

THE CHRISTIAN'S STEWARDSHIP MANUAL

The Bible Is Our Guide

John 16:12-14

Part II

Our manual for Christ-like living is the Bible! Many times, however, we hear people say, "I try to read the Bible but I can't understand it" It's not the part that they don't understand that causes problems for people, it is the part that they do understand.

Perhaps they are saying what the Ethiopian said to Philip. Remember the story in Acts. Philip was going from Jerusalem to Gaza when he met "a man of great authority" who was reading from the prophet Isaiah. Phillip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The man replied, "How can I unless I have someone to guide me?" (Acts 8:26-40)

God long ago recognized the need and provided the answer — the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to the disciples, I have many things to share with you but you are not ready, but when the "spirit is come He will guide you into all truth." Today the Holy Spirit simply awaits the invitation to guide us in understanding the Bible and living the Christian life.

The Bible is God's inspired word to us – "all scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (II Timothy 3:16) Holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Today the same Spirit waits to guide us to understanding the manual God has given – **The Bible**.

- ▶ He who inspired the Bible must interpret it.
- ▶ He who authored the Bible must apply it.
- ▶ He who moved upon men to record God's word must move upon men to receive it.

Without the Holy Spirit we may:

- ▶ Know the words but miss the wonder.
- ▶ Read the sentence but miss the substance.
- ▶ Understand the grammar but miss the greatness
- ▶ Grasp its history but miss **His Story**.

In fact, we will never know the life it gives, the light it shed nor the love it reveals without the Holy Spirit's moving in our hearts and minds.

When we invite the Holy Spirit to help us to understand the Bible as we read and study it He will:

1. Lead us to **accept it** as God's word and as God's unique message to us. We realize that the word is speaking directly to us. As the Philippian jailer we ask, "what must I do to be saved," and the answer comes, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved."
2. Lead us to **apply** the truth to our personal need at the time. There are times when He needs to "convict of sin, righteousness and judgment." There are other times when He needs to force us to see ourselves as looking into a mirror. There are other times when He reveals to us the God of all comfort and brings peace to our turmoil.

There are other times when major decisions need to be made (such as your part in STEWARDSHIP ENRICHMENT). We read the word and pray and the Holy Spirit leads us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus to sacrificial commitment.

3. Lead us to **allow** the word to be "a light unto my path and a lamp unto my feet."
 - ▶ When there is worry He leads us to "cast all your anxiety on Him because he cares for you." (I Peter 5:7)
 - ▶ When there is failure He points us to "confess your sin for He is faithful and just to forgive." (I John 1:9)
 - ▶ When there is turmoil He point us to Jesus' words, "...Peace I give to you..." (John 14:27)
 - ▶ When there is sorrow and separation He says, "Let not your heart be troubled ... in my Father's house are many mansions." (John 14:1-2)
 - ▶ When there is reluctance, even rebellion, He reminds us that obedience to the Father is the only happy way. "...To **obey** is better than sacrifice..." (I Samuel 15:22)
 - ▶ When there is selfishness he guides to the words, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over..." (Luke 6:38)

*Lord, may your Holy Spirit guide my heart and mind
as I seek to be a part of your will for our church.*