced in one’s attitudes and actions toward others.

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Fruit Manifestation #7 - The manifestation of faithfulness .

Faithfulness is not to be confused with faith. The Spirit of God does produce faith through hearing the Word of God, but this is not this particular fruit manifestation. Faithfulness is that which is consistently trustworthy, steadfast and faithful. God is ever and forever this—Lam. 3:23. Humans, on the other hand, have a proven track record of unfaithfulness, but not so with God. When the Spirit of God is producing this, the individual will be seen to be trustworthy, steadfast and faithful. Specifically, the Spirit will develop the person to be trustworthy, steadfast and faithful in that to which God, Himself, is faithful. Obviously, the more we know of God's Word, the more real faithfulness may be developed.

Fruit Manifestation #8 - The manifestation of gentleness .

This word may be understood by either the term “gentleness” or “meekness,” or better yet, “a gentle meekness” (Smith, pp. 376-377). Dr. Chafer made an important observation concerning this element: “meekness does not consist in pretending to be less than one really is; it rather is demonstrated when one does not pretend to be more than one really is” (Vol. 6, p. 213). Jesus Christ was very meek when here on earth, yet He never denied the fact that He was God and He continually demonstrated great power and authority in many areas. One who is developing in meekness is one who manifests less and less of a dominant attitude and more and more of a submissive attitude.

Fruit Manifestation #9 - The manifestation of self-control .

Self-control may be partially understood as being self-disciplined. One who is self-controlled is one who has the ability to restrain one's own passions or appetites or emotions. Being self-controlled is just the opposite of being out of control. One who is becoming more spiritual will be one who is becoming more and more self-controlled and self-disciplined. This particular quality is a requirement for elders in a church (Titus 1:8).

As God's Spirit develops us, we may expect that these character manifestations may be seen more and more in our own personalities.

Positive Manifestation #2 - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through Spirit inspired praise and thanksgiving . Eph. 5:18-20

When a believer has a desire to praise and worship God for His greatness and majesty and to thank God for His never-ceasing benefits toward humanity, that believer is truly being developed by the Spirit of God. It is recorded in Scripture that high-ranking holy angels continue to praise and worship God (Is. 6:3). We, who are part of this N.T. age, not only will have the same desire produced in us by the Holy Spirit, but we will also have the desire to continually thank God for His saving grace. This is not a natural praise and thanksgiving for a human, but a supernatural praise and thanksgiving produced by the Holy Spirit in the heart and mind of the believer.

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Positive Manifestation #3 - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through a passion to know and understand the Word of God.

The Spirit of God moves in the spiritual people of God to be sanctified by the Word of God (John 17:17). No one who does not have a supernatural passion and drive to know and understand God's Word is truly being developed by God's Spirit, no matter how religious or spiritual one pretends to be. The Spirit of God has a profound connection to truly understanding God's Word (John 16:12-15). It is stated plainly in this text of John that the Holy Spirit "will guide you into all truth" (16:13). It is the Spirit of God who is able to search the deep things of God and reveal them to spiritual people of God (I Cor. 2:11-16). When the Holy Spirit is truly developing one into becoming spiritual, there will be a supernatural internal drive to study to rightly divide and understand God's written Word. When a believer that is Spirit-controlled goes to church, he goes with the full expectation of carefully studying and understanding God's Word. When this does not happen, the Spirit of God is grieved and thus so is the believer.

Positive Manifestation #4 - The Spirit of God will manifest Himself through the leading of the Spirit in the life of the believer. Romans 8:14

It is the potential for every believer to have God's Holy Spirit lead that believer into paths which have been sovereignly chosen by Almighty God. God has designed a human being so that he is incapable of leading himself into these paths. To become spiritual, one must be led by the Spirit. There is no command in Scripture that demands a N.T. believer be led by the Spirit, but in order for one to be spiritual this must occur. Jesus Christ, Himself, was led by the Spirit (Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1).

One text that is extremely important is Romans 8:14. The Greek word for "sons" (υἱός) is not one that refers to one young (παῖς) nor is it one that refers to one's parentage (τέκνον) as being a child of God. This word is one that refers to a mature son who stands in a privileged position of being destined to receive full inheritance (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 334). In other words, the teaching of Paul here is that in order to be a mature son who will receive a full inheritance, he must be led by the Spirit. Every saved person is a son of God, but not every saved person is a mature son of God destined to receive full inheritance. In order for that to happen, he must be led of the Spirit.

In this dispensation, we have the potential privilege of having God's Spirit directly lead us. This is a far better system than the O.T. system which included dreams, visions, voices and tests. The child of God in the N.T. Grace Age has God's Spirit in him/her who desires to lead the believer to the greatest levels of maturity in accordance with God's will for that life and the key to having God's Spirit do this is a **willingness to do God's will**. Dr. Chafer said, "The will of God indeed is not primarily a matter of a Christian's being in one place or another; it is rather of his being willing to do God's will. All else is then easily adjusted" (Vol. 6, p. 228).

Now the question comes, how may one be aware or conscious of what God wills? Or another way to ask this is how does one know whether or not the Spirit is leading?