

## Judy's Manna July, 2016

**FIRST, HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT JESUS CHRIST NOW LIVES IN YOUR HEART?** The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit. *"The Spirit Himself testifies and confirms together with our spirit [assuring us] that we [believers] are children of God," (Romans 8:16).* Before Jesus Christ came to live inside of you, you were very much aware of your mind and your body. You live in your body and you have a mind. Now, your spirit has come alive in Christ Jesus. You are born again of the spirit!

*Jesus answered him, "I assure you and most solemnly say to you, unless a person is born again [reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified], he cannot [ever] see and experience the kingdom of God," (John 3:3).* Seek God with all of your heart until you know with absolute certainty that Jesus Christ lives in your heart.

When at age 27 I saw a joy I had never seen before on everyone's face at Forest Home Christian Conference Center in July, 1967, I made the decision that what they were telling me was true. I had never before heard that Jesus Christ would come to live in my heart. I probably heard it with my ears, but I never comprehended it. I was second born in my family and had a compliant personality. I was not aware of sin in my life. I didn't try to be good, I just was.

So, accepting that Jesus Christ died for my sins was strange to me. I am so embarrassed now to even say such a thing, but perhaps someone else may come into God's kingdom in this unusual way. I made the decision to receive Jesus Christ.

After returning home I prayed to God each day because I had loved God for as long as I can remember. I would say, "Father, I believe but we both know that I haven't comprehended it yet." I prayed that for three months. One GREAT morning I woke up and I knew that Jesus Christ was and is my Savior. From that day to this I have not once wondered if He was or is my Savior and Lord of my life. I just knew. I know now. That is why I say to seek God with all of your heart.

Remember how Jacob held onto God all night long and would not let go (Genesis 32:22-32). Jacob would not let go of God until He declared a blessing upon him. I believe we must wrestle or seek or yearn for God so vigorously until we know that we know Him. Once you experience knowing God in Christ Jesus, no one can ever

take that away from you. Perhaps you came to know God more easily than I did. What I declare is, seek, long for God until your relationship with God is more real than any other relationship that you have.

How do you contend for the presence of God in your life? If you wanted to get to know an author, what would you do? You would buy all of his or her books and read them or listen to them on audio. God has written 66 books to you, 26 books in the New Testament and 39 books in the Old Testament. You know that God wrote this book outside of the earth's time and space because He used over 40 men over a span of 1,500 years. These men wrote consistently the same message.

I will take the time to establish the authenticity of the Bible that we have in relation to the Bible written by the 40 authors. For example, two copies of Isaiah written 1,000 years earlier than the previously oldest known copies of the Bible have proven to be "word for word identical to our Standard Hebrew bible in more than 95% of the text. (The five percent variation consists of obvious slips of the pen and in spelling.) The Dead Sea Scrolls contain at least parts of every book in the Old Testament except the book of Esther.

*There are over 6,000 early manuscript copies of the New Testament (when we include the earlier versions we have over 24,000 copies. When quote from the early church fathers are included, we have twice that many. Some of them date only 20 to 30 years from the original writings. By comparison only a few copies exist at all of Plato and Aristotle and those were written 1200 to 1400 years after the original writings. The interval between the dates of the original writing and the copies of the New Testament is so small that it is negligible. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as firmly established.*

We know in our hearts that God wrote the Bible. Establishing historically that God wrote the Bible confirms God's history on earth for everyone to acknowledge.

The Bible teaches: "*for you have been born again [that is, reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, and set apart for His purpose] not of seed which is perishable but [from that which is] imperishable and immortal, that is, through the living and everlasting word of God,*" (I Peter 1:23). When you are born again of the spirit of God, you are transformed immediately into the righteousness of God. The difficulty is that you are stuck with your mind and spend your life with the goal of conforming your mind into the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

For some people there may be a thick crust of error, tradition, stubbornness, living in your life to become true to you. Hang on. Don't give up. Wrestle with God until you know without a shadow of a doubt that you have been born of the Spirit of *God. You know that you have been saved from hell and transported into the kingdom of God right now! Eternity begins the moment you believe. "For He has rescued us and has drawn us to Himself from the dominion of darkness, and has transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption [because of His sacrifice, resulting in] the forgiveness of our sins [and the cancellation of sins' penalty]," (Colossians 1:13-14).*

What is the evidence in your life that you are born of the Spirit of God? *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven," (Matthew 7:21).* To know God's will, you must know what He has written to you, the *Bible*. Create a plan to of study. Establish a time and a place. Have a notebook and pen ready.

Some ways that I study are: I like to read the 1<sup>st</sup>, the 31<sup>st</sup>, the 61<sup>st</sup>, the 91<sup>st</sup>, and the 121<sup>st</sup> Psalm on the first day of the month. On day two I read the 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 32<sup>nd</sup>, *the 62<sup>nd</sup>, the 92<sup>nd</sup>, and the 122<sup>nd</sup> Psalm. I also read the Proverb for the day* because there are 31 Proverbs☺ I have a set of three by five cards ready. When I see a verse that stands out to me, I write on a three by five card. I carry these cards with me. When I have a free minute, I go over the cards all during the day. I am writing on my heart God's instructions to me.

Another way I study is to read or listen to three chapters of the Old Testament and two chapters of the New Testament each day. This plan takes me through the *Bible in a year*.

Another way I study is to go through the *Bible* one book at a time. I am so blessed to be a part of *Calvary Chapel of Palm Harbor*. We are always going through a book of the *Bible*. Right now we are going through Psalms, John, Luke, and Matthew either with our pastor, Pastor Brett Robinson, or in the two Home Fellow ships that I attend. Because of our writing two Bible-based books each year, I am so very thankful to have such magnificent teaching straight from the *Bible* every week.

Discover a way to study the *Bible* that fits you perfectly. I emphatically recommend going through the *Bible* once a year. As you study the *Bible*, listen as God speaks to you. Write down what He says to you. Go over it often.

Another evidence that you are born of the Spirit of God is that you ask God to forgive you of your sins. No one is without sin. Whoever says he does not sin is deceiving himself or herself (I John 1:8). God says that: *"If we [freely] admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just [true to His own nature and promises], and will forgive our sins and cleanse us continually from all unrighteousness [our wrongdoing, everything not in conformity with His will and purpose], (I John 1:9).* Confess to God immediately when you know you have made a mistake, either consciously or unconsciously. Keep a clear conscience. You will interfere with your prayers if your conscience is not clear.

Another evidence that you are born of the Spirit is that you pray. You talk to God at specific times and talk to Him all day long as well. I will spend a whole message on prayer. The Lord's Prayer is wonderful to pray to God each day. Spend time on each part and talk to Him about it. God's gives us specific instruction to pray for: other believers (Ephesians 6:18), leaders in the church (Hebrews 13:17-19), leaders in government (I Timothy 2:2), the persecuted church (Matthew 5:10-12), for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). I have a list of daily prayers and a list of urgent requests that come in each day.

More evidences that you are born of the Spirit of God are that you fear the Lord (Proverbs 9:10), you serve the Lord (Psalm 100:2 "worship" and "serve" can be used interchangeably), and you gather together with others who are born of the Spirit of God (Hebrews 10:25). Each of these topics can be a message of its own 😊

*"Father, we have spent this time together yearning to know You better. We live to bless You. Reveal to us more today than yesterday, more tomorrow than today how we can know You better. Speak to us in Your Word. Speak to us through each other. Speak a Word to us for someone else each day. Impart in us so much of Yourself that others will see You in us and want to know You. Thank You, Father, that we live today in You and we will live forever in You in Christ Jesus. We love You, dear Father, In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."*