

Chapter 1

Of the Rule and Guide of Christians, and of the Scriptures

Q. Since Christ reveals the knowledge of God through the Spirit, are we led to understand the gospel through the Spirit as well?

A. If the Spirit dwells in you, then you are not of the flesh, but the Spirit. If a man lacks the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. [Rom. 8:9]¹

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. [Rom. 8:14]²

Q. In that case, is it an inward principle that guides and instructs Christians?

A. If you have been anointed by Christ, then you don't need the teachings of men, as that anointing teaches you the truth, and thus you abide in Christ. [1 John 2:27]³

As for brotherly love, no one needs to exhort you to love your brother, as God teaches you to love one another. [1 Thess. 4:9]⁴

Q. From that answer, I understand that the inward anointing and rule is what teaches Christians; is this the basis of the New Covenant?

A. This is the Covenant that God has made with Israel: God will put his laws into their mind and write them on their hearts. He will be their God, and they will be His people. They won't need to teach their neighbors and brothers, for everyone will know God, from the least to the greatest. [Heb. 8:10-11]⁵

They will all learn of God. [John 6:45]⁶

Q. Did Christ promise that the Spirit would both be with His disciples, and be within them?

A. Christ said his Father would give us another comforter, the Spirit of truth, that would be with us forever, but that worldly men could not receive, because they don't see or know it. We Christians, however, do know the Spirit, for it dwells with us, and is within us. [John 14:16,17]⁷

Q. Why were the Scriptures written?

A. The Scriptures were written to teach us that our patience and the comfort of the Scriptures would give us hope. [Romans 15:4]⁸

Q. How are the Scriptures helpful?

A. The Holy Scriptures teach us of salvation through faith in Christ. Scripture is inspired by God, and is useful to teach us doctrine, to teach us what we should disapprove, to correct those in error, and to instruct us in righteousness, so that we may be perfect in the things we do. [2 Tim. 3:15-17]⁹

Q. What makes the Scriptures so perfect?

A. The Scriptures were not written by men according to their own will, but rather these men were writing what the Holy Spirit told them to. [2 Pet. 1:20-21]¹⁰

Q. So the Scriptures should be respected because they came from the Spirit, and because these Scriptures testify that the Spirit leads us to Truth, not the Scriptures themselves. How does Christ command us to read the Scriptures?

A. Christ tells us to read the Scriptures, because while we may think we have eternal life in them, they actually testify of Christ. [John 5:39]¹¹

Q. I understand that a past generation greatly respected the Scriptures, but would not believe in Christ or be guided by the Holy Spirit that the Scriptures testified to. How does Christ explain this?

A. Christ says he doesn't have to accuse us of unbelief, as Moses himself does that. If we believed Moses, we would believe Christ, because Moses wrote of Christ. If we won't believe the writings of Moses, how can Christ expect us to believe His own words? [John 5:45-47]¹²

Q. So then, how do we account for their unbelief, in spite of their claim to follow the Scriptures?

A. They don't understand the Scriptures, and so their claim to follow the Scriptures is their own undoing. [2 Pet. 3:16]¹³

Notes

¹But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

²For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

³But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you:

but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

⁴But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

⁵For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

⁶It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

⁷And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

⁸For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

⁹And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

¹⁰Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

¹¹Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

¹²Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

¹³As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.