

PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)

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Know How To...

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Introduction

Most of us have read or looked up information in some type of “how to” manual. There are web sites and videos and entire sections of bookstores devoted to “how to” subjects. These have been very helpful to me over the years as I have used them to fix everything from cars to computers. The great thing about “how to” manuals is that you don't need to know or understand anything about the thing you are working on—you just need to be able to follow instructions in a step by step manner.

While this is great for natural things, it is not so great when dealing with spiritual things. I have seen or heard many “how to's” for spiritual issues. How to prophesy. How to operate in the gifts. How to find your calling. How to fulfill your destiny. How to be a leader. How to achieve success. And on and on. While these appeal to our mental processes, in most cases they have little value as spiritual solutions. God does not operate with formulas and in spite of what some teachers say, saying something over and over does not make it a reality.

Instead of formulas, God gives us procedures where we learn how to work with Him in achieving His plans and purposes. By learning the procedures we also come into spiritual understanding, which allows us to participate with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' Example

Jesus is a clear example of this process. Isaiah gives us a clear picture of how this is done and shows us that there is a part for us and a part for God.

Isa 50:4-5 NKJV

- (4) "The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to *him who is* weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.
- (5) The Lord GOD has opened My ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn away.

One of the hardest things for us to know is “how to speak a word in season to him who is weary”. When I have been in the middle of difficult circumstances or even tragedy, I have had well meaning people say some of the dumbest, cliched things to me. Made me want to grab them and slap them silly. They had no understanding of “how to speak a word in season...”. They had not been spiritually taught.

Let's break these verses in Isaiah down. The Lord God gives us the tongue of the learned; that is, of the disciple (the original word means both). How does He do this? By waking us morning by morning. By opening our ears to hear as the learned. This means that He wakes us up early so that we can seek Him, spend time with Him, fellowship with Him, practice hearing the Holy Spirit speak to us, and have our understanding opened by the Holy Spirit as we study to show ourselves approved. [2 *Tim.2:15*] As our ears are opened (literally, *digged*) we learn the Lord's plans for us, our destiny. Because our understanding has been opened we won't turn away from what the Lord has for us even though it may be extremely unpleasant.

This is the procedure that leads to a place where we “know how to speak a word in season...”.

Knowledge Or Understanding

We need to understand that there is a difference between knowledge and understanding. Knowledge is primarily facts. Understanding is knowing how to utilize facts in practical applications to accomplish or support the will of God.

In our desire to understand the natural world, we have formalized our methodologies and categorized our knowledge into various sciences in order to convince ourselves that we understand the “how to's” of the universe. While we have collected facts, we have done it without God so we have failed to gain understanding.

Daniel tells us that in the end days that there will be much activity and increase in knowledge. [*Dan. 12:4*] However, Paul tells us the result of this increasing knowledge.

2Ti 3:7 NKJV

(7) always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

How can this be? Why do we learn but never come to true knowledge? While we tend to ignore it, Paul gives us a clear answer.

1Co 2:14 NKJV

(14) But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

The natural man cannot gain spiritual understanding. The natural man can gain facts and knowledge and can apply logic and systematize knowledge into a form of man's wisdom; however, this has no value to spiritual understanding. Why? Because only the Holy Spirit can bring us to spiritual understanding.

1Co 2:12 NKJV

(12) Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Only when our ears have been opened by the Lord and our tongue trained so that we might “speak the word in season” do we begin to gain spiritual understanding in the wisdom of God.

1Co 2:6-7 NKJV

- (6) However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.
- (7) But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

While mechanical lists of “how to's” may help us organize our thoughts, they will not bring us to the knowledge of the truth. Only the Holy Spirit can lead us into Truth. [**John 16:13**]

There are no shortcuts to wisdom and spiritual understanding. We must follow the same procedure that Jesus followed as prophesied in Isaiah 50:4-5.

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