

Spiritual Discernment and Clericalism

All Christians with the Spirit of God have a spiritual discernment that others do not have which is called the mind of Christ.^[1] It is a wisdom of the heart enhanced by the Spirit. In a culture that worships the mind, this aspect of ourselves is not fully appreciated. When this is not recognized in a Christian organization, there will be the tendency to view those who are in administrative positions as having a more important place in the Body of Christ than the others.^[2] There should not be this separation. It is called clericalism.

The Holy Spirit gives gifts to anyone He chooses throughout the Body.^[3] Pastors, elders, and priests do not have more of the Holy Spirit than anyone else. This is why we are told to “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”,^[4] and to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”^[5] We should always exercise this responsibility; otherwise, we may open ourselves up to deception.

Christ is the power and the wisdom of God; and, He imparts them to all of those in whom He abides.^[6] Those who regard others as having these rather than themselves have not been properly instructed. There are pastors, coaches, and spiritual directors who promote this misinformation for their own benefit. They should point people to Christ and never assume to be replacements for the guidance, peace, and strength from the Holy Spirit in people’s lives; otherwise, the law of sin (human weakness) will continue to dominate the person that they are directing. They need to point people to Christ because only the man Christ Jesus can transform us. His Spirit

is required for our wholeness and salvation: and it is the pledge of our future inheritance.^[7]

Salvation is also supposed to benefit all of us in this present life. If we are trusting in God, we will not be walking in fear but in the Spirit; and the resulting peace that we have from God will be the place from which we get His guidance in our lives.^[8] When we are anxious and emotionally agitated, we block the prompting and the wisdom that can come from God into our hearts and minds. This is why the peace of God that we get from casting all of our care on God is such a vital part of our Christianity.^[9] We need to be anxious for nothing. In this way, we maximize the effects of the Spirit in our lives.

The Bible instructs us on how to approach God for receiving His presence within us. We need to act on it otherwise it will not do us any good. It points us to faith in Christ which brings His Spirit within us. The Bible may be the only place where most people will receive this instruction. Relying on others to provide it may be the last place to find it in many churches. Reliance on God rather than on man may not be the message that they want to promote. The Bible has all of the information that we need “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”; and to be “thoroughly equipped for all good works”.^[10]

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^[1] Cf. 1Corinthians 2:7-16; Psalms 90:12; Proverbs 4:5-8

^[2] Cf. 1Corinthians 12:22-31

^[3] Ibid. 12:11

^[4] 1Thessalonians 5:21

^[5] Philippians 2:12-13; Psalms 37:23; 1Samuel 10:6-7; 2Samuel 7:3

^[6] Cf. Isaiah 11:2; 1Corinthians 1:24-30; 1John 2:20, 27; Proverbs 3:5-6; Colossians 1:28

^[7] Cf. Ephesians 1:13-14; 1Corinthians 12:13

^[8] Cf. Colossians 3:15; Isaiah 55:12; Mark 13:11;

^[9] Cf. 1Peter 5:5-7; Philippians 4:6-7; Proverbs 3:5-6; Matthew 6:25-27, 11:28-30; Psalms 37:7, 55:22; 112:7-8; Isaiah 26:3-4, 30:15, 55:7-9; John 6:63; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 6:13, 8:28; James 4:6-10

^[10] 2Timothy 3:16, 17