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SESSION _____

SPIRIT OF LIFE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
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SESSION 86 – FAITH PART 25
HOW TO TRAIN THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Your spirit can be educated just as your mind can be educated. Your spirit can be built up in strength just as your body can be built up. There are four steps by which your spirit can be educated and built up.

1. By meditating in the Word.
2. By practicing the Word.
3. By giving the Word first place in your life.
4. By instantly obeying the voice of your spirit.

After a while you can know the will of God the Father even in all the minor details of life. It takes time to train the human spirit, but it is well worth the effort.

God communicates with the *spirit* of man, not with his *reasoning* faculties. As you train your spirit and as you instantly obey your spirit, you will find that you are obeying the Holy Spirit.

Remember that God said in His Word in **Proverbs 20:27**, "**The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.**" This means that God is going to use your own spirit to guide you because the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.

Now let us look in greater detail at the four steps to train and educate the human spirit.

STEP NUMBER ONE: MEDITATE ON THE WORD

Notice that three of these four points – meditation in the Word, practicing the Word, giving the Word first place, and instantly obeying the voice of your spirit - have to do with *the Word*. We all know the importance of reading the Word, but we must also realize the value of quiet meditation in the Word.

The most deeply spiritual men and women I know are people who give time to meditation in the Word. You cannot develop spiritual wisdom without meditation. God taught Joshua that principle in the very beginning of his ministry after the death of Moses.

Joshua 1:8

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

The Amplified Bible says, “...for then you shall make your way prosperous...”

You certainly would not have good success if you could not deal wisely in the affairs of life, would you?

God told Joshua to meditate in the Word. God told Joshua that if he would meditate in the Word, then Joshua would make his way prosperous, and he would have good success.

A preacher was teaching one time at a district convention along this same line. Afterwards, a minister asked him to come to his church and hold a meeting, and he did. The minister told him he had been trying to make a success of his church by visiting every successful pastor he knew.

For example, he would go and visit a pastor and watch what he did and see what kind of programs he was using and then try to implement them in his own church. But he said when he tried to put another man's program into action in his own church, it never worked. This minister traveled all around the country doing this.

I think that many of us are like this minister. After the preacher held his meeting, that pastor told him he decided that instead of trying to implement other pastors' programs, he would meditate on the Word the way the preacher taught and take a little time out each morning to do so.

After thirty days of doing this and not making such a pull on the people, but just by meditating on the Word, they just had a landslide service one Sunday. More people were saved in one day than they had the entire two or three years before!

You see, once this minister began to meditate on the Word, his people were revived, and he began to have good success.

That was this pastor's life and calling, so of course, that was where he needed to have good success. But your life's calling is something else. It is certainly true, however, that your way can be prosperous too, and you can have good success in your own life and calling by meditating on the Word.

Take time to meditate in the Word. Shut yourself in alone with your own spirit where the world is shut out. If you are ambitious to do something worthwhile for God, I would suggest that you just begin by taking ten or fifteen minutes daily for meditation in God's Word. That is not much. Begin the development of your own spirit. And this is the way to do that.

STEP NUMBER TWO: PRACTICE THE WORD

Practicing the Word means being a *doer* of the word. James said, *"...be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, DECEIVING your own selves."* (James 1:22).

The margin reads, "He *deludes* himself." We have many self-deluded people. The sad part is they have deluded *themselves*.

Begin to practice being a *doer of the Word*; under all circumstances do what the Word tells you to do. Some people think that being a doer of the Word is to keep the Ten Commandments. No, that is not what the Bible is talking about here. After all, we under the new covenant, have one commandment, and that is the commandment of love (John 13:34).

If you love someone, you will not steal from him. You will not lie about him either. Paul said love is the fulfilling of the Law (Rom. 13:10). If you walk in love, you will not break any law that was given to curb sin.

So being a doer of the Word means to walk in love, and if you are walking in love, you will already be keeping the Ten Commandments. But being a doer of the Word also means to do primarily what is written in the Epistles because those are the letters that are written to the Church. The Epistles belong to us.

Practice the Word by Not Fretting

Philippians is just one of the New Testament Epistles written to the Church.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6, 7

"6 BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

The Amplified translation of this verse brings out the meaning a little clearer that we are not to fret.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6, 7 (Amplified)

"6 DO NOT FRET OR HAVE ANY ANXIETY ABOUT ANYTHING, but in every circumstance and in everything by prayer and petition [definite requests] with thanksgiving continue to make your wants known to God. 7 And GOD'S PEACE be yours, [that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] WHICH TRANSCENDS ALL UNDERSTANDING, shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

We usually practice only part of this verse. For example, we do not mind practicing the part that says to pray, but if you just practice that part and not the entire verse, you are not practicing the Word. You are not being a doer of the word.

First, God says not to fret. If you are going to fret and have anxieties, then it is not going to do any good to make requests. We teach prayer, but why don't we just go ahead and teach the whole story on prayer. Why teach just part of it. That kind of praying does not work. The kind of over-anxious praying that is full of fretfulness does not work.

Years ago, a newspaper account read: "A scared prayer ain't no account." The man who wrote the story said that down in the state of Georgia years ago there was a man, his wife, and his son who had an experience while they were out in the field chopping cotton.

This boy was a grown man, nearly thirty years old but still lived at home. He was a little mentally retarded. As they were all out picking cotton, a storm came up and it began to thunder. The boy and his mother wanted to go into the house, but the old man wanted them to hoe out the row first, so he told them to finish the rows they were on.

But before they could finish, the lightning grew worse, and they all just threw down their hoes and began to run toward the house. When they saw that they could not make it in time, the man and his wife got down on their hands and knees and began to pray. Then the boy, who had not knelt to pray, turned around to them and said, "Come on Ma and Pa. A scared prayer ain't no account."

There is much truth to this statement. That is what the Spirit of God is saying through Paul here. Paul is telling believers, ***"Be careful for nothing - don't have any anxiety."***

A minister came to a man of faith some time ago. The man of faith felt so sorry for him but sometimes sympathy does not help anyone at all. Just to sympathize with a man does not give him the answer.

In this minister's case several tests and trials had come against him, and he just could not sleep. His stomach was upset, and he was not able to keep anything down that he ate. His nerves were just shot because of worry and fretfulness. He came to see if the man of faith could help him and thank God he could.

At first, he started to rebel against his help, though really it was *God's* help because he gave him the Word. He began to tell him what the Word said and how to pray about his situation. He had him read **Philippians 4:6**.

He would read it and then say, "Oh yes Brother, but everyone doesn't have the faith you have." The man of faith answered "Maybe they don't, but they do have the same bible I have. Anyone can develop their faith." He told him it was not a matter of having a lot of faith. It is a matter of acting on the word and exercising the faith you do have.

This minister said to that man of faith that it seemed that he didn't have a care in the world. He told him he did not and that it was because he was practicing the Word; he was a doer of the Word. He kept telling him that even though some people had not developed their faith to the extent that they could, they still had the same Bible that he had, and that it was a matter of practicing the Word.

The man of faith said to the minister that if he was going to worry and fret, he was not going to sleep or eat. The man of faith told him that when he would get alone and read this verse aloud, he would tell the Lord that His Word is true, and he believed it. He explained to this minister that he would be tempted to say he could not help worrying and fretting, but that God has not asked us to do something we cannot do.

When God said not to fret, that means we can keep from fretting. God is a just God, and he will not ask us to do something that we could not do. He told him that at one time, he believed he could make his requests known unto God, but it was hard for him to believe that he could not fret. But God said that we do not have to fret. So, he told God he would agree with what the Bible said and refuse to fret or have any anxiety about anything. He told all of this to this minister.

He told him that he would also tell the Lord that he was bringing his requests unto Him, and then he would thank Him. He said it quieted his spirit and helped him resist the troubled spirit the devil wanted him to have. He said he would get up from praying and go on about his business, and before he knew it, the devil was trying to trouble or harass him again with anxious thoughts. But he would just simply go right back and read the verse again and keep claiming it.

After he explained to this minister about resisting the devil with the Word the minister told the man of faith later that when he started doing this that his problem worked out and did not get as big as he was expecting. He was going to be sued over a certain situation, but the lawsuit did not amount to anything. God helped him out of it all.

You can become so fretful over something that you do not eat or sleep. But all you have to do is practice the Word and you can overcome all anxiety and fear.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-8

8 BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING [do not fret or have anxiety about anything]; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 and the PEACE OF GOD, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise THINK ON THESE THINGS."

Many people want what verse 7 promises – the peace of God - but they do not want to do what verse 6 says in order to get it. They do not want to practice not fretting or having any anxiety about anything. They do not want to practice casting their cares upon the Lord.

But in order to get what verse 7 promises - the peace of God - you have to practice verse 6 - Be not fretful. If you will practice verse 6 then as *The Amplified Bible* says, God's peace will garrison and mount guard over your heart and mind and spirit.

The education of our spirits comes by practicing the Word. Can you reap the results and have peace and not be a doer of the Word? ***No, you cannot.*** It is impossible.

Some people who worry and fret continually think on the wrong things in life. They continually think and talk doubt and unbelief. You will not be able to educate and train your spirit by continually thinking and talking doubt and unbelief.

Don't Talk the Problem

The more you talk about some problems, the bigger those problems seem to get. But if something is not true, honest, just, pure, and lovely, or of a good report, then you should not be thinking about it. It may be true, but it might not be lovely. So, do not talk about it.

The *Amplified* translation of **First Corinthians 13:7** says that God's love in us is "*... ever ready to believe the best of every person . . .*"

I have found out through the years that most of the bad stories I have heard about people aren't true anyway. It seems as if you can hear everything in the world in Christian circles about other people. Some things you hear might be true, but they might not be pure and lovely, so therefore you should not be speaking or even thinking about them.

We give place to the devil by thinking and talking about these things. The devil's greatest weapon against us is the power of suggestion. The devil is ever seeking and endeavoring to enter into your thought life. That is why the Apostle Paul is instructing believers and saying this. He says in **Philippians 4:8**, "*... think on these things.*" Meditate and feed on the letters that were written to the Church, the New Testament Epistles. Here is God, the Holy Spirit, speaking to the Church. Be a doer of the Word. If you do, you will grow spiritually.

Step Number 3: Give the Word First Place in Your Life

The Scriptures tell us exactly how to give the Word first place in our lives.

PROVERBS 4:20-22

"20 My son, ATTEND TO MY WORDS; incline thine ear unto MY SAYINGS. 21 LET THEM not depart from thine eyes; KEEP THEM in the midst of thine heart. 22 For THEY ARE LIFE unto those that find them, and HEALTH to all their flesh."

JOHN 6:63

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

There is healing in the word. Jesus said, "*...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*" Always put the Word of God first in your life. It is a strange thing to me that some people will not do this.

Often as a pastor we see people get sick and go to the hospital, and then afterwards ask for prayer. We are not saying it is wrong to go to a doctor, but why not just put God's word first, instead of using it as a last resort.

Once a preacher did not believe particularly in divine healing. He had problems with his throat and tonsils. The doctors told him he needed to have his tonsils removed.

Every morning this minister, and his family would read the bible and pray. One morning they were reading in **2 Chronicles 16:12, 13** about King Asa who had a disease in his feet and was dying. It said that King Asa did not seek the Lord, but just the doctors, and King Asa died.

This stood out to the minister. He realized he had not been praying about his tonsils to be healed. He told his wife and children that they should all pray about his tonsils. When they prayed, the Lord spoke to him and told him not to have them removed. To his astonishment, the Lord healed him, and he has not had any more problems with his tonsils since then.

There is a lesson to be learned from this. This verse in Isaiah does not say that the king died because he put the physicians first, but it certainly implies that he ought to have put the Lord first.

We should train ourselves and ask ourselves what God's Word says about every situation and circumstance in life. Sometimes in ignorance, family and friends can try to rush us into things. We need to think about what the Word of God says and put that first. We will be spared many difficulties in life if we would only put God's Word first.

Step Number 4: Instantly Obey the Voice of Your Spirit

The human spirit has a voice. We call that voice the *conscience*. Sometimes we call it *intuition*. Sometimes we also refer to it as an *inner voice* or an *inward guidance* from the Lord. The world calls it "a hunch." But really it is the voice of man's spirit talking to him.

Every man's spirit has a voice whether he is saved or unsaved. But the new birth is a rebirth of the human spirit. As you give your born-again recreated spirit the privilege of meditating upon the Word, your spirit gets correct information, and it will then become an accurate guide. Then, you must learn to obey your spirit.

Your spirit has the life and nature of God in it for the Holy Spirit dwells within you. The devil cannot be guiding you in your spirit because he is not in you. As the god of this world (**2 Cor. 4:4**) he is on the outside of you. But God communicates with you on the inside, in your spirit, because that is where He is. God is not in your head; He is in your spirit. Your spirit gets its information from God through the Holy Spirit. Learn to obey your spirit.

Some people say that the conscience is not a safe guide. But that statement is not always true. That statement needs to be qualified, because the conscience is a safe guide for the believer, *as long as he is walking in fellowship with God and His word*.

Your conscience, the voice of your recreated spirit, becomes the voice of God to you when it is trained in line with the Word of God. God is speaking to you. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord (**Prov. 20:27**). God will use your spirit to guide you. He will use it to enlighten you.

As your spirit has the privilege of meditating and feeding upon the Word, it becomes more and more a safe guide. As you feed and meditate upon the Word, you are training your spirit in the Word of God.

Paul said that he always obeyed his conscience (**Acts 23:1**). The Holy Spirit does speak to some of us who stand in certain ministries a little differently; however, in the lives of believers, the inward voice is the voice of one's spirit speaking, and not just the Holy Spirit.

I hear what the Holy Spirit says often but I usually never hear Him for my own benefit. For my own personal guidance and direction in life, I have to follow my inward voice, the voice of my spirit. The Holy Spirit will speak to me about others.

The reason I say this is that a prophet's ministry is not given for his benefit. The ministry of a prophet is given for the benefit of others. I have to know through my own inward voice or spirit about my own personal life, just as any believer does.

Don't put Out a Fleece – Look to Your Spirit

We miss it by not always looking to our spirits. Many times, we put a fleece out and tell God, "You do this if You want me to do that." But when you do this, what you really want God to do is come over in the sense realm and give you direction, and that is dangerous because that is the realm where Satan operates (**2 Cor. 4:4**).

Gideon put out a fleece (**Judges 6:37-40**). But he did not have the Spirit of God in the sense that he was not born again. Therefore, he could not be led by his spirit - it was not recreated. Gideon was just a natural man, walking by his natural senses.

You see, in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit only came upon the prophet, priest, and king. Those in the Old Testament we would call lay members did not have the Holy Ghost. Because of this, God had to deal with the Old Testament saints through their senses. That is why God had to deal with Gideon through the senses because Gideon did not have the Holy Spirit inside him.

God might do that today, but if He has to deal with us through circumstances and the sense realm it is because we are so spiritually dull. Believers are supposed to walk by their spirits (**Prov. 20:27**). And under the New Testament, Jesus said he would send the Comforter, who would come and who would lead and guide us into all truth (**John 14:16,17; John 16:13**). Therefore, believers have a safe Guide. But Gideon did not know the Holy Spirit.

You as a believer know the Holy Spirit because He lives inside of you in your spirit (Rom. 8:14; John 14:16,17,23). God deals with man through his own spirit by the Holy Spirit. He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, and Jesus said that He would guide us into all truth (John 16:13). Satan, not God, operates through the sense realm (2 Cor. 4:4).

Learn to Obey Your Spirit Even in the Affairs of Life

One Christian businessman said he lost \$10,000 because he got involved in a business deal, and a fleece made it look as though he should do it. All the time, the inward voice of his spirit was telling him not to do it. He followed the fleece and lost the entire \$10,000.

He said that for many years after he had done this, he wondered where he had missed God. He had been confused until he saw the truth of walking by his spirit as it is trained and developed by the Word of God. He had remembered an inward voice telling him not to do it.

A young Baptist pastor had never heard about fleeces, but when he came to the Pentecostal church, people kept talking about fleeces. Years earlier he began to think about changing churches, so he put out a fleece. It was the only fleece he ever put out in his life.

He told the Lord that if it was His will for him to take a certain church, then He should let such and such a thing happen. The answer to his fleece indicated that he should take the church, so he did, and God let him get fleeced! He missed it. It was not God's will for him to take that church. But he learned his lesson and never fooled with fleeces again.

God has a better way than a hit-and-miss system in the sense realm. You know that. Learn to obey the voice of your spirit. You will not get there quickly, but eventually as you train and develop your spirit by feeding and meditating in God's Word, you will come to the place where you will know in your spirit what you should do in every area of life. You will get a yes or a no and you will be able to deal wisely in all the affairs of life.

As you diligently follow these four steps outlined in this session, you will build up your spirit and train and educate your spirit man to dominate over your flesh and your mind. If you will put God's Word first in every area of your life, you will find that this walk of faith that we have been discussing in all of these sessions on faith will become like second nature to you. The spirit realm will become more and more real and distinct to you as you learn to appropriate God's blessings in your own life by faith in His Word. God has called us to a life of faith, a life of victory over circumstances, the flesh, and the devil. Changing the way we think, believe, and speak will bring us the victory that God has provided for us through Jesus Christ.