

BE SPIRIT SENSITIVE (ACTS 8:26-31) 05/27/12
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ATCHISON, PASTOR LEE HENDON

I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU WHAT I BELIEVE TO BE THE SECRET OF AN EXCITING LIFE. PEOPLE WHO HAVE DISCOVERED IT ARE SOME OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE, WINSOME PEOPLE I KNOW. THEY SPARKLE & SHINE WITH AN IDENTIFIABLE RADIANCE. I WISH I COULD RADIATE BRIGHTER! HOW ABOUT YOU? THIS SECRET TOUCHES PEOPLE'S LIVES WITH A DISTINGUISHABLE EAGERNESS & ENTHUSIASM. THEY HAVE A GLOWING ZEST & ZEAL. IT IS THE SOURCE OF AN UNQUENCHABLE ENTHUSIASM ABOUT LIFE. THE SECRET IS: **BE SPIRIT SENSITIVE**. DEVELOP YOUR SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY. MOST OF US ARE TOO HIGHLY INTELLECTUAL TO THE DEMISE OF OUR SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY.

THE EXCITING REALITIES OF THE WORLD, FOR ME, ARE THOSE OF THE SPIRIT. A STORM IS NOT A STORM TO ME, NO MATTER HOW VIOLENT. IT IS BUT THE LAUGHTER, THE PLAY, THE MOVEMENT OF THE SPIRIT - I FEEL THE MOVEMENT OF THE SPIRIT NOT THE BLOW-ING OF THE WIND! IT IS CLEAR TO ME WHY THE GREEK & HEBREW WORDS FOR SPIRIT/WIND ARE ONE IN THE SAME - *PNEVMA*.

VITALITY FROM BEING SENSITIVE TO THE SPIRIT COMES FROM TWO COMPANION DYNAMICS: **GUIDANCE & OBEDIENCE**. THIS TRIUMPHANT DUO IS TIED TO MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES & BELIEF THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTUALLY CAN & DOES **GUIDE** OUR THOUGHTS & INSPIRATION & THAT OBEDIENCE CAN & DOES GIVE THE SPIRIT'S POWER **TO DO** THAT WHICH IS GUIDED. THIS OVER-WHELMING WONDER STEMS FROM THE AMAZING ACTUALITY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN PUT INTO OUR MINDS & HEARTS - FEELINGS, IDEAS, INSIGHTS, POSSIBILITIES & DIRECTIONS WHICH WE WOULD HAVE OTHERWISE NOT CONCEIVED OR DARED CONSIDER WITHOUT THE SPIRIT. THRU GUIDANCE & OBEDIENCE WE CAN COOPERATE WITH THE SPIRIT IN ACCOMPLISHING GOD'S PLANS & PURPOSES IN ALL THINGS. WE BECOME BOLDER & MORE FOCUSED.

R.H.L.SHEPPARD EMPHASIZED THIS SECRET WHEN HE WROTE, "CHRISTIANITY DOES NOT CONSIST IN **ABSTAINING** FROM DOING THINGS NO GENTLEMAN WOULD THINK OF DOING BUT IN **DOING** THINGS THAT ARE UNLIKELY TO OCCUR TO ANYONE WHO IS NOT IN

TOUCH WITH THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST.” **THAT IS IT!** THERE IS THE SECRET TO THE SPIRIT’S DANCE & LIFE - NOT IN ABSTINENCE BUT IN AFFIRMATION! ABSTINENCE CAN GUIDE OUR MORALS, ETHICS & PERSONAL BEHAVIOR, PERHAPS. THAT IS JUST MAINTENANCE. WHAT AN ADVENTURE & ELECTRICITY WE HAVE WHEN ENGULFED BY THE SPIRIT OF JESUS! THAT BEGINS WHEN WE LOVE JESUS WITH ALL OUR HEARTS, MINDS, SOULS & STRENGTH - DARE TO ALLOW JESUS TO INVAD E THE TISSUES OF OUR BEING SO AS TO GUIDE & DIRECT OUR THINKING, IMAGINATION & WILL.

THIS GREAT SECRET OF BEING SPIRIT SENSITIVE IS WHAT MADE PHILIP THE MAN OF GOD HE WAS. HE WAS GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT & WAS OBEDIENT. PHILIP WAS SO EFFECTIVE BEC HE WAS SPIRIT-DIRECTED & SERENDIPITIES OF THE SPIRIT OCCURRED WHEREVER HE WENT. HE WAS A MAN UNDER ORDERS. OUR BLESS-ING IS TO DISCOVER THRU THIS PASSAGE HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT WANTS TO LIVE IN & THRU EACH OF US TODAY.

VS. 26 & 27 ARE ASTOUNDING! THEY SHOW THAT WHEN THE SPIRIT DANCES IN OUR LIVES, WE ARE TO BE OPEN, READY, AVAIL-ABLE. AN ANGEL OF THE LORD GAVE PHILIP A VERY CLEAR DIREC-TIVE TO “RISE & GO AT NOON TO A ROAD THAT GOES DOWN FROM JERUSALEM TO GAZA.” NOTE THAT PHILIP DID NOT ASK **WHY** OR **WHAT** HE WAS TO DO WHEN HE GOT THERE - MOST OF US WOULD HAVE WANTED TO KNOW MORE OF THE DETAILS (PLEASE) BEFORE PUTTING ON OUR WALKING SHOES. NOT PHILIP. HE HAD DISCOVER-ED THE SECRET OF BEING SPIRIT SENSITIVE, SO HE GOT WITH IT! DYNAMIC CHRISTIAN LIVING IS ENCAPSULATED IN THESE WORDS: THE SPIRIT GUIDED, PHILIP OBEYED. JUST LIKE IN COUPLE-DANCING, ONE HAS TO LEAD, THE OTHER HAS TO FOLLOW. THIS MUST BE DECIDED BEFORE YOU GET ON THE DANCE FLOOR - WHO IS GOING TO LEAD & WHO IS TO FOLLOW.

FIRST OF ALL, **GOD DOES LEAD GOD’S PEOPLE**. GOD GETS THRU TO US BY IMPLANTING *THOUGHTS, FEELINGS & DIRECTIVES*. THE IMMEDIACY OF GOD WILL BE AT WORK IN THE MINDS & HEARTS OF HIS BELIEVERS. THE POINT, HOWEVER, IS THAT PHILIP WAS **SENSITIVE TO & COOPERATED** WITH GOD. HE HEARD & CHOSE TO RESPOND TO THE INFLUENCE & INSTRUCTION OF THE LIVING GOD. THAT SAME POSSIBILITY EXISTS FOR YOU & ME TODAY. **SENSITIVE & COOPERATIVE** ARE VITAL INGREDIENTS TO GUIDANCE & OBEDIENCE.

A SECOND INSIGHT - PHILIP WAS GIVEN JUST ENOUGH GUIDANCE TO CHANGE HIS PLANS & GO IN A NEW DIRECTION. WHAT **TRUST & FLEXIBILITY!** IT TAKES COURAGE TO OBEY WITH-OUT KNOWING EVERY DETAIL FIRST. OFTEN WE ARE GIVEN JUST ENOUGH GUIDANCE TO TAKE THE FIRST STEPS. PHILIP OBEYED BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THE LORD KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING & HE WOULD TRUST THE OUTCOME TO GOD. JUST LIKE IN DANCE, THE SLIGHTEST TOUCH OF THE LEAD TAKES THE PARTNER INTO A NEW PATTERN/DIRECTION.

FURTHERMORE, PHILIP WAS NOT JUST GIVEN THE **DIRECTION** TO GO BUT **WHEN** TO GO. HIS OBEDIENCE WAS TEMPERED BY THE SPIRIT'S TIMING - AT HIGH NOON. THE LORD WANTED PHILIP ON THAT ROAD AT A PARTICULAR TIME FOR WHAT HE WAS PREPARING. ME THINKS, WE WOULD HAVE BARTERED WITH THE LORD, "MIDDAY LORD? ON THAT SUN BLISTERED ROAD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT? MIDDAY - BEST WAIT 'TIL MORNING WHEN IT'S COOLER."

PERHAPS THE REASON MANY OF US MISCARRY IN THE GREAT THINGS GOD HAS PREPARED FOR US IS BECAUSE WE **MISS GOD'S TIMING.** IMAGINE THE OPPORTUNITIES WE HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED BECAUSE WE WERE IMMOBILIZED ON SOMETHING. **STUCK ON DEAD CENTER,** WAITING FOR THE "BIG PICTURE" TO APPEAR ON THE SCREEN BEFORE WE WOULD FOLLOW THE LORD'S GUIDANCE. PHILIP DID NOT WAIT!

THE STARTLING FACT IS THAT PHILIP'S OBEDIENCE TO BE ON THAT ROAD AT THE RIGHT TIME & PLACE MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE **FLOW OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** - GUIDANCE & OBEDIENCE ARE RELATIONAL. THEY GROW OUT OF A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. WE FIND IN THIS PASSAGE THAT THE SPIRIT'S TIMING WAS RIGHT ON THE MARK FOR BRINGING ABOUT GOD'S WILL & DIRECTION. WHAT WERE THE ODDS THAT TWO PEOPLE FROM TWO DIFFERENT PLACES WOULD CONVERGE ON THE SAME CROSSROAD AT THE SAME TIME OF THEIR JOURNEY? **SLIM OR NONE, EXCEPT FOR THE LEADING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!**

I WISH ALL MY STORIES IN THE SPIRIT WERE A SUCCESS WITH A HAPPY ENDING - IT GRIEVES ME THAT THEY ARE NOT. LAST WEEK TOWARD THE END OF THE DAY A STRANGER CAME INTO OUR CHURCH. HE ASKED TO USE THE BATHROOM. I SAID, "SURE!" - I

WAS IN A HURRY BUT WAITED & WAITED. WHEN HE LEFT I WAS ON DEADLINE FOR AN APPOINTMENT BUT NOTICED HE HAD DROPPED A WAD OF CASH FROM HIS BUNDLE. I PICKED IT UP & RUSHED OUT TO CATCH HIM. HE HAD SAT DOWN UNDER THE BREEZE WAY & APPEARED TO BE STRESSED OUT & CUT UP A BIT. I PROMPTLY RETURNED HIS MONEY FOR WHICH HE WAS VERY GRATEFUL - I WISHED HIM A GOOD DAY BUT THE SPIRIT WAS PROMPTING ME TO LINGER ON & VISIT WITH HIM - HE OBVIOUSLY NEED SOMEONE WITH WHICH TO TALK. TO MY SHAME I HONORED MY APPOINTMENT INSTEAD OF THE SPIRIT'S PROMPTING & DEEPLY REGRET DOING SO. NOW THAT MOMENT ON THE ROAD TO GAZA IS LOST TO ME & HIM - WHAT MIGHT THE SPIRIT HAVE HAD IN STORE FOR US? I MADE THE WRONG CHOICE ON THAT ROAD TO GAZA - LET US BE ALERT - **BE SPIRIT SENSITIVE!**