

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRITS

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Do you consider being a child of God important? That is, one saved from past sins and one who is presently or continues to be a child of God?
2. Do you ever stop to consider whether or not you are a child of God as spoken of in Rom.8:16?
3. Do you know there is a way -- a means of knowing for sure? That is, in the absolute sense? We can know without a doubt
4. What a blessing it is to be divinely assured of this fact and to know when and how it is accomplished.
5. That is what our present lesson is all about, in which we shall learn:
 - a. How to expose all human speculation; such as:
 - (1) "I know it because of the way I feel."
 - (2) "I know it because of the 'religious experience' I had which proves it to me."
 - (3) Etc., etc., etc...
 - b. How to prove by the Bible whether or not we are children of God. In other words, how it is that we have absolute divine assurance of the fact.
6. In biblical history from Genesis through Revelation there is never found a person who was a true spokesman for or religious servant of God who ever expresses a syllable of doubt about what the Lord tells them. They all operated under divine assurance with full faith in it.
 - a. Abraham is a classical case, Gen.12:1-4; 22:1-14; 18:17f; Heb.11:8,9,17-19.
 - b. The prophet Isaiah, in Ch.25, a Hymn of Thanksgiving for the Divine mercy over "the terrible ones," Vv.1-5.
 - c. The prophet Jeremiah, 1:4-10; 29:1,10; 31:31-34.
 - d. The apostle Paul, 2Tim.1:8-12.
7. God never leaves us in doubt about the truth regarding any Bible subject. Certainly being a child of God is a Bible subject.
8. Therefore, we raise the question: How do we know and/or how can we know with divine assurance that we are the children of God?

II. DISCUSSION

A. THE ANSWER IS FOUND IN ROM.8:16.

1. First, take note of what the verse says: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”
 - a. There are two witnesses here: One, “the Spirit,” 2nd, “our spirit.”
 - b. “The Spirit” is said to bear witness “WITH” our spirit.
 - (1) His witness is “with” our spirit, not “to” our spirit.
 - (2) Both spirits must testify or bear witness to the same fact.
 - (3) Both spirits must bear witness together – their witness coincides to the one fact.
 - c. The point to be corroborated by the two witnesses is that one, a certain one, is a child of God.
 - d. Definition of terms:
 - (1) “Witness”: Strong #4828 and #4862: “to testify jointly, i.e., corroborate by (concurrent) evidence.”
 - (2) “With”, (meta) “in common with” “together with” (para) “along side of”
 - e. “The Spirit,” is, of course, without a doubt the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God.
 - f. “Our spirit” is the human spirit or soul of man that inhabits the fleshly body. See Ac.7:59; 2Cor.2:13. Cf. Job 32:8; Dan.2:1; Zech.12:1; Heb.12:9; Gen.35:18; Mt.10:28.

B. OUR FIRST PROBLEM, IN VIEW OF SO MUCH DENOMINATIONAL MISUNDERSTANDING, REGARDING THIS PASSAGE WE MUST RAISE AND ANSWER THE QUESTION: WHAT DID AND HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT FUNCTION IN BEARING WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT?

1. The answer is easy. His work can be summed up in two words, **REVELATION** and **CONFIRMATION**.
2. First, he was sent by both the Father and the Son for the purpose of **revelation**, or revealing the truth, the word of God, or the mind of God to the mind of man, Jno.16:7,13-15; Eph.3:1-5; Gal.1:11,12. 1Cor.2:9-13.

- a. Note: These passages teach that the will of God is in the mind of God and man, unaided, or by his will only, has no access to God's mind. Cf. Jer.10:23; Prov.14:12
 - b. Teach that revelation is the manifestation of the divine mind, which is by the function of the Holy Spirit, who takes the mind of God and reveals it to the mind of man by means of words man can understand.
 - c. 1Cor.1,2 show that man by his own power and wisdom cannot know or discover the things of God. It must be done by means of divine revelation, which the Holy Spirit was sent to do.
 - d. These passages teach that the Holy Spirit reveals the mind of God to the mind of man by means of words: "Not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth..." 1Cor.2:13.
 - e. Since the time of miracles by human agency has ceased (1Cor.13:8-13), as far as the Scripture is concerned, words, the written words of the N.T., are the all-sufficient and only means by which God's will is conveyed to the human mind in what he is to do in this dispensation to obey God. See 2Tim.3:15-17; Eph.3:1-5; 5:17; Jas.1:19-22; 2:12-24.
 - f. Since it was the function of the Holy Spirit to transmit or reveal God's will from mind to mind through words then what the written word of God says is what the Spirit says.
 - g. He bears witness today through the revealed word of God.
3. Secondly, the Holy Spirit was sent by both the Father and the Son for the purpose of confirmation; for the purpose of confirming the revealed word of God.
- a. This he did by signs and wonders and mighty deeds; that is, by miraculous works.
 - b. See Jno.20:30,31; Mk.16:19-20; Heb.2:1-4; Ac.5:29-32; Cf. Ac.2:32,33.

C. THEREFORE, THE HOLY SPIRIT, BY MEANS OF THE WRITTEN WORD, WHICH HE HAS REVEALED AND CONFIRMED, BEARS WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT THAT WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD, HAVING SPECIFIED WHAT MAN MUST DO TO BE AND BECOME A CHILD OF GOD.

1. What, then, is the Spirit's revealed testimony or witness as to what one must do to become a child of God?
 - a. Gal.3:26,27; MK.16:1,16; Ac.2:36-38; 22:16; Jno.3:3-7; Ac.8:35-38; Rom.6:3-6; Col.2:12.
 - b. Therefore, to be saved, to receive remission of sins, and become a child of God, the Holy Spirit says: One must be a penitent, confessing baptized believer; baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.
 - c. Note how different groups try to change this and thus pervert the true teaching of Rom.8:16.
 - (1) The Universalists say: "All will be saved regardless of whether they believe and are baptized or not." Cf. Mt.7:13,14,21-23.
 - (2) The Calvinists say: "One who is saved will believe and be baptized."
 - (a) With them, belief and baptism are signs of a salvation already wrought by the eternal decrees of God.
 - (b) The number of the saved is already fixed and certain – the number cannot be changed.
 - (c) The individual has no personal choice in the matter. What he does is just a sign of what God has already done.
 - (3) The Denominationalists (other than Calvinists) say: "He that believes is saved and may be baptized."
 - (a) Unlike the Universalists and the Calvinists, the Denominationalists say that one must believe in order to be saved.
 - (b) They say that salvation is given at the point of faith before and without any further acts of obedience.
 - (4) Catholicism says: "He that is baptized is saved and may believe."
 - (a) Because of this belief they baptize newborn babies (so young they are hardly capable of any action, must less that of believing in Christ as the Son of God).
 - (b) They do this in order to save their souls (in case of death) from the fires of eternal hell.

(c) With the Denom., belief is the only essential; with a Catholic, baptism is all that is necessary.

(5) Moralism says: "Just live a good, honest life."

- d. But the Bible still says: Mk.16:15,16; Ac.2:36-38,41,47; Gal.3:26,27.
2. Next, what is the Spirit's revealed witness or testimony as to what one must then do in order to continue to be a child of God.
 - a. Rom.6:1-23.
 - b. Eph.4:22-5:12.
 - c. Phil.1:27; 2:3-5.
 - d. Col.3:1-17.
 - e. 2Pet.1:5-11.
 - f. 1Jno.2:1-6.
 3. It is always the Spirit's function to bear witness **with** our spirit that we are the children of God, which he has already done by means of the revealed word.
 4. But it takes **two** witnesses to prove the fact of how and when: the witness of the Holy Spirit and the witness of our spirit. Both spirits must testify or bear witness to the same fact; both must bear witness together; their witness must coincide.
 5. Having established the witness of the Holy Spirit as to what it takes to become and be a child of God,

D. FINALLY, WE CONSIDER THE WITNESS OF OUR SPIRIT, WHICH MUST AGREE WITH THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IF WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH.

1. Does my spirit bear witness with the Spirit's witness that I have done what the Spirit has revealed in the Spirit-inspired word of God is necessary for me to do to become a child of God, a Christian?
 - a. That is, am I a penitent, confessing believer baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of my past sins in order to become a child of God by in Christ Jesus?
 - b. This is the Holy Spirit's witness. Is it mine?
2. Does my spirit bear witness with the fact that I have done and am doing what the Holy Spirit revealed I must do in order to continue being a child of God?

3. If my spirit bears witness with the Holy Spirit's witness, then I have positive, divine proof that I am saved and a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
4. What is true of one person in this matter is true of all others – no exception.

III. CONCLUSION

1. This is the plain truth about Rom.8:16.
2. This is how we know we are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
3. There is no other way!

(Credit to Howard Winters – from his book: “The Word of the Holy Spirit,” pp.173-189)