

An Eye for the Spirit

by Walter Beuttler

Walter Beuttler emphasizes the importance of being sensitive to the Holy Spirit to fully experience God's guidance and blessings in our lives.

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches about the importance of not neglecting the gifts of the Spirit, sharing personal experiences where the Spirit's work was hindered by lack of interest, suppression, and misunderstanding. He emphasizes the need to have an eye for the Spirit, to avoid hindrances like secret sins or jealousy, and to be sensitive to the Spirit's leading to experience the fullness of God's work in our lives.

Transcript

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you." John 14:16-17

As I told you this morning from a German translation, "The world cannot receive the Spirit because the world has no eye for the Spirit; no love for the Spirit; no interest." We lose very many things if we do not have an interest in the Spirit of God or an eye for the Spirit.

I remember the occasion in our school where we had a chapel service. Now the system we had was that the student group that led the service had a faculty advisor. The auditorium was divided into two sections. It was our custom that when the service was finished, the faculty advisor in charge would leave the platform first, and the students on the platform having a part in the service followed him. Then he would lead the group down the center aisle, and the rest of the students would then follow behind, and leave the chapel to the classroom.

One morning I happened to be faculty chairman. The students carried on with the service, and just as the speaker began to get nearer the end of his message, I could distinctly perceive the Lord standing in front of the platform, just a few moments before closing. Obviously, there was a reason why the Lord was there. I did not see Him, not on that occasion; I have seen Him, but not on this occasion, but I could clearly perceive the presence of the Lord.

This boy finished his message, and then he said, "Let's stand and be dismissed." Well, I try to have an eye for the Spirit, and I knew in my spirit, the service was not to be dismissed. Yet he prayed and dismissed the chapel and said, "Now, shall we go to our classes?"

It was up to me to take the lead in getting off the platform, and I didn't take the lead. I just stood there. I had my hand raised, my eyes closed. I said to the Lord in my heart, "Lord, if everyone walks out on You, I want You to know that I will not walk out. I will stay behind with You."

I stood there, and everybody expected me to start leaving the chapel and I wouldn't do it. I could hear our some 200 students turn around facing the center isle getting ready to follow behind, and I kept standing, eyes closed. I stood and stood, kept my mind, my eyes so to speak, on the Spirit to see what He would have me do.

I felt I should simply keep standing. I knew that 400 eyes were watching me wondering why Beuttler is not making a move. This is an uncomfortable feeling, but one of the things you have to bear. I kept standing, I do not know how long, but it was not very long, though to me, it seemed an eternity.

Later on, the students said to me, "Brother Beuttler, when we saw you stand like that, we knew something was up, but didn't know what." Well, I kept standing, and all of a sudden, the power of God struck that student body and poured out His Spirit. We were in that chapel for three solid hours until the noon hour. God gave us a mighty move of the Spirit of God. We almost missed it. It was a case of having an eye for the Spirit.

We miss many things along this line. You'll have to pardon me when I go back to school, because I spent 32 years there and you draw from your experiences, of course. There had been many an occasion when having an eye for the Spirit saved the class, or saved a chapel service.

One year at school, before class, I was going to stop in somebody's house and borrow a tool. As I walked up the hill, I suddenly had a little presence in here (stomach area), a little signal. I knew what the signal meant: do not do it.

So I went right back to school, and during that first hour class, we had a real outpouring of the Spirit. I'm confident we would have missed it if I had not been sensitive to the check of the Spirit of God. These things are so far reaching; it would be difficult for me to take you in all sorts of avenues where this thing operates.

One year I was going to Africa; then over to Australia; to Perth; etc. I had a schedule. I had meetings lined up in the Congo. I was very glad to go to the Congo, as I had never been there. The Congo had always fascinated me, and here I had the opportunity to go way back into the interior for a seminar with the national pastors.

Well, the day approached. Everything was set: ticket, everything fixed. It was a very short time before leaving. I try to be sensitive to the Spirit - I think I am. I discovered a song of the Spirit in here (stomach area). Now as I tell you these things, you watch because you will learn. Or putting it differently: when you see how the Spirit of God works in other people, very often that's the way He works in you. Many times you didn't recognize Him and people say, "Now I know what that was." This is my style, or method.

I discovered a chorus in my spirit. I do not know whether you have it here in Australia. (Is this Australia? No, not yet; it's on my schedule later.) I noticed the song in here, "Not what I wish to be, nor where I wish

to go, for who am I that I should choose my way." Do you have that song here? Now I'm not a singer, you recognize that right away, but the song is in here. That went over and over. Finally, it dawned on me and I said to myself, "Hey Beuttler, the Spirit is speaking to you."

Let me tell you something here. Very, very often the Spirit of God has something to say through a chorus. You watch that. It's a wonderful life in the Spirit, but we have to be sensitive to it. And there was that chorus, over and over. "Beuttler, the Lord's talking to you."

I thought, "What could that be with that chorus going over and over?" so I said, "Lord, I'm not going where I want to go. You asked me to go and teach all nations, and Africa and Australia are all part of it. What's wrong? Is there anything wrong with the itinerary?"

No sooner had I said that, there stood in my conscientiousness one word, "The Congo."

I said, "Lord, what's wrong with the Congo. Why shouldn't I go there?" I recognized I wasn't supposed to go to the Congo. I said, "Lord, I have a nice invitation, and a good week of ministry with the national pastors." But the song kept singing, and I realized God did not want me to go to the Congo. I had an eye for the Spirit, an interest, an openness, a responsiveness that saved me. So I wrote and told them I was not coming. They wrote back and said, "We're very, very sorry, very disappointed."

I couldn't help that. But now I had an open week, so I left it open. It was too late to fill it up. I thought, "Somewhere on route, I'll stop and have a vacation." You need that too sometime, you know. So I stopped in Kano, Nigeria. I had a hotel there, and it was furiously hot. It's just south of the Sahara, and the wind came down. It was dreadfully hot, so I thought, "I'll go out to the airport and go upstairs. Maybe I'll catch a little breeze."

I was up there sipping a soda, and as I did, I noticed a plane coming in: a DC 6, women and children only. It's the only passengers that were on; not one man. I thought, "That's strange." Five minutes later, another DC 6 plane came in: women and children only. Five minutes later, another DC 6 came in: woman and children only. I still remember a little girl dragging her dolly by one arm. They all had bundles. I said to myself, "Something is wrong somewhere."

So I went down to the information desk and said, "Lady, could you tell me something. What's the idea of three DC 6's coming in with woman and children only? Where are the men?" She said, "Haven't you heard?" I said, "No, heard what?" She said, "There is a revolution in the Congo." I said, "Oh! Where is the revolution?" She said, "Way beyond Stanleyville in the interior." And she mentioned the very city where we were supposed to have the seminar.

Now God saved me from being caught in that revolution. And you doubtless know while many got out, many never did. They were thrown into the river; and to the crocodiles: missionaries, whites, Frenchmen and what have you. The Lord had saved me from being caught in the beginning of that revolution that was so terrible. It necessitated an eye for the Spirit, a song in here (stomach area), and I recognized the Spirit of God was talking.

Friends, if we will develop a sensitivity to the Spirit, an eye for the Spirit, there is no telling what God can do for us as a result.

Just one more instance that comes to my mind: Mrs. Beuttler and I were in Singapore a couple of years ago. She wanted to do a little shopping in a Chinese department store at what they call Rattles Place.

Some of you have been there, of course. So she went shopping, and I followed behind her. I remember saying, "You just go around the store, and I'll walk behind you." I had nothing to do, but to be with her.

As we were walking along, I discovered in here (stomach area), a little presence, a presence of the Spirit of God, and I knew what it meant. You see, the Lord will teach us these things. They cannot effectively be taught to others, but I knew what it meant. It meant to me that the Lord wanted me to be alone. So I said to Wife, "If you'll go shopping alone, I'll go over in that chair and we'll meet there," and I went over there.

As soon as I sat down, there was a strong inner presence, a combination of worship and intercession. In the midst of it, the Lord gave me a message for the Bible school the next morning.

That message, so to speak, brought the house down, brought the roof down. Did we have the move of the Spirit! The missionary's wife went all to pieces. It was a message fresh from the heart of God, but it took an eye for the Spirit: that little discerning, that little signal within, and understanding it's meaning - "I want you alone."

"The world cannot receive the Spirit because it sees Him not, has no eye for Him, no interest, neither knows Him, but you know Him, for He dwells with you and shall be in you."

This morning I mentioned this personal knowledge of the Spirit of God. I had also mentioned to you that the Holy Spirit is a person, and now we are going to look into that for a little while.

In I Corinthians 2:9-11 we have a marvelous passage giving insight into this area:

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God." I Corinthians 2:9-10

Now what I am doing with verse 9 is to point out to you a little secret, and if you can catch it, you will be on the way for marvelous things from the Spirit of God. Notice what is said, "As it is written, eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him."

Notice something, there are things which God has for us in the life of the Spirit which do not come to us, which we do not acquire, as it is written here, by means of the eye. There are things, which God has for us, which you will not discover through the eye, that is to say, reading will not do it. It has to come by revelation.

"Neither has ear heard" - you never hear some of the things which God has prepared for those that love Him. "Neither has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him" - in other words, we would never conceive in our hearts what God has in store for us.

In 1951, the Lord dealt with me about traveling for Him. In fact, the Lord spoke to me in a voice that I heard. Now I can tell you what happened. It shows you the marvelous ways of the Spirit.

In the School, I had charge of a tremendous move of the Holy Spirit. On Friday night, I made a mistake, and by my mistake, I killed the meeting. I killed it, a tremendous move of God. I killed it dead. I did not mean to, but made a mistake. I knew the meeting was dead and could not be saved, so I dismissed the students.

During the night, at 2:30 a.m., I had a marvelous experience. I was awakened by a man singing in my room, in our bedroom. Wife slept over there by the wall. I was over here. She never knew a thing about it. I was awakened by a man singing in the room. As I woke up startled, I looked and there stood the Lord by the window (inside though), full size, dressed in white down to the foot, down to the floor, a white garment, looking my way; and He kept singing. He sang two stanzas of a song I never heard before nor since. The first stanza had to do with sin and forgiveness. The second stanza had to do with grace and glory.

When He finished the second stanza, He suddenly was gone. That was just as real when I looked at Him as when I look at you people. I was thrilled, and was so conscience of His presence. It was 2:30 in the morning. I got up and sat before the Lord for several hours. Then I noticed something was wrong. I could give you details, but do not want to take the time. So I said, "Lord, is there anything wrong?"

At once, in front of me stood words that said, "The error of Uzzah." You remember Uzzah in the Old Testament, the man who touched the ark by mistake and was killed. The Lord let me know, "You touched the ark and death in the meeting was the result." That is to say, the meeting died. There was no moving of the Spirit at all.

I recognized at once what was wrong: I had killed the meeting by putting my hand on the manifestation of the Spirit. I didn't mean to. Some of the fellows went into excesses. They were getting into the flesh, so I got into the flesh trying to correct the flesh. But the flesh cannot correct the flesh. Flesh is flesh. That's what killed the meeting.

So I said, "Lord, I am awfully sorry. I did not mean to do it. Is there anything I can do?" And the Lord spoke to my heart very clearly, "On Sunday morning I want you to stand up before the entire student body and make a full confession of what you did on Friday night, and ask the students for their forgiveness."

I squirmed like a worm and said, "Lord, that's hard. I'm a teacher, and I'm the senior teacher at that." Apparently, that made it all the more necessary. I said, "Lord, normally it isn't the faculty that does the confession, it is the students." Maybe that is what's wrong. But this time it was the faculty, and I squirmed and said, "Lord, You will get me to come around, but cannot You let me out?"

There was no out. Sunday morning came. We were passing out communion. My heart started to pound so awfully, it seemed it was going to jump out of my suit, and out of me. I knew that was the signal.

Have you ever sat in an audience, and the Spirit came on you to give a message in prophecy or tongues or interpretation, and your heart pounds to beat the band? Very often that is the signal that this is it. It is some reaction of the Spirit, but for me, it was the signal. I stood up and said, "Students, I have a confession to make." Whew! You could have heard a pin drop.

I could hear them think, "Brother Beuttler?" The silence was so loud it hurt my ears, if you know what I mean. But I told them what happened; told them what I did; and asked for their forgiveness. It was not easy, but I did it. When I did that, one of the young men, a student, jumped to his feet and gave a powerful utterance in prophecy.

I'll give you part of it. Some of it I withhold. I am afraid to share that. I do not share everything. It was obviously addressed to me, and started out by saying, "Because you have done this thing, and have humbled yourself in the sight of this congregation; therefore the Lord, your God, will raise you up and make you a city set on a hill; and cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth..." It went on with

some more, but I do not want to share that.

When I heard that, I broke and wept. I wept, and knelt right down on the floor between the seats and wept like a baby. I went to pieces, and as I did, the Lord spoke right in here (stomach area), in words that I heard. The Spirit spoke as clear as a bell, sharp as a razor, "Go and teach all nations." If I had not made that confession, He would never have said this.

It may well be as we go through the day, and you see what is in store for us; it may well be that the Spirit of God will create a hunger, a thirst, a desire in your heart for some of these things that I expect to share with you. And in doing so, in your response, it may well be, that He will put His finger on something to straighten out first of all. You understand what I mean? The Spirit works that way. So the Lord spoke precisely as I told you.

"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him."

I had no idea; it would have never occurred to my mind that when the Lord said, "Go and teach all nations," that that would reap such immense proportions. I have traveled for 22 years, crisscrossed the world over and over again. My feet have stood in more than 100 countries. In some of them so often, I could not even tell you how often. When I think of all the mileage, of all the ministry for over 22 years, over a half a million miles of air travel. That would have never dawned on my mind.

As we respond to the Lord, we have no inkling what God will do, what He has in store for you and for me.

"But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God." I Corinthians 2:10-11

Basically, what we see here is that the Spirit of God knows. Obviously, the Spirit of God has an intellect. May I suggest to you that many Christians do not know that the Spirit of God knows. They say they know, "Oh yes, the Spirit of God knows," but they do not know. You see the Spirit of God knows the need. He knows what needs are present in a given congregation at a given time.

Have you ever heard people say, "That preacher? He was talking about me. Why doesn't he have the courage and talk to me directly if he has something to say?" I have been accused countless times of having been informed. "Who told Beuttler about me? Oh I know: He's staying in Sister 'So and So's house, and she told him all about the church. No wonder he knows so much about us."

The fact is, I do not like to stay in anybody's house at any time. When I'm in meetings, I do not accept social visits. I like to stay where I belong. That way, I hear nothing; I learn nothing. Nobody can fill my ear except the Lord. Then when you touch things that are present, people can't say, "Well, he has been informed." The Spirit of God knows.

I remember speaking in the States. I had never been to this church before; I did not know the pastor; I came right from the train to the platform. The service had already begun. After the service a lady walked up. How shall I describe her? Well, she had big fists, and she had her fists on her hips, and came right up the center isle swinging her torso belligerently. She says, "Preacher, I have a question."

I could tell her belligerence. I said, "Well, what's the problem?"

She said, "You're the problem. Listen preacher, you were talking about me for a whole hour and a quarter." I said, "I was not talking about you, not to my knowledge." She said, "Are preachers telling lies too? Listen young feller, you weren't only talking about me for a whole hour and a quarter, but when you said such and such a thing, you were even pointing your finger at me. And you say that nobody told you. Somebody told you all about me."

I did not know one thing. To this day, I do not know what she had in mind. The Holy Ghost knows. Instead of throwing bricks or stones at the preachers who talk right to our need, to our condition, we ought to thank God that the Spirit of God knows the place we're in; and knows how to direct words toward us. The Spirit of God knows.

He knows everything about every one of us. And so we ought to treat this Spirit of God with due respect, not only have an eye for Him, but respect the Spirit of God as a person. At this point, I want to point out to you that the Spirit of God has emotions; the Spirit of God feels. We need to respect and reverence the Spirit of God. He has feeling; He's sensitive. I am taking you for a moment to Isaiah 63:7-10. We are now getting into some specific aspects of the Spirit of God.

"I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isaiah 63:7-10

Will you just notice this in passing: "In all their affliction, he was afflicted." This is God now, the Father in His loving kindness. Those of us who are afflicted have the comfort of the fact that the Lord is afflicted with our affliction.

When a child is sick, parents that love the child are afflicted in their hearts by the affliction of their child. They say, "Oh honey, I feel so badly. I feel so sorry for you. It hurts me to see that you are sick." Well, God is afflicted when we are afflicted. That's only in passing. "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit."

The Spirit of God is a person, and because He is a person, He has characteristics of personality; one of them is that He has sensibility or emotion, feeling. The Holy Spirit feels. That is why it is written:

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption." When I was a young preacher, I was quite legalistic. That's the German, you know. It took God a long time to get the German out of the German. Now I have some characteristics, but I am speaking about this legalism.

One night, I gave the assembly that I pastured a terrible whipping. Ooh! Did I let them have it! I laid down the law and you better believe it. After I got done, they were all still. Nobody, as we say in German, "nouxed." They were all still, and I felt so hurt in my spirit. I congratulated myself by saying, "You know Beuttler, you're all right. You can whip God's people and feel bad about it. That's a good sign." So, I even complimented myself on top of it all.

I was talking to a preacher's wife, who was no fool. I told her the whole thing. She said, "Brother Beuttler, are you sure what you felt was not the grieving of the Spirit?"

When she said that, I knew she was right. The Spirit felt hurt because I hurt His people. We can vex the Holy Spirit.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking with all malice be put away from among you."

Now I know there is no evil speaking in Auckland, and no malice and no bitterness; they are all saints, but in New York, San Francisco and Chicago, you have those conditions in the Assemblies of God, believe it or not. Those things hurt the Spirit of God. Here the prophet speaks about the Spirit's vexation. We can vex the Spirit, that is to say, irritate Him, trouble Him, disturb Him, agitate Him, anger Him. He can be angry. God can be angry and still be holy. Incidentally, we can vex the Spirit of God by some things. Now if we really know the Spirit, surely we do not want to vex the Spirit.

Here I want to take a little while and give you tonight four things that vex the Spirit of God. Remember He's a person. He's omnipresent; He's among us. We can vex Him, trouble Him, disturb Him, irritate Him, agitate Him. Oh yes! Look how the Spirit of God was agitated in the case of Ananias and Sapphira.

I am taking you to I Thessalonians 5:19. You probably know the scripture. "Quench not the Spirit." We can vex the Spirit, trouble Him, disturb Him, anger Him in a holy sense by quenching Him. He can be quenched; He can be suppressed. This has largely to do with the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit. We are told here to "Quench not the Spirit." We can suppress the Spirit when He wants to use us.

We had a teacher in the school, a good teacher, but she did not like what she called, "the interruptions of the Spirit." She would not permit any manifestations of the Spirit such as prophesying, tongues, interpretations and other things in her classes. She simply would not tolerate it, and she would suppress any attempt of the Spirit of God to use a student. That was very unfortunate because she was a top quality teacher, but this was an area for which she did not have any particular use, "Quench not the Spirit."

I am going to read to you from my notes where I have the reading of six different translations. They're all quite synonymous, but still there is a shade of difference, and it helps you to grasp better the idea of quenching the Spirit.

Before I forget it - there is a difference between the Holy Spirit and the human spirit. Some human spirits do need suppression. I'm not speaking about the human spirit, but about the genuine manifestation of the Spirit, as Paul does. Now we have here in different translations:

- 1) "Do not extinguish the Spirit's fire" (Berkeley). In other words, if the Spirit of God moves, do not extinguish it.
- 2) "Do not put out the fire of the Spirit of God" (New World Translation).
- 3) "Never quench the fire of the Spirit" (Moffat).

I have seen the Spirit of God quenched on many, many occasions over the years, and that, deliberately, because other things take priority. Remember now, it does not speak about the human spirit when people carry on in their own spirit. That's another subject. But as far as the Spirit is concerned: never quench the fire of the Spirit.

4) "Stop stifling the Spirit" (Williams). We can stifle it in public; we can do it individually. I had a pianist once while I was a pastor. I was speaking, and in speaking, felt that someone had an utterance from the Spirit. So I stopped, looked over the congregation, waited for something, but nothing came. I happened to look over to the pianist and there she was: (demonstrated how she held an utterance in by stuffing a handkerchief in her mouth), and I knew that was it. She was stifling, suppressing the Spirit of God.

So I went over to her and said, "Look here, take your handkerchief out and let the Spirit have His way," and she gave a beautiful utterance in tongues. We can stifle the Spirit.

We had another case in school. There was a girl, and she was a little problem in this area. A good kid, but ignorant. She would scream. She went: Ooooooooooooooh! Louder than that! Oh, it chilled your ears, went down your spine. She screamed. Well, she sat over there, and I did not want to be harsh with her. You can take something and hit people over the head, but then to get them started again is something else. I let it go and waited until she got done. She held the class up 5 minutes or so with her screaming. Well, finally she ran out of steam and that took care of it.

A few classes later, she went screaming. Oh did she scream! I could tell the students wondered why I didn't do anything. Well, the girl was new. I was sure she was sincere. She needed help, so I let it go again. When she did it a third time, I thought, "Now this can't go on." So I talked to her, "Would you mind coming to my office sometime? I'd like to have a little chat with you." She said, "Oh yes Brother Beuttler. When would you like to see me?" So we made a date.

She came in and sat in the corner. I pulled up a chair. I like to look people in the eye, then you can look right down on the inside. I knew I had to treat her carefully because she was sensitive, a certain nationality, and I knew she would be very sensitive to any criticism. So I said, "My, the Lord has been blessing you of late, hasn't He?" She answered, "Oh hallelujah! Brother, yes, so wonderful!"

I thought she was ready to go off again. I let her talk a little bit and then I said, "Do you know that the Lord wants to bless you even more?" "Oh, He wants to bless me more! If He wants to bless me more, I don't see how I can stand it." I said, "Suppose I help you stand it. I want to tell you a story."

Once upon a time, I was a boy. (Wife said the other day, "You know, there's still a boy in you." I like to have a little fun sometime. And I said to her, "When there's no longer a little boy in me, then it's time for you to worry.") Anyway, when I was a little boy in Germany, I liked mechanics. My Father bought me a little steam engine with a water pump and some other machinery for Christmas. You put water in it, put fire under it and the engine would drive the machinery from the hot water. It had a whistle, and you know how boys are: they love noise.

When you see somebody with a car with a muffler that makes a lot of noise, you know there's still a boy driving that car even though the boy is 60 years old. They like noise - the adolescence in them, you understand that. I was a boy and liked the noise. I liked the whistle the best. I turned it up this loud: Whee ee ee ee ee ee! until it used up all the steam, and the machinery would stop working. There was no more steam left. It blew it all off. One day my Father said to me, "Son, if you would leave that whistle alone, you'd have enough power to drive the machinery."

I want to tell you something, "You've been blowing the whistle, and you lost all the power with the whistle." (Whee ee ee ee ee! Louder than that.) At first she was a little... didn't respond quite right, but came around. I said, "Look here, if you would leave your whistle alone and not make all that noise, and lose all

the power of the Spirit, the Lord would use you. The next time the Spirit of God comes on you, try not to let it go with Whee ee ee ee. Nobody gets anything out of that. You're wasting our time, and it's hard on our nerves. Just hold it in, and ask the Lord to help you know what to do with it."

She said, "Well Brother Beuttler, thank you, I'll try, but I don't know how I can keep still." I said, "You try." We had a few classes, and I noticed something to my side and looked her way. There she was hanging onto the whistle (stuffing a handkerchief in her mouth). All of a sudden, she burst out and gave her first message in tongues. There was no whistle after that. She was cured. A little later, the Lord also used her in interpretation.

Now she was quenching the Spirit. First, she was disbursing the Spirit; later she was quenching it, but trying to learn. The Lord used her in interpretations. She graduated, and I received a letter from California, which said,

"Brother Beuttler, I want to thank you for the story of the whistle. The Lord isn't only using me in messages in tongues, interpretations, but also in prophecy, and it has enriched my ministry."

Now she had to learn. Many people quench the Spirit out of ignorance. Nevertheless, "Quench not the Spirit" is still one of the rules of the Word of God. By suppressing the Spirit willfully, we are vexing the Spirit of God; we are hurting the Spirit; we trouble Him.

As we read here, we are not to stifle the Spirit.

"Do not stifle the utterance of the Spirit." (Knox).

"Do not dampen the Spirit of God" (Muhlheimer).

The Spirit of God is a person, and we should avoid suppressing, quenching, depriving the Spirit of God of His free manifestation and movement. Now the human spirit, that is something else, as I already said. Perhaps I will stay with this context. In verse 20 it says: "Despise not prophesying."

To "despise" simply means to "treat with contempt." Prophesying is speaking in the Spirit of God in the language understood by the hearers. I noticed we had two prophetic utterances this morning. It is speaking in the Spirit of God in the language of the speaker and the hearer without the use of speaking in tongues and interpretation.

In fact, the two are equal. Tongues and interpretation has the same effect as prophecy, but there is a difference. I might go into that some other time. In the meantime, "do not treat prophesying with contempt." I was in a church in the States where all week long we had no manifestation of the Spirit of any kind. At the end of the week, I said to the pastor, "Brother, don't you have the gifts of the Spirit in operation in this church?" He said to me, "Oh, we don't bother with that stuff." And that's a Pentecostal man. "We don't bother with that stuff."

But the Book says, "Covet earnestly the best gifts, especially that you may prophesy." It says, "Covet to prophesy." Paul said, "You may all prophesy one by one." This word "covet" in the Greek is a very strong word. It means "to be in hot pursuit," and prophesying is one of the gifts which is open to all Spirit-baptized believers.

"Despise not prophesying." What Paul had in mind was the spurious. In his day, there were also false prophets and false prophesying as we have in our day. I have heard them. We had a fellow in school. He gave what was meant to be, or purported to be a prophecy. "Behold, thus saith the Lord..." and then he gave a terrific rebuke to somebody. After chapel was out, he happened to walk past me.

He said to me, "Brother Beuttler, what did you think of my prophecy?" I wanted to keep him guessing, so I simply said, "Nothing." That didn't really answer him. He said, "What do you mean by 'nothing?'" I said, "I mean nothing, nothing." Then he said, "You mean, you didn't accept my prophecy as authentic?" I said, "Of course not."

He rebutted, "I want to tell you, that was the Lord. I spoke in the Name of the Lord. Oh well, never mind now. I had it in for a fellow, and I wanted to give him a good piece of my mind in the Name of the Lord, so I put it in the form of a prophecy."

Well, you get those things. They had them in Paul's day, but that does not mean that we should despise prophesying. We should not reject the good because of the false.

I do not know if you, in New Zealand, have counterfeiters of New Zealand dollars. I suppose you do. I guess they're everywhere. We have them in the States. Time and again you read in the paper, "Million dollars worth of counterfeit \$20 bills are in circulation."

I have yet to hear a person say, "I don't believe in any \$20 bills. I don't want any." They take them all right. You don't throw away the good because of the bad. So we are not to vex the Spirit by holding prophesying in contempt when the Word indeed says, "Covet to prophesy."

We had a student in our school, a nice chap. He was engaged to a nice girl. He graduated a year ahead of her, and took a pastorate. She wanted to finish school. I was up to give him some meetings, and he wanted some counseling. He said:

"Brother Beuttler, I don't know what to do. I have prophetesses in my congregation, and I don't know what to do with them. They get up and prophesy something like this: 'Behold, thus saith the Lord, you shall not marry that girl in school. The Lord has provided for thee a wife from your own congregation; therefore obey the voice of the Lord, or the Lord will cause thy ministry to disappear.'"

The prophetess was a mother with a girl she would like to have married to the pastor. There were several of them. There were a number of girls there, and he was a nice chap. Any girl would fall for him, and the mother's did.

Another had a revelation, "Brother, I must tell you of a revelation I had from the Lord. I saw terribly black clouds, and the black clouds settled over you. And I said, 'Lord what means this?' And the Lord showed me that this means that the projected marriage with that girl is like a cloud that's going to come over your life, and the only way for you to get out of this cloud of judgment is to break the engagement and look around in your own congregation for a girl. Behold, thus saith the Lord."

She had a daughter that she would have liked to get married to the pastor. He got married anyhow. The girl from the bible school became his wife. They lasted about one or two years. Those prophetess's kept up this prophesying pronouncing brimstone and fire on this union, all because they had daughters they would have liked the pastor to marry. Those things could easily get you prejudiced and say, "Oh, that prophesying, we're fed up with it."

Well, I'm fed up with some, but on the other hand, I have heard choice prophetic utterances that were the pure gold. Despise not prophesying just because some people go way off into the flesh and come along with all kinds of, shall we call it, nonsense.

I was teaching in a camp meeting also in the States. One day, I was told, "Brother Beuttler, did you know that we have a prophetess here?" I am always interested in prophetesses. I like to meet them. The camp did not have a dishwasher, and one day they announced, "Is there anyone here who would be willing to wash dishes today? We do not have a dishwasher."

Nobody's hand went up, so I put my hand up and volunteered to wash dishes. I was washing dishes that afternoon, and somebody said, "Brother Beuttler, the prophetess is coming," in a whisper. "Good," I whispered back. She had prophesied in the camp. The camp had a very good cook. Italians are good cooks, you know, and she was a good cook. She knew my weakness, blueberry pie.

She'd say, "Brother Beuttler, there's a piece of blueberry pie for you in the kitchen. Come and get it." I could get almost anything I wanted. This prophetess had prophesied to this cook, "Behold thus saith the Lord, You shall not cook for another year. This is the last year in which you are to cook. Buy thee a white dress and white shoes, for you shall die and not live. Behold thus saith the Lord. He has spoken."

One day, this cook was so sad and downhearted. I said, "Sister, what's the trouble?"

She said, "I'm going to die." I said, "Of what?" "I don't know, but I'm going to die," she tearfully answered. I said, "Well, where did you get the idea?" She answered, "The prophetess has spoken in the Name of the Lord." I said, "And you believed her?" "Oh yes, Brother Beuttler, she is a prophetess. This is the last time I cook for this camp."

I got angry. I said, "Do not believe stuff like that. It does not sound right." "Yes, but she's the prophetess," she tearfully replied. Isn't it something how gullible people are? They swallow almost anything. I don't know what it is, so I prayed. I said, "Lord, don't let the cook die. In the first place, she's a good cook. In the second place, expose the false prophetess so everybody will know."

Because when the prophetess was around, people tiptoed, "Oh, the prophetess," in a whisper. The prophetess all right! So I said, "Lord, don't let her die." Well, next year, she cooked again. I'm not saying the Lord answered my prayer, but that's the way I prayed it anyhow. I said to the cook, "Look here, do you remember the prophecy last year?" "Oh yes," she answered. I said, "Now you're still cooking." "Oh yes." "Don't you see now that's she's false?" She answered, "Brother Beuttler, I don't know. Perhaps she only made a mistake."

I have never turned away from genuine utterances just because of these foolish people that come along with such foolish harangue in the Name of the Lord. Let's not vex the Spirit by holding prophetic utterances in contempt.

Now then, in I Corinthians 14:39, there is a third one:

"Forbid not to speak with tongues." What you have here is that forbidding is the wrong method of correction for abuse. I know that people make mistakes, but forbidding genuine utterances of the Spirit is not Pauline. I was in a large Assembly, but not the speaker, and a young girl stood up and gave an utterance in tongues. The pastor said to her, "Sit down, you. I don't believe God gives gifts to high school kids." That was an awful mistake. That girl had a genuine utterance of the Spirit, and just because the

pastor did not believe that the Lord would use girls of high school age, he set her down to her great embarrassment. I would not be surprised if that girl never opened her mouth again. Forbid not to speak with tongues. I did not write this: it was Paul that wrote it.

Apparently what had happened was that they had excesses of the manifestation of speaking in tongues. We know that of course. Apparently some leaders tried to correct that by forbidding all speaking with tongues, but we can vex the Spirit by forbidding utterances in tongues. I would never do it, though I have suppressed speaking in tongues that disturbed the meetings, but I don't think Paul is talking about that. I think he is talking about genuine utterances in the Spirit, presumably utterances that are to be interpreted.

Here I also give you a note, six different translations:

- 1) "Speak not against the gift of tongues" (Centenary).
- 2) "Do not hinder the speaking with tongues" (Berkeley.)

Many times in class over the years, students spoke in tongues and I knew they were making a mistake. I had never reproved in public, but kept still. Later on, I would take them to the side to talk to them and help them in the exercise of their gifts.

- 3) "Do not check speaking with tongues" (Weymouth).
- 4) "Do not interfere with tongues" (Knox).
- 5) "Do not prohibit speaking in unknown tongues" (Aramaic).
- 6) "Stop preventing others from speaking in ecstasy" (Williams)

Now there are people, I do not know about New Zealand, but in other countries, that have nothing to do of any kind with speaking with tongues. If anyone tries to give a message in tongues, they would suppress it immediately. Williams' translation says, "Stop preventing others from speaking in tongues."

So there again is one way in which we can vex the Spirit of God, trouble Him, disturb Him by clamping down on the free flowing of the Spirit of God.

In I Timothy 4:14, "Neglect not the gift that is in you." We can have a gift, and the gift become dormant in our hearts, and the gift gradually fall into disuse. In fact, we can go so far as to deliberately stifle the gift in our own lives.

I remember a girl in Bible school when I was a student in 1927. She had been used in the gift of tongues and interpretation. She had a lovely gift. But somehow, some of the students were jealous and they would say something like, "You don't think that was the Spirit, do you?" and "We don't think you have a real gift. You're making it up. You want to be somebody." The words stuck into the girl's heart, and she said to the Spirit, "Oh Spirit, don't bother me anymore with the exercise of the gifts." And He didn't.

She stood up in chapel one day. That's how I found it out. She stood up and wept bitterly. She told us how she was hurt because of criticism. She told us what she said to the Spirit, "Don't bother me with these gifts anymore," and then she sobbed almost hysterically, and blurted out saying, "The Spirit took me at my word. He hasn't used me for weeks. I have asked Him to forgive and to use me again, but He hasn't done it. Students, please pray that the Spirit will use me again." The Spirit did not use her for the remainder of

her time in school. What happened afterward, I did not know.

She did not only neglect the gifts, she even suppressed it and spoke to the Spirit not to bother her anymore. The Spirit, obviously, was so vexed and so hurt, that He took her at her word, and did not bother her anymore. It's a terrible thing to willfully resist the Spirit of God in areas like that, or in any other area for that matter.

Now in the case of Timothy, it was not quite as bad. Timothy was afraid. Paul was in jail. Timothy was afraid that if he wasn't careful, he might go to jail also. You find that in the context. I am not reading it to save a bit of time. So Timothy went easy on the exercise of the gifts and neglected its use because of fear. He did not want to be persecuted like Paul, and possibly go to jail.

Here I want to read to you some of the other translations:

1) "Keep alive the flame of God's gracious gift" (Berkeley)

I've had people say, "Brother Beuttler, the Spirit of God has taken my gift away from me." Personally, I do not believe the Spirit of God will take away the gifts of the Spirit from any person, except perhaps in the case of outright rebellion, or the unpardonable sin-something which is very difficult to commit. Generally speaking, when people used to be used, and are no longer used, it is not that they have lost the gift, or that the Spirit has taken it away, but that it has become dormant through neglect.

Lack of prayer, lack of consecration, lack of waiting on God, the intrusion and encroachment of the things of this life gradually bring a gift into disuse. It's not lost, it's buried, and very often it is buried under a lot of rubbish. If we remove the rubbish and clean out the heart and get rid of the clutter that has come into the heart, we will discover the gift is still there.

2) "Stir up like a fire the gifts of God" (New World Translation).

3) "Kindle into a brighter flame the gracious gift of God" (Weymouth).

4) "Rekindle and keep burning the fire of the divine gift" (Williams).

Paul writing to Timothy, "Bring that gift back again into use."

5) "Fan the flame of that special grace which God kindled in thee" (Knox).

6) "Blow upon the embers of that inner fire" (Pulpit Commentary).

So, the Holy Spirit is a person; He has feelings; He can be hurt; He can be troubled; He can be vexed. In order not to vex the Spirit we are told, "Forbid not the speaking with tongues; quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesying; neglect not the gift that is in thee." By observing these prohibitions, we are sparing the Spirit of God from being vexed. He is a member of the Trinity; He is a real person; He has feelings and is looking to us, not to hurt His feelings, but to cooperate with Him like we would cooperate with any person in whatever He seeks to do among His people; for He is the energizing power of God by which God works to bring His people into the fullness of the stature of Jesus Christ.

In another message, we will go into different activities of the Spirit of God such as His leading; how He leads; how He does; what He does; and why He does, so we can learn to cooperate with the Spirit in the work of God to bring us into the full stature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord bless these words to your hearts.

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