

## Summary

- a) This session is the second of ten sessions that looks at a vital principle that fosters Spirit-led living.
- b) The second principle that we will examine is this: Spirit-to-spirit communion with Christ is the food that strengthens, nourishes, and energizes your spiritual life.
- a) As you will learn in this session, eternal life is knowing God. When Christ's unending life was implanted within you at new birth, it gave you the ability to know God in a deeply personal way. Eternal life was grafted to your spirit so you can experience an internal, intimate relationship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit right now.
- c) As this session stresses, eternal life is your destiny not your destination. In fact, you won't go to heaven when you die if you don't possess His life now. This means eternal life is not somewhere you go; it is a Person you know. And contrary to the mindset of many believers, you don't have to wait to experience intimacy with the Lord until after you die.
- d) This session also explains some practical ways to cultivate conversational intimacy with Christ.

## Introduction

- a) Jesus said, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3).
- b) Growing up in a traditional, evangelical church, where the emphasis was on getting people saved week after week (which is great), I developed a paradigm of eternal life centered solely on life after death.
- c) Whenever I heard the phrase *eternal life*, like many evangelicals I immediately thought *dying and going to heaven*. I instantly thought *destination* rather than *destiny*.
- d) If this is your mindset, hopefully this session changes your view of eternal life.
- e) Jesus, the uncreated Son of God incarnated in human flesh, defined eternal life for us. It's knowing God—both the Father and the Son through the Spirit.
- f) Notice Jesus didn't say, "This is eternal life, that they may die and spend eternity with God in heaven."

## Eternal Life Defined

- a) *Eternal* means "without a beginning or an end." *Life* is the word *zoe*, and when referring to God's life, it's the highest life, the superlative life.
- b) God's life (*zoe*) transcends animal and plant life, *bios* in the Greek, from which we get the English word biology.
- c) God's life (*zoe*) also transcends soul life, *psyche* in the Greek, from which we get the English word psychology.
- d) God's *zoe* is the uncreated, divine, indestructible, and eternal life the Father and Son possess in themselves.
- e) God's life is infinitely higher than animal life, human life, and angelic life.
- f) When you believe in and partake of Christ, you begin possessing His life without beginning or end. This started at new birth, when God's uncreated, indestructible life was implanted within your spirit through the Holy Spirit.

## God's Life in You Enables You to Know God

- a) Jesus is the Life, and he who has the Son has the life (see 1 John 5:12). This means whoever belongs to the Son has His eternal life dwelling within them.
- b) Eternal life, therefore, is Christ in you, possessing you; it's not somewhere you go.
- c) Eternal life begins at new birth and increases as Christ increases and self decreases.
- d) Eternal life describes a state of being entered into at salvation and greatly enhanced, far beyond the mind's ability to presently comprehend, in eternity.
- e) Therefore, eternal life is your destiny not your destination. In fact, you won't go to heaven when you die if you don't possess His life now.
- f) Eternal life was implanted within you so you can know God in a deeply personal way.
- g) Eternal life was grafted to your spirit so you can experience an internal, intimate relationship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit right now.
- h) This means eternal life is not somewhere you go; it is a Person you know. And contrary to the mindset of many believers, you don't have to wait to experience intimacy with the Lord until after you die.

## Ginosko

- a) The Greek word *know* in John 17:3 is *ginosko*, and it frequently indicates a relationship between the person knowing and the object known.
- b) What is known is valuable and important to the one who knows and is therefore the basis of the relationship.
- c) The verb to know "represents knowledge as the effect of experience."
- d) This means, when *ginosko* is used 222 times in the New Testament, it frequently carries the meaning of *knowing through experience*. This is especially true when it pertains to knowing God.
- e) This meaning is underscored in Matthew 1:25 and Luke 1:34, where *ginosko* is used as an idiom for sexual union between a man and woman. Obviously, this doesn't mean we have sexual intercourse with the Lord. God forbid! But it does offer a metaphor of the deeply personal and intimate way the Lord invites us to know Him as His friend and bride.

## Spirit-Led Principle #2

- a) The second principle of the Spirit-led life is:

Spirit-to-spirit communion with Christ is the food that strengthens, nourishes, and energizes your spiritual life.
- b) There is a vast difference between knowing about God and knowing God.
- c) You can know much about God by reading the Bible, reading devotionals, or hearing Scripture-saturated messages. You can know about God by diligent study—relentlessly reading books, commentaries, and using Bible software. By the way, I love studying Scripture and learning about God.
- d) But it's not the same as knowing Him experientially. Jesus told the Pharisees, men who studied and meditated upon Scripture day and night, "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life" (John 5:39-40).

- e) Surveying the landscape of the church, many believers are repeating the Pharisees' error. They have a relationship with the book but not with the person. They search the Scriptures for life but neglect the One to whom the verses point.
- f) They haven't made the distinction between knowing about God and knowing God.
- g) They attempt to apprehend God with their minds, trying their best to understand Him with their finite brains. But this only feeds the soul and starves their spirits, ultimately limiting them from enjoying a deeply personal relationship with the Lord through spiritual experience.
- h) You can know about God by your intellect but knowing God begins with your intuition.

## Knowing God in Your Spirit

- a) Jesus did not say, "Eternal life is knowing about God by reading the Bible, commentaries, and books." Rather, eternal life is Christ dwelling in your spirit as life, giving you the ability to experience God intimately and know Him intuitively (see John 17:3).
- b) Eternal life gives you, in the here and now, the innate, inward ability to hear God's voice and know Him intuitively in your spirit.
- c) Eternal life affords you the ability to communicate with the Lord Spirit to spirit.
- d) Knowing God experientially, intimately, and deeply takes place in your spirit as the indwelling Spirit speaks and reveals God and His Word to you.
- e) Knowing God experientially does not originate in your soul.
- f) While the Lord communicates to people in various ways, such as visions, dreams, trances, prophetic encounters, the gifts of the Spirit, or angelic visitations, it's clear from 1 Corinthians 2 that the indwelling Spirit communicates Spirit to spirit, not Spirit to soul or Spirit to body.

## Cultivating a Spirit-to-Spirit Relationship with the Lord

- a) Knowing the Lord experientially begins in your spirit not in your soul.
- b) Certainly, comprehending the Lord with your mind and feeling Him with your emotions are by-products of encountering Him with your spirit.
- c) But knowing God doesn't originate in your soul. Knowing God stems from your spirit-to-Spirit union with Christ.
- d) Then, whatever you encounter in your spirit, overflows into your soul, causing your mind, emotions, and will also to experience whatever the Spirit reveals. This is how eternal life becomes real in your daily life.
- e) Jesus said, "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit" (John 4:24, emphasis mine).
- f) Like Jesus said, you must use your spirit to worship Him—and I would also add to commune with Him.
- g) Authentic worship and communion with God, who is Spirit, begins with your spirit. It does not originate with the natural functions of your soul or body. Even though your soul and body often experience the overflow of your spirit-to-Spirit encounters with God.
- h) Understanding this spiritual law helps tremendously when you are trying to cultivate an intimate relationship with the Lord.
- i) If God communicates to you through your spirit, then you shouldn't waste time or energy trying to hear Him with your mind, will, emotions, or five senses.

- j) You should focus on and develop the part of your being where you are certain the Lord will speak to you—your spirit.
- k) Just as you can't eat food with your mind, will, or emotions—since eating is a physical activity governed by God's laws of creation—communion with the Lord takes place in your spirit.

## Spiritual Communion

- a) To be clear, the communion I'm speaking about is not the bread and wine we eat and drink to remember the Lord's broken body and shed blood.
- b) Rather, the communion I have in mind is the sharing or exchanging of intimate thoughts, words, and conversations with the Lord through your spirit-to-Spirit union with Him.
- c) Just as you communicate with the material world through your body, you communicate with the indwelling Spirit through your spirit.
- d) The Lord designed the spirit, not the soul, for spiritual communication with Him. This is one reason why having a new spirit is essential, for your new spirit enables you to commune with the indwelling Spirit and know the deep thoughts and desires in God's heart (see 1 Cor. 2:10).
- e) Paul said the Spirit does not speak with human wisdom to the mind and intellect. He speaks by "combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words" (1 Cor. 2:13). As Paul revealed, the Spirit speaks to you through your spirit-to-Spirit union with Christ.
- f) According to the apostle Paul, neither the body nor the soul can naturally comprehend the depths of God. Quoting Isaiah 64:4, he said, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God" (1 Cor. 2:9-10).
- g) The indwelling Spirit alone knows the thoughts of God, even the deepest thoughts in God's heart (see 1 Cor. 2:10-11). This knowing is an intuitive knowing not a knowing through deduction, calculation, reasoning, and mental processing.
- h) The indwelling Spirit intuitively knows everything in the depths of God's heart, apart from any outside influence or information. And He communicates what He knows intuitively by speaking directly to your spirit, enabling you to also know intuitively.
- i) This is one reason why the Spirit has been grafted to your spirit. The Lord loves you so much He yearns to be in constant, direct communication with you, giving you anytime access to the infinite mind of Christ.

## Dining with Christ

- a) To know someone experientially, intimately, and deeply requires long conversations over many months and years. The same is true in your relationship with the Lord.
- b) If you really want to know Him, it requires a lifestyle of conversational intimacy with Him. This is exactly what Jesus offers you.
- c) The risen Lord told the Laodicean church, "Because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. . . . Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:16, 20).
- d) Many have used verse 20 as a call to salvation. But Jesus was not speaking to unbelievers. He was speaking to His church. More specifically, Jesus was speaking to the lukewarm Laodicean church who lost their spiritual appetite because of self-satisfaction and material blessings.

- e) In His kindness, Jesus invited them—and us—to dine with Him in a deeply personal, conversational relationship with Him.
- f) As previously mentioned, sharing a meal together is an experience where people let their guard down and really connect with people. When you share a meal with someone, you usually become real and communicate with them at a heart-to-heart level.
- g) In the same way, Jesus yearns for deep fellowship with you. The pleasure and privilege of dining with Jesus is inexpressible. Nothing compares.

## Listen to Live

- a) Even in the Old Covenant, the Lord wanted to dine with His people in conversational intimacy.
- b) The Lord spoke through Isaiah, “Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost” (Isa. 55:1).
- c) This is the old covenant invitation for God’s people to dine with Him in deep intimacy. Obviously, this still applies to us in the new covenant.
- d) Going further, the Lord addressed the self-satisfaction in His people, saying, “Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy?” (Isa. 55:2).
- e) Like the Laodiceans, the ancient Hebrews were spending their money in an attempt to quell their hunger and thirst for God. And just like the Laodiceans, dining with the Lord is the only remedy for the God-shaped hole in the human heart, for until we find rest in the Lord, the human heart is restless.
- f) This is why the Lord said, “Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live” (Isa. 55:2-3).
- g) Even though this was spoken to ancient Israel, take a moment and personalize it. Hear the Lord saying to you, Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen carefully to Me, eat what is good, delight yourself in abundance, and listen that you may live.
- h) This is what spirit-to-Spirit communion with Christ is all about. It’s listening to the Lord through the indwelling Spirit as He communicates directly to your spirit. It’s actively waiting on the Spirit to transfer His thoughts straight to your spirit.

## What Is Your Prayer Life Like?

- a) For many believers, prayer is a boring, mechanical, duty-filled obligation they endure rather than a pleasure-filled, joyful, delightful meal they relish.
- b) Jesus invites you to dine with Him in conversational intimacy, where you share your heart with Him, and He shares His heart with you.
- c) But rather than having a heart-to-heart conversation with the Lord, many have made their prayer life like a kid going to see Santa Clause. They approach the Lord with a list of things they want God to do for them rather than drawing near to enjoy Him.
- d) They spend the whole time talking to the Lord about their needs and desires, not taking any time to wait on Him to speak.
- e) Solomon exhorts us, “Draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools” (Ecc. 5:1). What exactly is the sacrifice of fools? It is being “hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God” (Ecc. 5:2).

- f) When you draw near to the Lord, Solomon said, “Let your words be few” (Ecc. 5:2).
- g) This obviously doesn’t mean you can’t talk to the Lord. But it does mean you should change the way you pray. Instead of approaching the Lord like Santa Clause, asking for gifts, draw near to Him to listen.
- h) Make your prayer life a dining experience with Him, where you have deep, two-way conversations with Him, always making time to listen for the whispers from His lips and discern the thoughts He transmits to your spirit.

## Practical Principles of Communion

### 1. *Pray until the shift comes.*

- a) If you are like me, when you first wake up in the morning, 99% of the time your soul or body is dominant, leaving your spirit dormant and the indwelling life of Christ suppressed within you.
- b) If you want to live daily by Christ’s indwelling life, you must learn to pray until the shift comes. This is an essential secret I have discovered in my journey of learning to live by Christ’s indwelling life.
- c) What do I mean by this? The Lord promises new strength for those who wait upon Him (see Isa. 40:31). Based upon this divine guarantee, I have learned the importance of praying with persistence and diligence for the indwelling Spirit to transmit His dead-raising, miracle-working power to my spirit, making my spirit stronger than my soul or body.
- d) Sometimes this prayer is answered immediately. In a matter of minutes, I shift from a carnal state to a spiritual state.
- e) Other times, it can take up to thirty to sixty minutes for a breakthrough. Regardless of how long it takes, praying until the shift comes is a matter of spiritual life or spiritual death. That’s why I can’t afford to skip too many days of waiting on the Lord.
- f) Often, praying until the shift comes means I spend time meditating upon Christ in me and how He has transformed my spirit. I talk more about meditation in a later session.

### 2. *Be still and know He is God.*

- a) After I have shifted from the soul or body to the spirit, I take time in stillness, quieting my soul in the presence of the Lord. The Lord says in Psalm 46:10, “Be still, and know that I am God” (NKJV).
- b) When practicing stillness, it’s easy to become passive and even fall asleep. But the Lord didn’t have this type of stillness in mind when He spoke Psalm 46:10.
- c) Rather, He was calling for your spirit to be active and alert while your soul becomes still and silent.
- d) Praying until the shift comes helps tremendously to quiet your soul, stilling your mind, emotions, and will.
- e) When I sense my spirit is active, alert, and stronger than my soul, I ask the Lord to speak to me.
- f) In addition, like Psalm 46:10 states, I use my spirit’s intuition to know He is God. Not only is He God enthroned in heaven, but He is also God enthroned in my heart.

### 3. *Come to Him in you.*

- a) A few years ago, while asking the Lord how to live by His indwelling life, the Lord said, “Come to Me in you.” I can’t even express how much this simple revelation helped me.

- b) Prior to this revelation, I used to try and connect with the Lord in heaven. And for some reason, it never worked. Go figure.
- c) But when I realized He dwelled in me and I could go directly to Him in my spirit, everything changed. Since my spirit is the holy of holies where God dwells in glory, it meant I could come to Him in me at any moment. The same is true for you.
- d) Like Peter, who said to Jesus as He walked on water, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water,” (Matt. 14:28), I sometimes say to the Lord, “Invite me to You in my spirit.” Then, as when Jesus told Peter, “Come,” I wait until I sense the Lord say to me, “Bryan, come to Me in you.”

#### *4. Pay attention to your spirit’s intuition and write down what you sense.*

- a) The Lord, speaking through Isaiah, said, “Incline your ear and come to Me” (Isa. 55:3).
- b) When I come to the Lord in my spirit, I draw near to listen, always with a mindset of being slow to speak and quick to hear (see James 1:19).
- c) But I have learned not to listen with my ears or mind. Instead, I pay close attention to my spirit’s intuition.
- d) As I wait on the Lord in this way, I might be directed to read a Scripture verse or chapter in the Bible. I might sense a word or phrase is just for me.
- e) By the way, I highly recommend to always have a notebook and pencil in hand when you listen to the Lord like this.
- f) As you sense the Lord communicating to your spirit, write it down.
- g) Often, if I pay attention to my spirit’s intuition as I write, I sense the Spirit speaking more, and I keep writing until I sense I should stop.

#### *5. Test and separate the spiritual from the soulish.*

- a) The Lord told Jeremiah, “If you extract the precious from the worthless, You will become My spokesman” (Jer. 15:19).
- b) The Lord still speaks, He loves to speak, and He dwells in you. You can absolutely expect to hear Him speak. But don’t try to force it or rush it. If you do, what you hear will surely be tainted by the soul.
- c) Make sure to carefully and cautiously evaluate what you sense in your spirit. You don’t want to mistake soulish communication for the Spirit’s communication.
- d) Paul said to test prophetic words and hold fast to what is good (see 1 Thess. 5:21).
- e) I can’t stress enough how important it is to test what you think you heard from the Lord.
- f) This is especially true when it comes to what the Spirit communicates to your spirit.
- g) Speaking from experience, it’s so easy to mistake your own thoughts, desires, or emotions for the Spirit’s communication.
- h) Don’t be afraid to experiment with hearing the Lord speak to your spirit, but always test and evaluate what you hear.
- i) One last note before moving on. In this session I am addressing only what the Lord speaks to you personally not what He speaks to you for others. That is an entirely different subject requiring an entirely different class.

## Feast On Jesus

- a) Spirit-to-spirit communion with Christ is the food that strengthens, nourishes, and energizes your spiritual life.
- b) Jesus is both the bread you eat and the wine you drink when you dine together with Him (see John 6:53,55).
- c) As you learn to come to Him in your spirit and feast upon Him and His Word, you will experience the spirit-to-Spirit communion for which you were created.
- d) Jesus Himself is the meal you eat when you dine with Him.
- e) I encourage you to begin practicing spirit-to-Spirit communion with Christ.
- f) As you spend time with Him, take as long as needed to quiet your soul until you can intuitively discern His voice in your spirit.
- g) Then, as you sense His voice in your spirit, write down in a notebook what you believe He is saying.
- h) Over time, you will be amazed at all the Lord speaks to you. And as the Lord said through Isaiah, there are no limits to how much the Lord will speak.
- i) You can listen to Him, eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.