

How to Bridge the Church's Great Divide Between Word and Spirit

As a student in Bible college and seminary, I received tools, "rightly dividing the word of truth," (2 Tim. 2:15b). Great professors and scholars taught Bible study methods and the art of studying Scripture.

However, I had a hard time combining what the Holy Spirit said in the Bible and what He is saying in the present through spiritual gifts and in my personal time spent with Him. But I knew He is my present companion and Comforter and enjoys speaking to His kids.

Most literature said we could not combine both for fear of taking Scripture out of context. There seemed to be a great chasm between studying the Scripture and the present work of the Holy Spirit. Many Spirit-filled denominations and associations are guilty of teaching this disconnect, confusing their ministers in training.

But that is far from the truth. We need both the Spirit and Scripture. Through ongoing study and revelation, I learned that the wonderful Holy Spirit is still speaking through Scripture. The great chasm can be bridged. Not only has He spoken as recorded in Scripture, but He is speaking, continually revealing Himself to us through the Bible and to present circumstances.

Romans 10:17 says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." Many people tend to think this refers only to hearing the preaching of the gospel. But it actually refers to preaching and prophesying. It includes the written word of the past but also the Spirit-empowered spoken word of the present. And what He is saying to us personally,

to our churches and movements will not contradict what He has said in the Bible.

The Simple Question

The wonderful Holy Spirit must be included in our study of Scripture. He is the best teacher (Neh. 9:20, John 14:26, 1 John 2:27). Fellowshiping with Him enhances our understanding of the Bible. Increasing our faith as we continue growing in friendship and community with Him and one another.

This week in your Bible study, please continue your observations, interpreting and applying what you've read. But add one simple question to your study. Ask the Holy Spirit directly: "What are you showing me through this Scripture, Holy Spirit?"

Then wait on Him, writing down what He says to you. He is the sole reason I have published the *Spirit Empowered Journal* in the U.S. and U.K. with this direct question for Bible study.

In the next article in this series, I will share another simple step, adding to your Bible study, *Reading the Bible with the Holy Spirit in Your Faith Community*. I believe it will help empower you, enhancing your spiritual growth and equipping us to be Spirit-empowered.

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