

**"GOD'S SPIRIT GUIDES TRUSTING SOULS"**

The First-Century Gospel Church Philadelphia

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A Christian who has a thirst to know God's Word and what His 'will' is for everyone, is very fortunate to have a complete volume of Truth as the Bible contains for us. In reality, His Word has everything that we need and ought to know about God's 'will' for us. He sent the Holy Spirit to teach that, and to inspire us from within our heart (so we should not expect nor need to receive special revelation from God). (Hebr 1:1-2) "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe."

All that God told us through His Son (also the Apostles, and the prophets before), has been written down for us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Where any teaching or necessary spiritual light about what we are to do, is revealed in God's Word, we should not expect (nor need) any further revelation beyond that written Word (of God). Since the Bible contains a complete volume of the Truth of God's Word, it is not necessary for Him to speak directly to us.

We also want to remember that the foremost way Satan would use to deceive us, would be through suggestions to our mind, so we want to measure our thoughts in the light of what God's Word says.

When a person would first come to God in their life, they would be unaware of Satan's deceitful tactics, and if they were not careful he would get them on an unscriptural course of action that would not be according to God's will. Satan is not new at this, because he has been in the business of deceiving people for thousands of years.

Satan was an archangel and supposed to be in charge of the music in Heaven (the late Pastor said), but he fell from that position. The Bible says that his extreme beauty caused him to be lifted-up with pride, and as a result he fell into sin and rebellion against God. (Ezek. 28:12-13), "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you:" (14) "You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created...till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned."

(Satan used his 'power of choice' to rebel against God, just as the devil provides temptation for us to choose to sin and to rebel against placing our obedient trust on God) (many times due to pride in our own efforts of self). (Ezek. 28:) (God continued with His description of Satan's fall and of the judgement that He placed on

Satan) (verses 16-17), "So I drove you in disgrace from the 'mount of God', and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings."

Satan is still on earth in the form of an 'evil, spiritual being', and he is in charge of all 'spiritual hosts of evil'. (We are told, Ephes.6:12), "For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with the despotisms (which means dictatorship), the empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world-- the 'spiritual hosts of evil' arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare."

From God's account of Satan's fall (because of pride in himself), we can see that 'pride' is a deadly sin which the devil tries to put in everyone else to also bring them down. He knows that pride will cause us to fall and eventually defeat us in our Christian walk (if pride is not removed from our heart). God described what the nature of a human heart is really like, and He promised to change our heart for us (if we allow Him to do that spiritual work) (Jere.17:9-10) "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings.

We must allow God to remove 'pride' and all other wrong attitudes from our heart, no matter what measures it takes for Him to do that for us, because it is an eternal life issue, and we don't know our own heart... (and even less in the early part of our Christian walk). Paul instructed Timothy that he should not appoint a person new in the Truth to be a leader of God's people (1 Tim. 3:6) "He ought not to be a new convert, for fear he should be blinded with pride and come under the same condemnation as the devil." (We must escape condemnation by our choice to allow God to remove pride and self from our heart).

Our knowledge of God and His Word will develop, however, as we place ourselves in His hands, and allow Him to teach us, and for Him to work on remolding our Christian character. God is always doing His best to develop us in His Truth and teach us, which enables us to understand what is His will for us to do in our life (and begin to recognize Satan's suggestions to our mind). As we will allow Him, God will perfect us in all that concerns us, and above all things He will prepare us for Eternal Life.

At first, we don't know anything about the schemes of Satan, but as we grow and develop in the Truth under God's teaching, we also learn to recognize Satan's thoughts and suggestions to our mind, and of how he works. Neither do we (at first), know much about God and His Word, so we are quite susceptible to the deceitful tricks of the devil (who always tries to put suggestions in our mind to cause us to move away from following the Word of God.)

It is important to understand that the devil's suggestions will seem exactly like our own thoughts (and that is what makes them so very dangerous). You would not think Satan was within forty miles of

you, when those thoughts come into your mind (the late Pastor said), and if the devil can get us to think they are our own thoughts, then we would surely accept them (as we have often been guilty of).

All the error, misunderstanding, and all the false religions (and there are a host of them), and every plan of 'fallen man' in the churches (and the world in general), where people are trusting in someone else (or themselves) for things in this life,...are all controlled by Satan. Paul said, that Satan is the "spirit that works in the sons of disobedience". (Ephes.2:).

That means everybody who is not in the will of God; everybody who is not under the power of the Holy Spirit, are one hundred percent under the power of Satan. Jesus said, there would be very few under the power of the Holy Spirit (in these closing days of the Gospel).

It is apparent that the vast majority of people are under the full control of Satan, and they are not even 'aware' of it. Satan not only puts every thought into their mind, but he inspires every action (by those thoughts),...and people think they are their own thoughts. The point to be made from this is, that we have to be extremely careful of any suggestion that comes to our mind. We need to be sure they are according to God's will and Word, before we act on them. That will keep us out of a lot of trouble, and hinder Satan from having power over us.

We are extremely fortunate to have the Word of God in our Bible, a volume of Truth that is so complete, and, which gives us all the instruction we need to live a victorious Christian life. It is also all that we need to follow, to have God prepare us for Eternal Life, because He inspired His Word to be written.

God's Word (through the apostle Paul) should greatly encourage us that through believing in Christ, we are free from the "spirit that works in the sons of disobedience". (Ephes. 2:1-2), "To you Gentiles also, who were dead through your offences and sins, which were once habitual (routine) to you while you walked in the ways of this world and obeyed the Prince of the powers of the air, the spirits that are now at work in the hearts of the sons of disobedience"... "to you God has given Life."

It is the result of Adam's sin that we were born in Satan's plan of life, but, by God's mercy and grace our inward nature can (and will be) completely changed (if we allow God to do that for us). [ It is God's will for us to give our life back to Him, and to be taught and developed by Him until we become completely Scriptural in everything that we do. This can be a long process in most cases with us, and it can be 'trying' and 'tedious', but it is absolutely necessary and well worthwhile (for it is an Eternal Life issue.)

There are two things, that Scripture proves we can always be sure of (when we surrender our 'life of self' and place ourselves in God's hands to teach and prepare us),... and that is,.. all of God's dealing with us (and everything that touches us while we stay in His will),... will always work together for our spiritual good. That may be hard

for us to see (at the time we are being tempted), but as we hold steadfast it will work together for good for those who love and obey Him (as Jesus said we must), and, because God cannot be unfaithful to His Word. (Rom. 8:28). "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." (All that God is looking for is a heart that is willing to turn their life over to Him, so that He can teach and develop them (and us), until we all become Scriptural in everything.)

We would have to admit that no real harm has ever come to us when we were in God's will, (nor with any of His dealing with us, and that should be very encouraging). It shows that we are always safe in following God's plan, and staying in His will, so that is where we want to stay to be protected from being deceived by Satan's suggestions to our mind.

There are examples in the Bible where Satan deceived people. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus read from the book of 'Isaiah the prophet'. (Luke 4:18-24), "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

"All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked. Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'" "I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown."

Then we see how Satan works with suggestions to a person's mind, as the people began saying things among themselves, like, "that's not true. He is not divine. He is only a man like us. He is the carpenter's son. We know his father and mother, and his brothers and sisters. He is just like them."

Those people did not realize for a moment that the change of their opinion, and the thoughts that instantly came into their minds (about Jesus not being divine), were directly from the devil. They thought it was their own sensible conclusions and based on real facts, but they were directly from the devil, himself.

The reason the devil was able to do that was because those people were full of rebellion and sin, without even knowing it. They had wicked, deceitful hearts and that is why the devil could deceive them.

Then, in the time of Elisha there was severe famine in the land, and he was inspired by God to say, (2 Kings 7:1-2) "Hear the word of the Lord. Thus, says the Lord: "About this time tomorrow (food will be sold at market-price) at the gate of Samaria." "An officer of the king said to the man of God, "Look, even if the LORD should open the

floodgates of the heavens, could this happen?" "You will see it with your own eyes," answered Elisha, "but you will not eat any of it!"

That officer was trampled to death in a stampede to get the food the next day (because he had been a spokesperson for Satan) and food was sold at market-price at the gates of Samaria,.. just as God had inspired Elisha to tell the people. That man had sin and rebellion in his heart, and that is why he spoke out Satan's suggestions and thoughts without even knowing they were from him. He thought they were his own sensible thoughts. He thought that what he said, was truer than what God inspired Elisha to say, because that officer had a sinful heart and was under the power of the devil, thus, he was inspired by the devil. Elisha, however, (being a man of God because he had allowed God to remove sin and self from his heart), spoke as he was inspired by God to speak.

Elisha's word came true (of course), because God's promises and His power do not take human circumstances into account. Anybody with a knowledge of God would know He was able to do what He said he would, (and that is the way it turned out).

That was a serious thing for that man to lose his life and go to the Lake of Fire forever, because he listened to the devil. That reveals to us the danger of being under the devil's control, by not allowing God to remove sin from our heart. It shows how necessary it is that we be on our guard against the suggestions that come into our mind, and the courses of action that are suggested by the devil. It shows why we should be sure to be well acquainted with God's Word, and to test every suggestion by the Scriptures that speak on that course of action (before we follow through with it).

The devil would like us to think that his suggestions are the Holy Spirit talking to us, but it is the devil appearing as an 'angel of light' (as the Bible warns us about). The devil is trying to get us away from following God's Word. If he can get us away from doing God's will, our faith can be shipwrecked, (at least until we repent and get back to God's Word and doing His will again).

While we are on God's pathway (and doing His will), the devil cannot touch us, but if we get outside of that path, the devil can hit us,.. (because we permitted it). It is very valuable for us to understand that when Satan makes trouble for us at any point, the 'will of God' is not being done there, and we are not acting according to Scripture at that point. God will show us the cause and enable us to remedy it. Satan cannot attack us in any place where we are on Scriptural grounds. He will not be able to lay his finger on us.

Anyone who has repented and who are sincere in seeking God, will have many battles, but God will always deliver them. The 91<sup>st</sup>. Psalm says, "Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler",.. (which means every trick of the devil). The devil can put desires in our heart and mind that will be all absorbing (if we permit him to). For example, 'for us to love something (or somebody) more than God' ,

