

96-07-26b

Okay, we're ready to resume, and as promised, what I would like to do at this point is address the subject of the Holy Spirit in a little bit more detail. In Romans chapter 8, the section that we have just completed in verses 26 and 27 complements what we studied earlier in the chapter, and that is talking about the Holy Spirit. We saw in verse 14, as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are children of God.

These are sons of God. You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father. And this goes along with what we talked about in terms of life and peace.

We don't need to fear the challenges that face us. We don't need to fear what God might allow into our lives or bring into our lives. We should not be living in a state of apprehension.

If anyone had the opportunity to be apprehensive, it would have been the Apostle Paul. He's a great example of someone who could have been in fear for his life or in fear of rejection and so forth. He was abused in many ways for his testimony about Jesus Christ.

But we have received the spirit of adoption, a spirit of sonship, and it reinforces in our souls our relationship with God the Father. We have a family relationship to the God of the universe. We stand before Him the way Jesus Christ stands before Him, as beloved, as important, as heirs of what God has to pass on to us.

And he goes on to address himself to that, that we are children and heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified together. And again, you can see so many illustrations of this, especially thinking about the Olympics. There's great pride that an athlete takes in competing, achieving, being the best, and standing up on that platform and having them raise the American flag and play the national anthem.

There's just nothing like it. But how did they get there? It wasn't a waltz in the park. There were hundreds and thousands of hours of hard, grueling work.

But it's done in hope. It's done in expectation. It's done with enthusiasm.

It's done with a passion for that sport and that activity and the desire to be as good as you can possibly be. And it's one of the most fulfilling things in life. That's why there are so many people that do that, that strive toward some goal in that fashion.

And in the same way, we don't need to fear the judgment seat of Christ. We don't need to fear the critical eye of God, our Heavenly Father, if we just care about the things that He cares about, if we want to pursue in our lives the things that He saved us to bring about. And the Holy Spirit confirms that in our soul, that we don't need to fear our Heavenly Father.

We don't need to be afraid of Him. We don't need to be an acquaintance. Patty and I have, several years ago, said, you know, my view of God is He's that big judge in the sky.

And I'm just hoping He doesn't hammer me too bad before my life is over. And this particular person had a doctorate from seminary. And yet his view of God was that God was up there just waiting to find how we had fallen short and to judge us.

And even Jesus Christ Himself, you know, we've been studying the law of Moses and its role in human history. And we've seen that the law of Moses came in to condemn us and to show us how we fell short. The law of Moses did that.

Jesus Christ did not come to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. That's what it tells us in John. The work of condemnation had already been done by the law of Moses in terms of our lack of righteousness and falling short of God's expectations and God's standards.

Jesus Christ didn't come to condemn us. He didn't come to make us feel small or to give us a spirit of fear. He came to give us His Spirit, the Spirit by whom we cry out, Abba, Father.

And that Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him. And this isn't a suffering that we need to dread or seek to avoid.

Or when we start to experience a little bit of it, immediately try to pray ourselves back out of it. The trials of this life and the challenges of this life, that's the only place where we can manifest the glory of God. That's what those are for.

This is why it says, if indeed we suffer with Him, in order that we may be glorified together with Him. So it's necessary. Jesus Christ could not have become the Savior of all mankind if He hadn't been willing to follow the Father's plan all the way through His earthly life.

And we're in the same situation. That's why Paul says in verse 18, I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. What is it that we focus our attention on? Are we worried about the present and what the sufferings might be? Or do we have our eyes fixed on the glory and on the accomplishment of the goal that God has for us? If we concentrate on what God has in store, we're going to find that not only do we have life and peace in the challenges of this life, but happiness comes up, sneaks up from behind and overtakes us.

When we thought, well, I'm just going to reconcile myself to having to go through this challenge. I'm not going to let it depress me. I'm not going to be discouraged.

I'm just going to remember that God has a purpose in this. God has a plan and God's glory will be

revealed if I just trust Him, if I continue to march and I don't get my eyes on myself or my eyes on people or my eyes on circumstances. And right at the point where we're willing to quit seeking our own happiness and really pursue pleasing God, all of a sudden we discover that the life and the peace from God, the Holy Spirit has overwhelmed us and has given us a life of great happiness.

That's what Paul is encouraging us with in this chapter. And he's been talking about the role that the Holy Spirit plays in that. This role that the Holy Spirit plays in this age is unique to this age.

And one of the ways we see that is by seeing what his ministry was in the Old Testament. A lot of people have said, well, I wonder, you know, they say the Holy Spirit was not yet given because Christ was not yet glorified. So what exactly did he do in the Old Testament? What I have done is go to every single passage in the Old Testament that makes reference to God the Holy Spirit and classify them, decide what is it that the Holy Spirit was doing in that particular instance.

Why was he mentioned? What was he doing? What was his function there? And surprisingly, almost everything that the Holy Spirit does in the Old Testament falls under about six general headings. And if you get these functions or these missions in your mind, you can look at any reference to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. And this also, by the way, includes the Gospels, because remember Jesus Christ lived his earthly life in the Old Testament age.

And the ministry of the Holy Spirit was the same in his day and time as it was throughout the rest of the Old Testament age in many ways. But I will give you these headings, and then I'm going to give you some examples. We won't go through every single passage, because they printed in fine print, they take up four full pages.

But I'll give you some representative samples, and I will leave it to you as you encounter other passages to see if you don't find that these categories apply. Here are the six headings that I have developed. The first one is two words, creative and restorative, meaning that there's something involved in creating or restoring something that had disintegrated or fallen apart.

And these generally have to do with nature. In Job 26.13, by his Spirit he adorned the heavens, his hand pierced the fleeing serpent. By his Spirit God adorned the heavens.

The stars were put in place through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God's operative power when He wants to create, when He wants to restore, when He wants to restore. When life or existence is going to come into being for some living thing or some inanimate thing, God the Holy Spirit is involved in that creative or restorative process.

Job 33.4 says something along the same lines, The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. Now that's interesting, because Job is speaking, and Job was born just the way we are, and yet he says, It is the Spirit of God that made me. This is something to ponder when you think about the whole abortion debate and so forth and what's happening in the womb.

According to the Bible, that is a work of the Holy Spirit. The process of creating a person and bringing them into this world is a work of God the Holy Spirit, not something to tamper with lightly. Psalm 51.12 falls into this category.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me by your generous Spirit. This restoration, the restoration to wholeness, to completeness, to fullness of function, is a part of the ministry of the Spirit. In Psalm 104.30, You send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

I'm going to give you three passages here that you might find interesting in terms of... Have you ever wondered, you know, Jesus said that a sparrow doesn't fall out of the sky, that God doesn't know about it, and He says you are worth more than many sparrows. I discovered something I really didn't know before in looking at these passages. God the Holy Spirit apparently has direct oversight over nature and over the animals.

I'll give you three passages for this. One of them is Psalm 104.30. You send forth your Spirit, and they are created. This is a reference to the animal kingdom.

You renew the face of the earth. The flora and fauna on the earth are renewed by God the Holy Spirit. This is also in Isaiah 34.16. Talking about the... He's been talking about different kinds of animals.

And He says, search from the book of the Lord and read. Not one of these shall fail, not one shall lack her mate. For my mouth has commanded it, and His Spirit has gathered them.

The animals are superintended by God the Holy Spirit, and He makes sure that they mate and that they reproduce and that their species don't fail off the earth. You know, you've got all the environmentalists saying, oh, we're about to lose the snail darter or the bald eagle or whatever. God the Holy Spirit superintends the living things on this planet, and His Spirit gathers them.

In Isaiah 63.14, as a beast goes down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord causes him to rest. And in the same way, you lead your people to make yourself a glorious name. So the beast that goes down into the valley and rests, Isaiah says, the Spirit of the Lord causes him to rest.

God the Holy Spirit superintends those instinctive and natural functions that belong to the animals. And this falls under the creative and restorative function of God the Holy Spirit. You might also notice Isaiah 44.3. I will pour water on him who is thirsty and floods on the dry ground.

I will pour my Spirit on your descendants and my blessing on your offspring. And when you look at the parallelism in that, God the Holy Spirit is the one that restores us. He guides us and gives us rest in the same way.

Isaiah 32.15 says, when the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, the wilderness becomes a

fruitful field. And the fruitful field is counted like a forest. So again, plant life under the ministry of the Spirit flourishes.

You might also put with that Genesis 1.2, and following the Spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters in the initial creation. But the next four that I'm going to give you are ministries to people of God the Holy Spirit. This is what God the Holy Spirit did in interacting with people.

And I'll go ahead and give you these four categories. God the Holy Spirit provided, first of all, enablement for service. He provided enablement for leadership.

He provided enablement for revelation. And He provided personal strength. These three enablements I find the most interesting, service, leadership, and revelation.

And the bulk of passages in the Old Testament fall under these three categories. Under enablement for service, Pharaoh recognized that Joseph had the Spirit of God. He said, can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God? And that's when Pharaoh sent him over the land to manage the resources to prepare for the famine.

In Exodus chapter 28 and verse 3, God spoke to Moses and said, so shall you speak to all who are gifted artisans, gifted craftsmen, whom I have filled with the Spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister to me as priest. God said in Exodus 31.3, talking about one of those craftsmen, I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, and all manner of workmanship. This was to create the tabernacle implements of worship.

Exodus 35.31, He has filled him with the Spirit of God, wisdom and understanding, knowledge, and all manner of workmanship. In 1 Kings 18.12, it shall come to pass as soon as I am gone from you, the Spirit of the Lord will carry you to a place I do not know. This is talking about God, the Holy Spirit's ministry to prophets to enable them to do their work.

They would be carried to and fro. It's also interesting, there are several references in the Old Testament to the Spirit of God geographically relocating people. I'm grateful that we don't have that today.

I wouldn't want to suddenly find myself several miles distant. But God the Holy Spirit did this in Old Testament days, and He also did it for Philip in Acts. But that was a reference to it there in 1 Kings 18.12. There's another in the dealings with Elisha and Elijah.

In 2 Kings 2, when Elijah was getting ready to go to glory, Elisha said in 2 Kings 2.9, Please let a double portion of your Spirit be upon me. And that was the Spirit of God. And a few verses later in 2 Kings 2.15, when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw Elisha, they said, The Spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.

And they came to meet him and bowed to the ground before him. They saw that the Spirit of God

was there. And the next verse, they said to him, Look, here are 50 strong men with your servants.

Please let them go and search for your master Elijah, lest perhaps the Spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him upon some mountain or into some valley. So the sons of the prophets wanted to go send out a search party to find where the Spirit of God had carried, physically carried Elijah. You may recall not long ago, we talked about Ezekiel being grabbed by the hair of the head and taken to Jerusalem and shown perhaps in a vision or perhaps in the body.

Paul said the same thing. He didn't know if he was in the body or out of the body when the Spirit took him up to the third heaven. But this was all enablement for service.

This was part of enabling a prophet to do his job, to be carried from place to place, to have that Spirit of God resting upon him. In 1 Chronicles 12, 8, the Spirit came upon Amasai, chief of the captains. He was one of David's military leaders.

He said, We are yours, O David. We are on your side, O son of Jesse. Peace, peace to you and peace to your helpers, for your God helps you.

David received them and made them captains of the troop. The Spirit of God came upon this general to serve in David's army. And of course, the result of that was peace.

So that's enablement for service. The second of those three enablements is enablement for leadership. And I'll just give you a few of these.

There are many in Numbers 11, 17. God says to Moses, I will come down and talk with you. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and I will put that same Spirit upon them.

And they shall bear the burden of the people with you that you may not bear it yourself alone. So the elders of Israel received the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit, to lead the people, to judge the people, to take the administrative and leadership burden off of Moses to some extent. And you can read all through Numbers 11.

There are four different references to the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God came down upon the 70 elders and they prophesied in the camp. And there were two of these men who remained in the camp.

They didn't come out to the big elder meeting. There was Eldad and Medad and the Spirit rested upon them also. And they were prophesying in the camp.

They hadn't come out. And so they came out to Moses and they said, Eldad and Medad didn't come out with the rest of the elders and they're prophesying inside the camp. And get that Spirit of God off of them.

They shouldn't be doing that. They ought to be out here with the rest of us. And Moses said to

him, are you concerned for my sake? How I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon all of them.

Moses longed to see our day when the Spirit of God rested on every believer. He said, boy, my job in Israel would be a lot easier if the Spirit of God rested on all these people instead of just the elders. But this was enablement for leadership.

The Lord said to Moses in Numbers 27, 18, take Joshua the son of Nun with you, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him. This was an unusual thing. But Joshua was being prepared for leadership and he had the ministry of the Spirit.

It says the same thing about Joshua in Deuteronomy 34, 9. There are several references to the Spirit in Judges. Judges 3, 10. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he judged Israel.

He went out to war and the Lord delivered the king of Mesopotamia into his hand and his hand prevailed over that king. Judges 6, 34. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.

He blew the trumpet and the Abizrites gathered behind him. In Judges 11, 29. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh and passed through Mizpah.

And from Mizpah he advanced toward the people of Ammon to go fight a battle. In Judges 13, 25. The Spirit of God began to move upon him at Mahanadan between Zorah and Ishtaul.

So throughout the book of Judges, those judges were operating in a leadership capacity under the ministry of the Spirit. Now, let's stop and think about this. We've seen two ministries so far of enablement.

Enablement for service and enablement for leadership. What did that accomplish in Israel? It accomplished physical goals, didn't it? The tabernacle furniture got created. The cases, the civil court cases and the squabbles between neighbors were adjudicated and handled by the elders of Israel.

The judges went out and whipped up on the Philistines or the Ammonites or whoever the current enemy during that 300-year period were, right? Have we seen anything in terms of the ministry of the Spirit related to the inner life of any of these believers thus far? It's all been fighting battles, building furniture, making the tabernacle and so forth, right? We'll just keep that in mind because the same thing holds true continuing under that enablement for leadership. In 1 Samuel, we have seen Samuel taking the horn of oil and anointing Saul and the Spirit coming upon him. Later on, he anointed David in 1 Samuel 16, 13 and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

In Isaiah chapter 11, the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

Prophecy about Jesus Christ coming. The Spirit would rest upon him to enable him for service, to enable him for leadership, to enable him really for all of these things.

And that's an interesting thing to ponder as well when you think about Jesus Christ being God and man. If Jesus Christ was operating out of his own deity, he wouldn't need the ministry of the Spirit, would he? Because he would already have God power as God the Son. But because he was a man and operated in his humanity and set aside the function of his deity, he operated under the ministry of the Spirit.

And that's what you have predicted in Isaiah 11 too. Isaiah 30 verse 1, Woe to the rebellious children, says the Lord, who take counsel but not from me and who devise plans but not by my spirit so that they may add sin to sin. They were supposed to be operating under leadership that was superintended by the Holy Spirit and they were not.

They were making their plans, engaging in activities, getting advice, but it didn't come from God. It didn't come from people who were under the ministry of the Spirit. And God condemns them for that.

He says, Woe to you rebellious people who are not functioning under what I've provided through my spirit. Isaiah 42 verse 1 is another prediction about Jesus Christ. Behold my servant whom I uphold, my elect one in whom my soul delights.

I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. Jesus Christ accomplished his mission under the ministry of God the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 63 verse 10, One of the condemnations of Israel, they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned himself against them as an enemy and he fought against them. Isaiah 63 verse 11, He remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying, Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he who put his Holy Spirit within them? Talking about that ministry of leadership amongst the elders.

And then finally, Zechariah 4 verse 6, He answered and said to me, This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts. That was the way that leadership and service was to be accomplished in the Old Testament. Now our third category, this is one you might expect.

This is enablement for revelation. How did people find out what God wanted? They didn't have a Bible like we have at most. They might have had the books of Moses, maybe some of the books of the prophets in later days.

There was enablement in the Old Testament for revelation, for communicating God's will and God's word. And you have this throughout the Old Testament. Numbers 24 too, Balaam raised his eyes and saw Israel encamped according to their tribes, and the Spirit of God came upon him.

And then Balaam delivered a prophecy and an oracle. He did that through the Holy Spirit. Second Samuel 23 too, the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me and His word was on my tongue.

There are many of these. I'll just pick a few representative ones. There are many in Second Chronicles.

Second Chronicles 20, 14, the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jehaziel, the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jehiel, the son of Madaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph in the midst of the assembly. And He prophesied. Nehemiah 9.20, in reviewing the history of Israel, you gave your good spirit to instruct them and you did not withhold your manna from their mouth and you gave them water for their thirst.

The three basic elements of subsistence for Israel in the wilderness were God's spirit to give them God's truth, to give them water and to give them manna. So water, bread and God's word were the three things that God gave them in the wilderness. You gave your good spirit to instruct them.

Nehemiah 9.20. In Nehemiah 9.30, yet for many years you had patience with them. You testified against them by your spirit in your prophets, yet they would not listen. Therefore you gave them into the hands of their enemies, the people of the lands.

Job 32.18, I am full of words. The spirit within me compels me. Psalm 143.10, Psalm 143.10 says, Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.

Your spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness. Proverbs 1.23, Turn at my rebuke.

Surely I will pour out my spirit upon you. I will make my words known to you. And we could go on and on in Isaiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and Joel and Micah.

You can find these passages, get any good concordance and just look at the word spirit. Most of the references to spirit in those books has to do with the ministry of the Holy Spirit and it has to do with the function of communicating God's will and God's word and God's truth. Ezekiel is constantly referring to the fact that the spirit entered into me.

The spirit lifted me up. The spirit lifted me up. Three different times he says, the spirit lifted me up.

In Ezekiel 11.5, The spirit of the Lord fell upon me and said to me, Speak, thus saith the Lord. And then he gives his oracle. So those are three different kinds of enablement.

Enablement for service, enablement for leadership and enablement for the communication of God's truth, of revelation. In addition to the creative and restorative function. Another category was personal strength.

We find this especially in Judges. The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him. This is Samson.

The spirit of the Lord came upon him and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, even though he had nothing in his hand. In Judges 14.6. In Judges 14.19, the spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily and he went down to Ashkelon and killed 30 of the Philistines, took their clothes and gave their changes of clothes to those who had explained the riddle. In Judges 15.14, when he came to Lehi, this is Samson again, the Philistines came shouting against him.

Then the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire and his bonds broke loose from his hands. Samuel told Saul in 1 Samuel 10.6, the spirit of the Lord will come upon you and you will prophesy and be turned into another man. And in 1 Samuel 10.10, that prophecy was fulfilled.

When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him and the spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied among them. Saul was given a capability that he didn't ordinarily have. Finally, God, the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament had a ministry related to God's presence.

Whether it is the perception of God's presence in our soul or the observation of God, that God is there and is aware of what's going on. For example, in Psalm 139.7, where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? God's spirit is God's presence in the world. It's his immediate presence in the Old Testament.

Ezekiel 36.27, I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will keep my judgments and do them. Speaks of the personal presence of God as a motivation in the age to come. Haggai 2.5, according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my spirit remains among you.

Do not fear. Take heart. My spirit is still among you, O Israel, he says in Haggai.

Job talks about how depressed he would be if God should set his heart on it in Job 34.14. If he should gather to himself his spirit and his breath, if he should remove these things, Job would be alarmed. Now, my point in covering all of these, and this is pretty much a survey of all of the uses of, or all of the functions of God the Holy Spirit. You will find some other uses of the word spirit.

In particular, they come under the category of a deceiving spirit or a lying spirit in the Old Testament. This, by the way, is not God the Holy Spirit. This is an angelic function.

And perhaps we can address that one of these days. God does send a spirit which will deceive, which will motivate people to do things that are in accordance with God's plan. And this can cause us some disturbing thoughts sometimes.

We say, well, God does not lie. God is always of the truth and so forth. How could there be a lying spirit from God? We'll talk about that one of these days.

I will just say briefly that the providing of, if someone is seeking out an error, if they want to go against the truth, God will turn them over to that. We saw that in Romans chapter one. If people aren't interested in the truth, then God will send them a strong delusion.

If there's something else that they're, if that's what they want, God will provide it in the same way that if they want the truth, God will provide it. But God leaves an alternative in the world. Have you ever wondered why we've never found the ark? Why there isn't a great window in the sky where people can just look up and see God and everybody be convinced that he's there and believe in him and nobody would be an unbeliever? God leaves us the option because our existence has at its very center choice and free will.

And if we have looked at the truth and rejected it and said, get the hints, I don't want that truth, I want something else, God will give us another alternative and there will be something that's not the truth and that's a lie, it's a delusion, it's something that's false. And God provides for it, God allows for it because there has to be an alternative or there is no choice. And the only reason we ever fall for the deception or the delusion or the lie is that that's what we're looking for, that's what we want and that's what we're actively seeking.

So it's not God's fault and we can't say, well, God is the author of confusion or God is the author of falsehood. God simply puts in place alternatives to ensure that we have free will. But there has never been a person that wanted the truth that got the lie.

It's only people who want the lie that get the lie. And if you go to these passages, you'll see that. I'll just mention a few of these references that talk about a spirit of ill will or a distressing or lying spirit.

We've seen in 1 Samuel chapter 16, especially the distressing spirit from the Lord that came to plague Saul. Why do you suppose God sent a spirit to plague Saul? Did God just get a perverse enjoyment? Is he up there pulling the wings off of flies and that kind of thing? What was God's desire for Saul? He wanted him to turn. He wanted him to repent.

He wanted to be able to fulfill his promises to him. And sometimes God has to distress us to wake us up and get us to change our mind. And the distress from God is designed to be beneficial.

It's designed to be a blessing. It's designed to make us wake up and say, wait a minute, this is no way to live. What's the matter with this life I'm living? And to wake up and turn and experience the peace and the life that Paul is talking about in chapter 8. And in the same way that we sometimes have to give our children unpleasant experiences to benefit them in the long term, God has to send us unpleasant experiences from time to time to turn us when we are going astray.

And the distressing spirit from God to Saul had that purpose in 1 Samuel 16. The kings of Israel were disregarding God and were being evil and were relying on human strength instead of looking to the Lord. They were ignoring the prophets.

And in 1 Kings 22, God calls out and says, who will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all of these false prophets and tell the kings what they want to hear so that they will be defeated. And in 1 Kings 22, 21, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, I will go. The Lord said, in what way? And he said, I will go and be a lying spirit in the mouth of his prophets.

And the Lord said, you shall persuade him and also prevail. Go out and do so. And God sent one of his angels down to one of these false prophets and gave him a persuasive message.

And that's just what the king wanted to hear. And he went out and was killed in battle. And the king wasn't down there saying, let's pray to the Lord and do his will and let's seek God's will in this thing.

He was looking for the lie. And so God sent him the lie. We sometimes find this a little bit harsh.

But again, remember, we're in the Old Testament and it's God's purpose that counts. 2 Kings 19, 7, I will send a spirit upon him and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land. And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

This was something that God did to a foreign king that was invading Israel. He sent a spirit to him and gave him a rumor and made him return. And you find another account of what we saw in 1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18.

It's basically the same story. Isaiah 19, 14, The Lord has mingled a perverse spirit in her midst and they have caused Egypt to err in all her work as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. Now, why does a drunken man stagger in his vomit? Was he out there trying to do the Lord's will and pursuing the truth of God and seeking the ministry of God, the Holy Spirit? And he wound up being drunk and staggering in his vomit? Not at all.

He chose to drink. He chose to get drunk. And he chooses that over and over again.

And God makes a comparison. He says, here's Egypt that rejects God. They've had the witness of Israel for 400 years.

They've had many opportunities with Israel, their neighbor, the way Rahab did in Jericho to see the work of God and to respond. And instead, they reject God. And so God mingles a perverse spirit and causes Egypt to err in all her work, just the way a drunken man staggers in his vomit.

Isaiah 29, 10, The Lord has poured out on you, Israel, the spirit of deep sleep and has closed your eyes, namely the prophets. And he has covered your heads, namely the seers. You all aren't interested in the truth.

I send the prophets. I send the seers. They communicate the truth.

You're not interested. You don't think about it. You don't care about it.

I'm going to cut that off. You're not going to have prophets. You're not going to have seers.

Nationally speaking, your eyes are closed and your head is covered. If you're not going to pay any attention, I'm going to stop sending them, God says. So this is the case where there is a spirit of ill will or a lying spirit that's sent.

But notice, this is not God, the Holy Spirit. This is usually an angel that is sent to carry out a specific function. Now, all of these different ministries that we've seen, enablement for service, enablement for leadership, enablement for communication or revelation, creating and restoring and so forth, all of these things that happen in the Old Testament age, how many of those have we seen emphasize the inner life of a believer? None.

I couldn't find a single passage that said the Spirit will come upon him and he will be flooded with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. It's just a different emphasis, isn't it? The Old Testament ministry of God, the Holy Spirit, operated where God's plan was operating in the Old Testament, and that was in the external. God would bring about victories through his Spirit.

God would build furniture and tabernacles and temples through his Spirit. God would divert enemy soldiers and would provide physical protection through his Spirit. God did things in the external realm in the Old Testament through his Spirit.

Nowhere in the Old Testament, unless it's in a prophetic sense, does the ministry of the Spirit do anything on the inside. The one place you find that are those prophecies about where Israel will be in the millennial kingdom, when God will put his Spirit upon them and there will be some things take place. But in the Old Testament ministry of the Spirit, it operates in the external for leadership, for service, for victory in battle, and for communication.

What is the difference in this age? Just think about Galatians 5, 22, and 23. What is the function of the Spirit that Jesus talked about in John 15 and 16? He leads us into truth. He ministers on the inside.

He comforts. His name, his title is the Comforter. He is the paraklesis in Greek.

Para means alongside and kaleo means to call, the one that is alongside us. Paul has just said in Romans 8, he bears with us in our weakness. We don't know how to pray the right way and he does that for us.

He bears witness to us that we're children of God. His ministry now is on the inside. The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians, love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, forbearance, self-control, and so

forth.

These things are all on the inside. Does this contrast stick out to you the way that it does to me? Do you see this tremendous difference in the ministry of the Spirit now as opposed to the Old Testament? If you see that, let me ask you a question. What do you think about the trends in Christianity today that talk about the Holy Spirit's work in the external, in healing or in giving signs? You know, two white doves flew over.

I know I'm supposed to go to this church or whatever. We hear a lot of that today, especially in charismatic circles. And it becomes so clear when we look at the Word of God that that's a misunderstanding of the role of the Holy Spirit.

It misunderstands that God's purpose in this age is not external, it's internal. Some things are going to happen in the external. People are going to have wonderful opportunities for ministry with food, clothing, and shelter and the witness of the Gospel.

But the focus and the emphasis, that's why God the Holy Spirit is not on the outside of people helping them do exterior things like He did in the Old Testament. In this age, God the Holy Spirit is in us and He is at work in us to will and to do, to will, to change the way we think, to change our attitudes, to change the climate in our soul. What a great thing to have peace.

What a great thing to have a supernatural patience, a supernatural happiness on the inside. That's why God the Holy Spirit is on the inside in this age and that's where He's doing His work. That's where the purpose of God is being fulfilled.

It's really important for us to understand this at this point in this section of Romans because we're about to get into one of the most famous parts of Romans. This is almost as famous as John 3.16. All things work together for good. Well, what are we talking about when we talk about all things? Are we talking about all things in the world? Are we talking about circumstances and tabernacles and battles and all the kinds of things that the Holy Spirit worked with in the Old Testament? Or are we talking about New Testament things? Are we talking about internal things, attitudes and thought patterns? Everybody wants to give us counseling to help change our attitudes and help change our deep-seated insecurities or our deep-seated problems that go way back to our childhood.

We have something inside us. You know, I was talking about quartet music earlier. One of my favorite all-time songs is a song that the Statesman Quartet did way back in the 50s and it's called Something Within.

And he says, thank God Almighty, I've got something within. And then he asks the question, do you have that something, that burning desire? Do you have that something burning like fire? Have you that something? I just can't explain. Get in a hurry.

Tell everybody, I've got something within. And that's what the Holy Spirit gives us. He is the personal presence of Jesus Christ.

The combination of the Spirit and the Word, that is the presence of Jesus Christ in our souls. And it's more powerful than any experience we've ever had. It's more powerful than any memory we've ever had.

It's more powerful than any counseling or any step program or any chemical that we can take. It's the power of God that created the universe. And it's that power that is the life inside us that produces the fruit that God is looking for.

Everything in this life starts on the inside. Jesus Christ began preaching that to his disciples. He said, don't you understand you're worried about whether or not my disciples washed their hands when they ate.

It's what's on the inside that counts. It's what's on the inside that can defile a man. And it's what's on the inside that can produce the fruit that glorifies God.

We have that something within. It's a precious gift. People in the Old Testament didn't have it.

We've got it. Are we taking advantage of that gift? There are so many hundreds and thousands of believers in the Old Testament that would have given everything they owned to trade places with us and live in this age and have the ministry of the Holy Spirit inside and have this opportunity to bear this kind of fruit for God. We have the opportunity.

And that's why Paul is spending so much time writing such a long letter about the Christian life. And he's trying to argue us out of the idea that it's what we do. It's ministry.

It's evangelism. It's how people perceive me and whether or not they think I'm righteous or whether or not they think I'm a good Christian or whether or not they think I'm wise or that I've done the right thing. He says, look, you've got to set your mind on the things of the Spirit.

If you set your mind on earthly things, you set your mind on the things of the flesh. It's death. You're out of the game.

You're bearing no fruit. Christ's death in terms of delivering you out of this present evil age was a waste because even though you're saved, you're completely nonproductive. It's like going out in a field and saying, you know, I want to grow a vineyard.

I want to get some great grapes and harvest them. You go out and you plant these vines and you water them and you tend them and you weed them and you make sure they have just the right amount of exposure to the sun and they grow up. And when the time comes for grapes, there's no grapes.

And you think, look at everything I've done to invest myself in these. Patty has done this with some of her flowering plants. You know, you just water it and put those little spikes of food in there and change the light for it and try to keep it healthy.

And it doesn't ever have any buds. It doesn't produce the flowers it's supposed to produce. You think, well, I've slaved over this thing.

There's a great passage in the Bible where Jesus tells a parable about this, about the vineyard and the husbandman. And the owner of the vineyard comes and says, this vineyard is unproductive. Root it all out and burn it down.

And the husbandman says, I've worked with it these two years and it hasn't produced any fruit. Give me one more year. Let me dig around it and trench.

Let me trim away these dead vines. Give me another chance to encourage it and nurture it and give it a chance to produce fruit. And that parable was a reference to Israel.

Jesus was two years through his three-year ministry to Israel around that time. And God the Father was already seeing how unresponsive and uninterested Israel was in the plan of God. And it was a picture of Jesus Christ saying to his father, give me another year.

Give me more time to circulate and to teach and to present this great opportunity for the kingdom of God. And then if it still doesn't produce, you can root it out. And in the parable, the owner says, OK, well, in Israel, that third year didn't produce any more fruit than the first two years.

And as a result, God rooted up Israel and in effect burned the field. And Israel doesn't have an age now. And they're not in the plan of God at this moment.

And we are. So now we're up to that. And it's our opportunity to take advantage of everything that Christ died to give us, the presence of the Holy Spirit, the word of God.

All we have to do is remember as the day goes by and we're engaged in our daily tasks who we are and why we're here. We have something within. And it doesn't matter what we're doing in the external world.

Everything hinges on what we think, what our attitudes and our motivations are. It's such a great opportunity because there's no special qualification. We don't have to go to Uganda and be a missionary.

We don't have to go down to the urban inner city and get involved in that. Although those are worthy things if that's our calling. But our true calling and our central calling is to let God have his way in our soul.

And all that takes is a decision on our part to set our minds on the things of the Spirit. When we

continue next time, we're going to look at the New Testament ministry of God the Holy Spirit briefly. And then we're going to continue on forward and hopefully finish Romans chapter 8 and see what is involved in predestination and poor ordination and the overall plan of God as Paul presents it here.

And we'll see some things that I think you'll find helpful as you consider those issues, especially the issue of predestination and whether or not man's free will can function under an almighty and sovereign God. We'll see that next time, but let's close here in prayer. Father, we thank You for the privilege we have of being saved by Your grace and having been born in this age and having been entered into union with Jesus Christ and been given the gift of Your Spirit