

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:13**

### Chapter 21- The Gift of God's Spirit

#### 199 The Gift of God's Spirit- Part 6

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WAOY Wednesday 06/11/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today I want to continue to look at what John taught about "The Gift of God's Spirit". So, let's read **1John 4:13** again together:

**By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.**

Now this verse- like all of this entire Epistle was written by a very old man to men and women in a very troubling time- late in the first century. The world at that time was very perplexing and dramatic and radical changes were taking place. The Christian Church was under assault- not only from forces without the walls of the Church but John wrote in a time when evil men had crept into the Church to destroy Christianity by teaching false doctrine.

As part of his authority and duty as the last living Apostle- John had to leave behind a guide that all believers could follow which would clearly articulate what it meant to be a Christian and who was real and who was false.

So here this old man- who at one time actually leaned on the breast of Jesus Himself- writes his final words to those who will live on after he enters his reward in Glory. John loves the people to whom he is writing and we can see that by looking at how he addresses them over and over as "little children".

Now what is interesting- is not only at what John does tell us in this Epistle- but what he does not discuss as well. John does not mention the great persecution that not only the Church in general is under day and night- but which he personally has suffered under. He makes no mention of the many injustices going on all around him during that time like the brutality of the Roman Government; the high

taxes; slavery; and the misuse and mistreatment of women and children. John does not discuss politics or the economy or disease at all in this Epistle. But he does have much to say about the world in general like what he wrote in **1John 2:15-17**:

**15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**

**16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.**

**17 The world is passing away, and *also* its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.**

And what he says in **1John 5:19**:

**We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of the evil one*.**

So it seems that many of the things that are so important to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century were not worthy of even a single mention by this Apostle and that tells us one of two things:

1. We are right and John was off base
2. John was right and we are off base

And I would say that the Apostle of the Lord wrote down inspired Words and we do not so I am inclined to agree with the second statement rather than the first and operate under this assumption:

Where my own agenda disagrees with John is an indication of how far off base I am to God's Will.

And so I must learn to value and hold high and emphasize those things that John valued and that he held high and that he emphasized and I must learn to not value and to not hold high and to not emphasize those things that John left out.

And I think that by doing this I will accomplish two things:

1. I will become more godly

## 2. I will be out of sync with this present world

And I believe that those two things go hand in hand. That the more like the world that we are; the more acceptable to the world we have become- that is to the degree that we are ungodly and disobedient to what the Bible actually teaches. And conversely the opposite is also true- the less like the world we are; and the more obedient to the Bible we are- that is to the degree that we are godly and unlike this present evil world.

So the definition of being godly then is to be obedient to Scripture which is also the definition of what it means to be spiritual. So to obey Paul's exhortation to "walk in the Spirit" is not to dance around in some emotional ecstasy with no thought or care for responsible or holy living. No that action is the very opposite of what being spiritual is. That kind of activity- even though it may well make me feel better- is walking sensually- being guided by my frail human senses and being led by what I feel rather than God's Spirit. It is simply being emotionally caught away.

But walking in the Spirit is walking in humble obedience to Scripture- which is the Word and Voice of God in the earth. So being spiritual and being led by God's Spirit and walking and praying in the Spirit is not defined a thousand different ways by a thousand different people all to their own personal enjoyment. No, Christianity teaches that individuals who all have individual ideas and opinions and who come from different backgrounds and who have all been raised and taught differently come together in the Church as one body and they conform themselves to the already defined single standard of what a believer is. So doing anything in the Spirit is to be in one accord with holy and divine revelation- the Scriptures- because God's Spirit will never in any way promote any activity that is contrary to what has come out of the Mind and Heart and Mouth of God. So being filled with the Spirit is not an excuse to do whatever pops into your head and then justify it by saying that you were led to do so. Being filled with the Spirit is to have both the desire and the ability to obey God. Lets' read **Philippians 2:13:**

**for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.**

Now it is very important that we understand this verse properly. This verse clearly teaches that it is God Who works inside of us to do two very important things that would not be done if God does not dwell inside of us. Well, what are those two things that God, the Holy Spirit works in us to give to us that we do not normally possess without Him?

1. The will to do of God's good pleasure
2. The ability or power to do of God's good pleasure

So the power of the Spirit working inside the believer is not to give that person the ability to silly and foolish , but rather it is to give that person the desire to obey God and the ability to obey God- which to God are very, very valuable- much more valuable than an outward demonstration of emotionalism.

First of all- we need to define just what is "God's Good Pleasure". And this goes back to the basic understanding of Who God is. You see, beloved, God- as Owner and Creator of the Universe- does all that He does in the earth for only one reason- For His Own Glory or For His Own Name's Sake – which is the same thing. So, all that God does is to bring to Himself the Glory that He is rightly entitled to- and that includes *everything*- including Salvation.

So this verse tells us that God works inside of us frail weak sinful human beings to give to us the will and the power to do of His good Pleasure or in other words s that we will bring God glory. That is the sum total of all that we do as believers. We exist for no other reason other than to give to God the Glory that He is so rightly due.

As His very Own purchased slaves- we have no individual rights; we have no individual agendas; we have no individual dreams; we have no individual aspirations. We live to glorify God; we do all that we do to bring God all glory. Our lives are hid in Christ; we decrease so that He may increase; we go down so that He may go up; we are humbled so that He may be exalted; we have been brought low so that He is lifted high; He commands and we obey; He speaks and we listen; He does and we rejoice in that doing.

Now unbelievers don't see things like that. Those who are lost have a completely different agenda about life. Those who have not experienced the miracle of the new birth do not live for God's Glory-

they live for their own glory. They do not seek to honor God in all that they do- they do what they do for their own reasons; based upon what is good for themselves; in order to better themselves all to their own glory. So we can see that the agenda of the pagan is in hostile opposition to the agenda of the believer.

And the reason that this is true- is not because we are better than they are- we're not better- we're different. And what made us different is not something that we have done or because we were born in the right family or because we were of the right pedigree. No, what makes us different from the worst pagan alive is only what God has done in us and for us that we cannot do for ourselves.

And this verse says that God the Holy Spirit that John says dwells inside of us works in us to give us both the will to love and serve God and the power to love and serve God. And that is the only reason that we do God's good pleasure and they don't.

Now here's a question. I can understand why God has to work in us to give us the *power* to love and serve God- but why does God have to work in us to give us the *will* to love and serve God if our will is free and undamaged? You see, dear friends, **Philippians 2:13** does not just say that God works in us to give us the *ability* or the *power* to obey God- but this verse also says very clearly that God is the One Who works inside of us to give us the "will" or the "desire" to obey God. So why does God have to give us that "will" or that "desire" if we already have it?

Well the answer of course is that we do not already have a will or a desire that is free and undamaged. But our will and our desire was radically and completely ruined by the Fall of Adam in the Garden and ever since that Fall- Man no longer loves God; he no longer seeks after God; he no longer cares anything at all about God- but lost fallen man loves only himself now and his actions are predicated upon a will and a love and a desire that has been radically and negatively placed in bondage to his own corrupt nature.

Oh, fallen man is perfectly able to choose anything that he *wants* to- but that is the problem- because he is fallen- lost man never *wants* to choose anything except that which benefits and which glorifies himself precisely because he is fallen and depraved. In fact, it is that lost man cares nothing at all about God or the things of God that defines what being fallen is all about.

So in order to save fallen man- God has to give to him what he does not normally possess- both the will and the power to do of God's good pleasure. And God does this- not by making a few minor modifications to him or by bringing in a few improvements into his life. No lost fallen man must be born again; he must be recreated; the dead must receive life; the deaf must hear; the blind must see; the lame must walk and the dumb must talk.

So God the Father sends to this sinful fallen depraved wicked creature- God the Holy Spirit to go inside him and to open his blind eyes and to unstop his deaf ears and to take out of him and stony heart and give him a heart of flesh. God does this by taking out of that sinner his fallen depraved nature and replacing it with the new divine nature.

Because of what God has done for him- the lost sinner can now see; he can hear; and he can believe and so when the Gospel is presented to this lost soul- he trusts in Jesus Christ because his new nature has both the will and the power to do of God's good pleasure and he is saved.

And so John is teaching here that since Salvation is a Sovereign work of God- the fact that the individual now loves God; the fact that he now endeavors to serve and obey God is unarguable proof that the Spirit inside of him has done that miraculous work and this give the believer the great Assurance and Certainty of his Salvation.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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