

Week 36

8/31/11

James: Hey! Thank you!

Well, I know everyone is glad to know Beth is going to be teaching and sharing. And thrilled that Ravi Zacharias and Jack Taylor, our guests this week, if you don't watch *LIFE Today* every day, I suggest you do.

I'm James Robison. Betty and I welcome you to *LIFE Today*. This is "Wednesdays with Beth" and you're going to be blessed.

She's going to be talking about the spirit of discernment. There is a tremendous need to be able to discern the spirits and the spirit of people, and that you can do that. God has given us that ability.

It seems to be lacking oftentimes in leadership roles -- lack of discernment. It is lacking oftentimes among professing Christians. Well, let's let Beth help us understand the importance of spiritual discernment. Here's Beth Moore.

Begin video clip:

Beth: I'm so excited about what we're going to share together over the coming weeks. Now this is going to be a two-part series and that means that for the next -- at least five Wednesdays, we'll be on the same kind of material. We're going to develop it as we go. But this is something I am really, really pumped about because it is a fresh word God's doing in my own life. Turn with me if you have your Bibles to First Corinthians chapter two. It says in verse six of First Corinthians chapter two:

6 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

7 No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. **8** None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. **9** However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"--.

That right there deserves a really good amen. No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has ever conceived what God has planned for those who love him. And it says something in verse ten -- I've heard that verse a number of times but I can remember the first time I ever locked in on what came immediately after it because it is of utmost importance to us.

10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God

How has he revealed it?

Audience: By his spirit.

11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. **12** We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

Would anybody just be willing to understand something that God has so willingly given us? What if we could receive a fresh understanding of what God was doing in our lives and what he had partitioned for us in this season of our lives? What would happen if we got some fresh understanding? Verse 13:

13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. **14** The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Because they are spiritually discerned. Everybody say, "spiritually discerned."

Audience: Spiritually discerned.

Beth: Say it one more time way down here.

Audience: Spiritually discerned.

Beth: Notice it doesn't say all people --

15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: **16** "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

And then one of the most revolutionary statements we will ever see in all of scripture: but we have the mind of Christ. We have the mind of Christ. That for every single one of us who has received Jesus Christ as our personal savior -- and this is something you can do today. You can do it in the next five minutes, it is not something that takes a year. This is something you can do this very day.

When we trust Christ Jesus as our personal savior, we receive the grace gift of the cross and the power of the resurrection, in that moment -- so for all of us to whom Christ Jesus is savior, in the moment that we believed and that we made that confession of faith, his Holy Spirit took up residency in us.

We did not necessarily feel a thing, we could have gone on just like we had been in the last 48 hours. We did not feel any different physically than we did. Maybe it would take days to really come to an understanding of what Christ had started to do in us in that moment but we are told -- it is a spiritual fact -- that in that moment the spirit of Christ takes up residency in us and we have something huge that has overtaken us. The Holy Spirit literally lives in our vessel.

Now, here's what I've come to tell you over the weeks that we have ahead. We only touch the tip of the iceberg of what the Holy Spirit would do in us and through us if we would let him. We don't just have the power to act.

What I want to discuss with you over the weeks to come is that we have the power to know things that human thinking cannot reason. We have the ability through the spirit of Christ and the activated mind of Christ in us to know what we could not possibly know in human terms.

So often, we don't do the thing because we don't know what the thing is. Am I speaking to anybody? To have the knowledge, to somehow be able to know what is impossible for the human rationale to wrap around, this is what we see as a promise in scripture. It tells us in that ninth verse. Blank.

That's the same word for which we get "revelation" in the last book of the Bible: Apokalupto in the Greek language and it means to have something that is hidden unveiled. Something that is somehow revealed in, very often, progressive revelation before our very eyes; something of the spirit to take off the cover, to disclose to us.

I want you to just see with me for a few minutes what we could have if we were willing to walk in cooperation with what God wants to do. If we would really just engage in this thing, what would the Holy Spirit be capable of doing in regular people

-- regular flesh and blood, folks like us living the life, going to work every day, doing the thing at home in all of our human relationships -- what would happen if the Holy Spirit truly overtook us? What would happen? What is he capable of doing?

Because what we're going to be studying over the weeks to come is this thing we call "spiritual discernment." Are we able to spiritually discern? If we were what would it look like? How do we know when God is trying to tell us something that is not black and white? Because I don't know about you but I live in a whole lot of gray. Anybody else?

There are a whole lot of black and white things in scriptures. But we get into life and a whole lot of it is that very dull, very undoing color of gray and we really don't know what to do because we don't know what's up. And maybe, we could -- maybe God would begin to work through his Holy Spirit in such a way within us, that the very mind of Christ would be activated in us and we would know what could not otherwise be known. That's what I'm presenting to you in this series.

I want you to turn with me to the book of Acts. You're going to back up a little bit. I think we're coming back there before long so you might leave something in First Corinthians 2. But go with me to Acts. I'm going to have you go ahead to 16 but while you're getting to 16, I'm going to note a couple of other scriptures with you. Because what we see, not only in the book of Acts, the Acts of the Apostles, we see the acts of Holy Spirit.

So we can look back there and see as Christ established that early church, what was the Holy Spirit doing among them in the area of spiritual discernment? Now you're sitting tight on Acts, chapter 16. I'm going to pick it up with you in just a moment. But let me tell you what we would have seen already. In Acts chapter 11, verse 12 Peter said something to this effect.

12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house.

The Holy Spirit had told Peter, "Do not hesitate to go forward with this group of people."

How did he know that? He didn't say that Christ spoke verbally and audibly from the heavens to him. He said, "The spirit told me to have no hesitation."

How did he know that? I don't think he heard the heavens split open and a voice fall from the skies. I believe he was spiritually discerning it.

Go without hesitation. How would we know that when it happened?

Another place, Acts 15:28 says this. It is the apostles writing to a new group of Gentile Christians. And they say these words:

28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:

How did they know it seemed good to the Holy Spirit? Because somehow they were walking with Christ in such a way that they could discern the pleasure of the spirit. Would anybody else like that but me?

Listen, if God's capable of doing it, I want it! I want it!

So if this is possible, if I could know in many instances, not every -- we don't have the kind of -- we don't possess all knowledge but we could know a whole lot more than we do.

Anybody besides me -- I'll even just ask for a hand if there is anybody that just wants to show one. Would anybody but me just stand to be smarter than they are?

[Laughter]

Anybody? Just could stand to know something that you don't! Anybody could stand a little supernatural wisdom of the activated mind of Christ in them.

I love it when it seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us. Isn't that a beautiful thing? Sometimes things seem good to me but I come to the end of the rope and realize that it did not feel good, obviously, to the Holy Spirit.

Now I'm picking up with you on Acts 16:6-7. I hope so much we're building a foundation here for our series. We're going to have a rocking good time in this series. But I'm going to ask you to get a little biblically technical with me for the next little while so that we can build this foundation and then we'll take off with it. But I want you to see in the scriptures what is possible. So Acts 16:6-7. Look at these words:

6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

I'm not positive about this but in a lot of the verses that -- if we were able to line them up against one another, a lot of times when it was an audible voice coming from Christ himself from the heavenlies or somehow through a vision to them or a dream of some kind it would say Christ.

The fact that we're being told it was the Holy Spirit of Christ instead of just Christ himself -- and we know it is his spirit -- is the intonation of this, that this is the discernment of the Holy Spirit coming from inside their hearts, that this is not right, we're not supposed to go here. Something is up here and we're not supposed to move forward into this place at this time.

What kind of Holy Spirit is it that honestly we could begin toward a certain area of employment, we could be on the verge of starting some area of ministry in this part of the city or this part of the state or this part of the world, how blessed would we be if the Holy Spirit was activated enough in us, we were walking yielded enough to the authority of Christ that honestly, when we came to a crossroad we would know whether to go to the right or to the left.

Could anybody stand that kind of knowledge besides me? I want some direction! I need some direction. I want to do the God thing. I don't the last time was that you just came to the reality that this thing is going fast. I mean just fast! I mean you just glance in the mirror and you go, "Whoa! Whoa!"

[Laughter]

"Okay, like whoa! Like when did that happen?" And I'm saying this to you young things, it does happen just that quickly!

[Laughter]

We were you yesterday! We were you! And now we're us and I don't want that to scare you but when you get to be my age, you're really going for quality of life and Jesus is your quality!

[Laughter]

And here's what I want to say to you, we don't have time to just be wandering around in the desert! We want to get on to God's will. We want to be doing the God thing. I don't want to be wasting time just walking in circles out in a wilderness. I want to get on with God.

Look at one another and say, "Get on with God!"

Audience: Get on with God!

Beth: If we're going to get on with him, we've got to know where we're going and the Holy Spirit is capable of telling us that.

Now, this is the coolest thing. I want you to hold on to this passage right here in Acts 16. But now I want you to go with me to First Corinthians 16 -- hold onto them because I want to contrast the two and see if this kind of works a number on your brain like it does on mine. I love comparing scripture with scripture like this.

This is Paul speaking to the church in Corinth.

7 I do not want to see you now and make only a passing visit; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. 8 But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.

Okay, wait just a second because something here looks like an oxymoron. Would anybody agree?

A great door has opened for me. So he knows he is supposed to be there. Paul knows that that door has been opened by the Holy Spirit for him. He said, "A great and effectual door has been opened unto me," one version says. But then he says, "But there are many who oppose me."

Now wouldn't we immediately -- when we're not walking in the spirit that Paul is talking about, wouldn't we immediately assume that if there is that much opposition that cannot be the will of God! Anybody?

Wouldn't you just assume, okay, that kind of opposition, isn't that what must have happened before that time in Acts, chapter 16, surely they came upon opposition.

They went, "You know what? We're not supposed to be here." This is a news flash for us in scripture. Opposition does not mean you are not heading exactly the place God wants you to be. It is not going to be because of a lack of opposition. Opposition can be something that arises because we are flat dead on to the will of God. Anybody know what I'm talking about? Can anybody step in that with me?

I mean it can be that you're getting opposition because you are doing exactly what God has called you to do. How would you know the difference? It will be spiritually discerned. Blank.

We can't just make assumptions based on the quality of the life around us and the acceptance of our peers that this must be where we're supposed to operate. It could be right there that God goes, you know this isn't my will for you. We want to move on with the anointing of God.

We never want to get into a place where we think, this is just where I'm going to stay for the rest of my life.

Listen, when God's anointing moves on, we want to go with it. I've got to know. We don't get to see a cloudy pillar anymore. There is no fire by night anymore.

Now the Holy Spirit that went in front of them in all those manifestations has overtaken us. We are now the manifestation of the work of God in this time element. We're it! Girlfriend, you are the cloudy pillar!

[Laughter]

Guyfriend, you are the fire by night!

I have to remember my guyfriends because there are some of them right here in this room and I know there are some on the other side of that screen.

We've got to know, we're it! We're what he wants to fire up. We're what he wants to lead. We are the temples of the Holy Spirit.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Oh, boy! And we really are. He wants to fire us up and we really are his temple, the power of God, the spirit of God living in us, giving us discernment.

Betty, one of the things I see related to our viewers, they discern need, they discern opportunity, and they discern what obviously makes a difference and to me, that's exciting -- that's the kind of viewers we have.

Betty: Absolutely! And we're so thankful for you as someone that gives and helps to meet the needs that we have, whatever it may be. They're ready and they're able and they're eager to.

James: I think when you see what you're about to see -- and by the way, I want to just tell you this, when you first see an image here in a moment, your first impulse is to turn away. I'm pleading with you not to. It is a very brief moment, it is very real but I promise you, you're going to move from a sensation of oh, no and you're the answer, you're the solution -- love through you and only through you because we are the release of the love that transforms and changes situations totally. You're going to see the joy that love brings and you don't want to miss this. Watch closely.

On the mission field:

James: And I'm asking you to give as many pairs of shoes as you can to put on these beautiful, beautiful feet of these beautiful children. Thank you! Thank you for your help!

In the studio:

James: Doesn't that make you want to clap? Don't you like that?

[Applause]

Yes! Yes! I want to put them on some little feet like this. We've got shoes of our children when they were little and they had leather shoes. These are of synthetic material but they are adjustable. You can even get them where a child can wear them, maybe that's a little too big and they can tighten the Velcro strap. You know we pay quite a bit of money for shoes like this all over the world. And they're very comfortable. We can get them for \$3.60 a pair.

We're asking you to help us put shoes of all sizes on 200,000 children. We like to do this ahead of time when we can get them to the missionaries so they can give them as Christmas gifts. Would you help us?

Betty, I can't imagine anyone not wanting to make a little child dance for joy like that.

Betty: Those were truly feet that were full of joy; weren't they? ...On that little child. I think about being a mom -- I can never get away from that -- of just thinking as a mom how precious when our children were small and I would pick their little feet up and I'd kiss them and love on the little pink bottoms of their feet.

James, it was so adorable. But then I look at the feet that we saw there that were so diseased and cut up and just almost destroyed because they didn't have any shoes for their feet to protect them from all the cuts and the bruises. But we can do something about that. Now that's what puts joy in my heart, knowing that we can, so to speak, James, put shoes -- dancing shoes on those kids. She was so adorable!

James: And you know we're not just giving them something comfortable but the hookworms and the bacteria that comes in through their feet can kill them. And not only make them look like those you first saw but would turn your stomach and your heart. I'm asking you to help us correct that. Would you dial the number?

I mean there are people who call every day to say, "I need prayer, I want to trust Christ. Would you help me?" Yes, because God cares, we care, and the people here who pray care.

But we're asking you to call because you care and you're willing to share. Would you dial the number? Would you take your bankcard? \$36, ten children shoes the rest of their life; \$72, 20 children; \$144, 40 children. We're not only going to give shoes but we're going to do cleft palate surgery. We call it "Shoes and Smiles." And we say it is for Christmas because of Jesus in his love. We want to get it now so we can have the shoes and the opportunity for the missionaries.

Would you make the gift God put on your heart right now? Please, dial that number. You can go to LifeToday.org and make your gift. But I'm asking that every one of you - you, I'm asking you to help. Make the largest gift you can, the best gift you can today. Thank you for making that call! Thank you for your help.

Begin clip:

Announcer: Poverty is a killer and because of it children needlessly suffer, not only from a lack of food and clean water but also from a lack of things we take for granted such as a healthy smile or a simple pair of shoes. For most of these children they've never owned a new pair of shoes and while that may seem minor in the light of all their needs, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections that could lead to crippling consequences, disease, and even death.

LIFE Outreach International has developed a durable all-terrain shoe especially made for the harshest conditions in children of all ages. By responding today you can help life immediately secure and begin shipping Christmas shoes to 200,000 children around the world just in time for the holidays!

Your gift of \$36 will help provide 10 pairs of shoes. A gift of \$72 will provide 20 pairs. And a gift of \$144 will help provide 40 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

In appreciation of your gift be sure to request the bestselling inspirational devotional by Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide two children with corrective cleft palate surgeries and you may request the heart of father bronze sculpture.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today!

End of clip

In the studio:

James: I want to tell you this, when we say thank you and we put something in your hand, now you know why we put these little shoes on those beautiful little feet and you see the joy that it brings, that's obvious.

But, Betty -- and you just bought a whole case to give to our friends, our grandchildren, this is a devotional book called *Jesus Calling* by Sarah Young.

When I tell you that this lady sat obviously in the presence of Jesus and had running conversation, you will know what I just said is an understatement because you're going to be caught up in the presence of God. I promise you! Absolutely transforming and it takes about 90 seconds, maybe two minutes every day to just read *Jesus Calling* -- awesome! -- by Sarah Young.

We'll be sending this to you thanking you -- many of you I pray will help us put some smiles on some children's faces. Make a real special gift and let's give these shoes to these children. Thank you so much for doing it. Thank all of you!

>> We're not real 'til he is in us. There is no reality -- a lack of Jesus.

Announcer: The key to triumphant living -- tomorrow!