

Isaiah 11:1-5

Spirit- Dependent Living

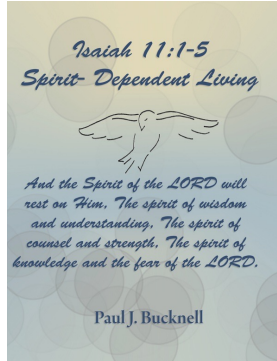


And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Paul J. Bucknell

Spirit-Dependent Living

A Study on Isaiah 11



Paul J. Bucknell

*As we depend upon the Spirit of God,
He leads us closer to Himself,
producing abundant lives.*

Book Information

Spirit-Dependent Living: A Study on Isaiah 11:1-5

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Spirit Dependent Living – Isaiah 11:1-5

Purpose: Make us more conscious of God’s will and increasingly dependent upon the Holy Spirit in all we do.

New Christians hear about becoming a ‘new creature’ in Christ (2 Cor 5:17) and are rightly excited at the new things God has for their lives. This newness, however, seems to wear off rather quickly.

We are troubled to see and hear of lukewarm Christians around us. At times, this despicable, lukewarm spirit infects us, too, often convincing us that Christ is not doing extraordinary things anymore—either in our lives or the lives around us.

Adopting this mentality is worse than being infected by a contagious disease! It affects not only our Christian growth but also our Christian service. How terrible when His people become blind to the supernatural presence of God. The newness of the ‘new wine’ stemming from knowing Christ only becomes a memory. A compromised Christian life is a sure sign of a near-bankrupt faith.

A study of Isaiah 11:1-5 enables us to regain a proper perspective of Christian life and service by helping us gain an inside picture of what moved and motivated the Messiah Jesus Christ. This passage unites what empowered Christ with what empowers our lives as His disciples. Essentially, we learn what it means to ‘walk in the Spirit.’ Let’s look at what it means to live a Spirit-dependent life.

Text: Isaiah 11:1-5 - On Becoming Spirit Dependent

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of

counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist (Isaiah 11:1-5).

Prayer

Dear Father in Heaven, there is no doubt that I have wasted too much time looking at this world through my own eyes rather than seeing it through the Spirit's eyes. After reading Isaiah 11 above, I sense my blindness and foolishness. I have worked hard but with little regard for how I need the Holy Spirit to work through my life.

Please forgive me for wasting so much time and spending it on my strength. I know I have let too many people down. The world doesn't need more world in religious garments, but Christ unveiled and lived out before them. Come now, Holy Spirit, and fill me. Teach me how to live like Jesus. Let me be an instrument that is powerfully used by your Holy Spirit. In Christ's glorious Name, we pray, Amen.

Discussion

Transformation in the presence of the Lord occurs by faith. We hope He will use us more effectively after this time together before the Lord. We are not simply acquiring some knowledge about God but getting to know Him more while He deepens our commitments and enriches our lives.

Do you remember how the Lord Jesus called the disciples aside? First, there was the stepping out of the world, followed by stepping into His presence. They happened simultaneously. A preoccupation with the world precludes one from getting close to God. Jesus asked for their total commitment. Indeed, many kept their original occupations but, in a true sense, began to live in His presence. They received their occupation back once they devoted it to Him. Isaiah 11 shares the keys needed to draw intimately before God.

Christ's servants learn how to have Christ live in them through the Spirit of God. We are to walk and be filled with the Spirit. The same Spirit that anointed Jesus is to dwell and stir our souls. We are called Christians, meaning 'anointed ones' (1 John 2:27).

God accomplished so much in the life of Christ because the Holy Spirit constantly filled Him. Practical and growing Christian lives depend on how much we understand and embrace the Spirit's work. It is not a question of whether we have the Spirit; all of God's people have the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14).²

The key is how much we yield our lives to the beautiful Spirit of God. After all, we have been trained to live with our eyes, ears, and minds all our lives. We must change our orientation and live regularly affected by the Holy Spirit. Our study describes the Spirit-filled Christian.

The Spirit encourages all Christians to respond appropriately to God in their lives. Let's see what this is all about.

- A. The Life of the Christian (Isaiah 11:1)
- B. The Spirit in the Christian (Isaiah 11:2)
- C. The Walk of the Christian (Isaiah 11:3-5)

² "You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory." (Ephesians 1:13,14).

What calls us demanding us to drop all for the sake of Christ?

A) The Life of the Christian (Isaiah 11:1)

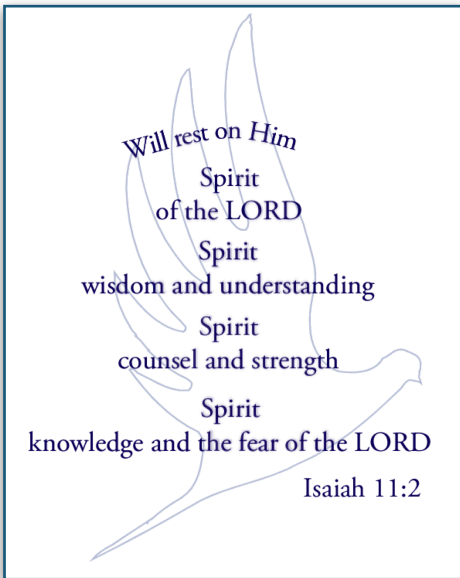
“Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit” (Isaiah 11:1).

The Christian is only as strong as his person is affected by Christ. The Christian is not the root or trunk but the branches that grow from the Tree of Life.

I (Jesus) am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing (John 15:5).

Power and vision for the church derive from Christ—not the church and especially not the organized church. God’s people depend upon Christ, the Rock. Isaiah 11:1 prophetically announces the Messianic promise of the then-coming Messiah. Jesus of Nazareth realized His

royal lines and the promises to King David through his father and mother’s genealogies (i.e., Matthew and Luke).



The church, then, is symbolized by this great host of branches springing out from Christ through their faith and life. God continually works through His Spirit to fill it to its fullest extent. Ephesians 1:1 calls these people holy ones (saints) because they are set apart in

Christ. Every genuine Christian possesses these ‘faith roots’ in Christ.

B) The Spirit in the Christian (Isaiah 11:2)

Isaiah 11:2 holds the key to understanding the life of Christ. When we look at Christ's life as revealed in the Gospels, we recognize that God used Him in extraordinary ways to minister to the people. Just think how many of us could step into people's lives as Christ did and leave any long-lasting, worthy impact. We need to be more like Christ.

And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD (Isaiah 11:2).

Now, some of us wonder if this verse speaks about Christ Jesus, why do we imply it has to do with us? There are numerous ways to answer this vital question. If we think these words only relate to how Christ lived, we will not seriously apply them. Here are two reasons Isaiah 11:2 applies to our lives.

1) Jesus received unique insight by the Holy Spirit at His baptism—the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Believers receive the same anointing by the Holy Spirit that Christians receive through their faith in Christ. This same Holy Spirit is mentioned above in Isaiah 11:2. “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know” (1 John 2:20).³

2) Second, the disciples' filling of the Holy Spirit in early Acts marked them as associated with Christ. This was not limited to the twelve apostles but, as Acts 2 wonderfully reminds us, came upon all Christ's disciples. From that point onward, the Spirit walk became a characteristic of God's people.

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25).

³ “And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.” (1 John 2:27).

Instead of wondering whether we should be Spirit-led, let us consider what it means to be Spirit-filled. Let us first make some general statements and then discuss these seven marks of Christ's anointing more fully.

Walking in the Spirit

As the air/oxygen invades each part of a person's body, the Spirit of God touches each part of our lives. Air and spirit are the same words in both Hebrew and Greek. Without the breathing of air, our beings cannot function. And so, similarly, God's people need the Spirit of God to move and animate their spiritual beings. People without the Spirit of God are considered spiritually dead (Eph 2:1-2) because the spiritual aspect of their lives is not functioning.

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience (Eph 2:1,2).

When a person becomes a Christian, the Spirit of God rushes in and makes the spiritual nature alive and functioning. The physical and spiritual functions were designed to work jointly, but because we have been so used to using our physical features, we place all our confidence in them. The body is suitable for opening a can of sauce or bringing the can to one's lips, but the spiritual nature, dominated by the Spirit of God, is needed to accomplish spiritual activities. These spiritual matters are mentioned in Isaiah 11:3-5. In Isaiah 11:2, however, we see how the Spirit of God works in a person.

One can debate whether a capital 'S' (Spirit) or a small 's' (spirit) should be used. It is relatively immaterial. I think it is more precise for English speakers to use 'Spirit.' The word is used four times, and it is the same each time. Hebrew does not have capital and small letters. Even if one wants to capitalize the first usage of 'Spirit' and make the others 'spirit,'

we will still affirm that it is the same Spirit that does these things. This is undeniable, and it is confirmed in how the Holy Spirit imparts gifts to His people (cf. 1 Cor 12) and communicates with our spirits (1 Cor 2).

A much more significant problem is to train ourselves to be attentive to and follow the Spirit of God. Most of us live in a very secular state of being, oblivious to the Spirit's working. If we prayed and sought our Father's will like Jesus, we would better learn how to walk and talk in the Spirit.

Seven Spirit-dominated Areas of Life

As we go through Isaiah's list, note how some categories, such as wisdom and understanding, are things we can have to some degree without the Spirit of God. In Isaiah 11, however, we are introduced to another kind of wisdom, understanding, and counsel. There is such a thing as physical strength, but because of the Holy Spirit, there is also spiritual strength. There is counsel from man but also counsel from the Spirit of God. The following chart helps outline the difference in the Holy Spirit's work in the seven mentioned areas.

At first, we will observe what it means for the Spirit of God to be at work in a person, functioning in this world but living within God's dimension—living in light of His Spirit. He can function equally in both worlds at the same time. In the Book of Acts, we see how the church should be operating when His people are dependent on the Spirit of God.

Are you conscious of God's supernatural strength, wisdom, and understanding of circumstances beyond your regular comprehension and abilities? God has equipped us, but we must put away our sins and sincerely seek Him to help us learn how to walk in the Spirit. We increase in this dependence on the Lord as we live by the spiritual disciplines of praying, fasting, and meditating on God's Holy Word. In

the list below, the Spirit animates the first person described, while in the latter, the non-Christian or resistant Christian functions without the Spirit of God.

God's Presence

Spirit of God at Work in His People

The presence of God occupies a person and influences His thoughts, decisions, and relationships with others.

Dependent on Man's Resources without God

The absence of God (spiritually dead) leaves only the body and a darkened mind (flesh) to dictate all of life's decisions (Eph 2:2).

Wisdom

Spirit of God at Work in His People

Unique insights from God connect the consequences of one's decisions with what is or will be done.

Dependent on Man's Resources without God

The accumulation of discernment is built up over the years of experience and knowledge.

Understanding

Spirit of God at Work in His People

Special discernment from God enables a person to grasp the proper perspective of a particular situation.

Dependent on Man's Resources without God

Grasping an acceptable perspective of a situation with one's accumulated knowledge.

Counsel

Spirit of God at Work in His People

Unique words of wisdom from the Spirit of God enable one to tenderly issue comforting, healing, and warning words as appropriate.

Dependent on Man's Resources without God

Words and advice stem from what one has learned and experienced.

Strength

Spirit of God at Work in His People

Extraordinary divine strength empowers God's people to do His will when their bodies and spirits would otherwise give up.

Dependent on Man's Resources without God

The ability to do what one's body and stress levels tolerate.

Knowledge

Spirit of God at Work in His People

Special insight brings attention to what is needed to understand and handle situations properly.

Dependent on Man's Resources without God

Guess what is needed from one's past learning and experience.

Fear of the LORD

Spirit of God at Work in His People

The special awe of God provides guidance and caution in times of temptation, leading a person to always trust in the Lord.

Dependent on Man's Resources Without God

The fear of man influences people's decisions rather than what God says or does.

If we are going to live as lights in the world, we must walk Spirit-filled lives, ridding ourselves of only living by our empirical senses that this secular world only knows.

C) The Walk of the Christian (Is 11:3-5)

³ And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; ⁴ But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. ⁵ Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist.... (Isaiah 11:3-5).

A Spirit-dependent person lives differently. Although we might treat Isaiah 11:3-5 as only applying to the life of the Savior Jesus Christ, we, as God-fearing readers, should conclude that if we share in the anointing, we share in the works that stem from that anointing. We are Christ's disciples. The disciples of Christ have not only their Master's knowledge but also His power.

When Jesus sent out the seventy to evangelize, He expected them to live as He lived. They were His appointees in training. Similarly, we are His ambassadors. Let's note the four life changes in one's life when Jesus, the anointed One, makes His people spiritually alive and alert.

1) God Sensitive

"He will delight in the fear of the LORD."

The Spirit-filled person does not live in fear but in the delight of God's glorious presence. He disdains disobedience and keeps from evil.

At one time, while driving, my highway lane had stopped traffic, so I pulled into the other lane. The Spirit cautioned me that I went too far ahead of the other people in the empty lane, so I returned to the slower lane. In this way, I would not be the subject of murmuring. I could have ignored the Spirit's word with me, but by His grace, I confessed my

aggressiveness and asked for wisdom to know when it is best to cut over into other lanes in future situations.⁴

I delighted in God's work in my soul, for otherwise, I would have gone on unnecessarily giving offense to others. Although I wrestled in my heart at His prompting, I was glad He was working in my life.

Many Christians cannot think clearly about sensing God's will for our lives because of bad teaching—they are either too 'friendly' with God or too distant.

1) Those too friendly only know God as love—"God allows me to do anything I want." They wrongly conclude that they can buddy up to God and have Him ignore their 'quirks.' These same people often cannot tolerate the wrath of God, an essential trait of God stemming from His sense of justice and vengeance.

2) The other group—"I don't even know He is present," has a hard time grasping the delightfulness of the fear of God. They usually tremble under the fear of man. They cannot see God's love and goodness but only His awesome and mighty power.

One group is too close; the other is too far. They both misunderstand biblical teachings. The fear of the Lord produces a good respect for God and yet senses His love and goodness. The first group refuses to state "the fear of the Lord," which, for them, is like an out-of-style fad. The second group cannot understand why they should delight in God's holy presence.

God's faithful servant finds God's goodness expressed through the cautious spirit given to a man that, in turn, causes him to observe God's command and seek His blessing. He refrains from disobedience out of fear of coming consequences; God is real. Like the reigns of a horse, the

⁴ This would not apply to situations where the sign requests that both lanes are used until the merger point.

fear of the Lord controls and leads the Christian into the most effective and fulfilled life possible.

2) Righteous Judgment - Decisions

“He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth.”

The resources a person depends on to make decisions ultimately control his decisions. The sources control the thinking. Isn't this the power of the books used in education or the power of the media? We see this same situation in its infant state when Eve went counter to the Spirit and rested on her own judgment.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate (Gen 3:6).

Note how her eyes led her into faulty thinking with the evil one's help. We cannot trust our senses to give us the right mind to judge matters. The mind forms the battleground where the world battles the Spirit. The world attempts to influence our minds by limiting our sources. The Spirit of God combats this by working through the mind of God established by the Word of God.

Lust lives on sight and hearing. Sexual lust observes who it is about and how people can be used. Lust's desires are inflamed by acquired knowledge through our senses. By seeing or hearing what can or might be eaten, our stomach's appetite is stimulated. Our sexual senses are aroused, and our imaginations are filled with devious thoughts. Our senses serve our bodies, but unfortunately, they pay service to our fleshly nature, bringing evil into our lives. Any man influenced by what is

around him, cannot truly serve others. His flesh rules him. His unbelief makes him (or her) a man of the earth.

The man of the Spirit gains information that contrarily feeds his spiritual nature. This is the opposite of what has been said. Of course, his physical senses still serve his body, but he can limit them to higher principles given in God's Word. He is not a glutton but exercises self-control (Gal 5:25-26). Refusing to look with lust upon women, he does not indulge in much alcohol. Instead, he eagerly pays full attention to the leading of God's Spirit.

When a man lives by the principles of God's Word, he necessarily lives by the Spirit.

“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please” (Gal 5:17).

Righteous judgment and decisions come from living by God's Word rather than one's subjective judgment. Counselors who deny their clients the truth of God are false prophets. The spirit of the world strategically interferes with God's judgments, leading people on without God's principles guiding their lives.

*If we share in the anointing, then we share
in the works stemming from that anointing.*

Proper concern for the poor only occurs when one's fleshly desires are not rewarded. Otherwise, the poor will be taken advantage of because they lack resources and knowledge. It is a great shame to think how women have been oppressed through the centuries because men serve their needs above their wives and children.

God's principles call the man to stand up for the needs and rights of the oppressed. Righteous decisions and judgments can be made only to the degree that God's Word affects one's heart.

3) Fight Evil

“He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.”

The Spirit of God strives against evil, as in Genesis 6:3.

“Then the LORD said, ... My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty year” (Gen 6:3).

This fight continued on from the Garden of Eve when Satan captured the hearts of mankind. Jesus, not tolerant of evil, was constrained by the rule that He came to save and not to judge (cf. John 3:17). Complete judgment through destruction would have been easier and quicker, but Jesus remained faithful to the mission. He patiently and graciously forgave those who repented from their sins but spoke harshly against those who used righteous words to hide their evil. Let's look at a few verses in which the word 'viper' or poisonous snake is used.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, ..." "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7; Luke 3:7). ... "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart." (Matthew 12:34). ... "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how shall you escape the sentence of hell? (Matthew 23:33).

Jesus Christ does speak words of love, but we seem to forget He also knew how to rebuke evil. His kind words were tempered by the context of His redemptive purpose, but they were still present. He brought threats against these people and stated judgment against Jerusalem.

And He answered and said to them, ... Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here shall be left upon another, which will not be torn down.... (Matt 24:2).

After this redemptive age, Christ will speak and shake this earth again.

“And in His right hand He held seven stars; and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength” (Rev 1:16).

“And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming” (2 Thes 2:8).

Throughout the New Testament, we see Spirit-filled men proclaiming God’s glorious gospel. We need only read through the Epistle of Jude or the Epistles of John to find many statements judging the wicked, those who know the truth but have turned from it. Although living in a tolerant age makes living godly lives difficult, we must force ourselves to apply God’s Word to our own lives consistently.

We need to be careful not to interfere with the redemptive purpose of this age by speaking words of judgment. Jesus restrained Himself, and so must we. Such words of condemnation were used when the ungodly confused those seeking the truth, bringing in judgment.

Personal reflections

Do we confront others? Why is it so hard to confront? How do we deal with those who spread evil against God’s people? Think through the Book of Acts and share 1 or 2 examples of how the Spirit led God’s servants to bring justice in this era of redemption.

4) Godly Qualities

“Righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.”

Righteousness and faithfulness are often used together and represent the integrity of the one filled by God’s Spirit. Let’s look at a few of these verses to gain a better sense of their strength.

“The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, righteous and upright is He” (Deut 32:4).

“Before the LORD, for He is coming; For He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness”(Psa 96:13).

“(A Psalm of David.) Hear my prayer, O LORD, Give ear to my supplications! Answer me in Thy faithfulness, in Thy righteousness!” (Psa 143:1).

Five times these parallel words were used in Isaiah alone, including this one (1:21, 26; 11:5, 16:5, 26:2). Righteousness characterizes those living by God’s righteous principles here on earth. He would always do what was right and benefited mankind. Faithfulness is the commitment to the facts and the truth of God. He is utterly faithful to what God has promised.

The two words jointly summarize a holy life before God, with perfect integrity and emphasis on God’s purposes. The belt about his loins or waist is difficult to understand, seeing few of us wear robes. For a warrior, the belt brings all his weapons and clothing bound up so that he can adequately fight.

Those filled with God’s Spirit will be men of righteousness and faithfulness. God’s Word, rather than the spirit of the world, dictates their actions, decisions, and words. We see this so clearly in Christ’s life and in those who have been near Him. We might ask why other attributes were not mentioned. One could speculate, but it seems that these two characteristics are meant to summarize the essential qualities upon which all other qualities are built. Righteousness speaks of God’s standards, while faithfulness speaks of integrity before God.

These are the qualities that a good society is built upon. The world uses force to compel society to conformity, but here, God's Spirit conforms people to the ways of God, that is, the kingdom of God.

Selected Projects

Week Study: “Ministering in the Spirit”

Purpose

Increase your awareness and dependence upon the Holy Spirit in your life, ministry, and teaching.

Means

Reflect on Christ’s ministry by comparing Isaiah 11:1-5 with the gospels.

Assignments

Preparation #1

Read through John 15:1-16 and study the word ‘abide.’ Read through at least 10 of the ‘*Abiding in Christ*’ series.⁵ Write down how Jesus Christ was sensitive to His Father’s will.

Preparation #2

Each day this week, choose a gospel passage and meditate on it. Ask the Spirit to teach you from that passage. Especially note what Christ’s disciples would learn through that circumstance. Seek the Lord for at least one daily application.

Daily Studies

Daily Study #1: Spirit-Dependent Teaching

We are simply amazed at the teaching of Jesus Christ. Read through the SPIRIT-DEPENDENT TEACHING page.⁶

⁵ <https://wwwFOUNDATIONSforfreedom.net/Topics/Abiding/Abiding00.html>

⁶ <https://wwwFOUNDATIONSforfreedom.net/Topics/DiscipleshipConcepts/SpiritTeaching.html>

List the 7 principles of excellent teaching. What practical steps can you take to renew your teaching skills? What does it mean to have the Spirit teach us? How can we depend more on the Holy Spirit teaching those we teach?

Note when you minister to others how much you have been praying and seeking help. What steps can you take to implement three suggestions? Extra: If you can access Bruce Wilkinson's "*The 7 Laws to Learning*,"⁷ view that video series or read the book. Answer the accompanying questions.

Daily Study #2: Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12)

Isaiah 11 addresses the anointing of the Spirit of God. Christ and His disciples have the Holy Spirit, including all genuine believers. Read 1 Corinthians 12 and discuss how the Spirit of God should impact a Christian's life. List the different manifestations of the Holy Spirit (12:7-11).

Compare this list with the list in Isaiah 11:2-3 and make some conclusions. In what ways have you seen the Spirit of God manifest Himself in your own life? Explain in your own words the difference between Spirit-given wisdom and ordinary wisdom. Explain the difference between Spirit-given knowledge and everyday knowledge. Extra: *As you do this study, write down some questions you want answered. Check out the answers in Carson's '*Showing the Spirit*' book on 1 Corinthians 12-14 by Baker Publishing.⁸

⁷ <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/190822/the-seven-laws-of-the-learner-by-bruce-wilkinson/9781590524527/>

⁸ <https://www.amazon.com/Showing-Spirit-Theological-Exposition-Corinthians/dp/0801025214>

Daily Study #3: Fear of the Lord

The fear of the Lord is often misunderstood, but we discover that serves as a key to a godly life and effective ministry. Read through the ‘Fear God Not Man’ series⁹ and answer the following questions.

What is the fear of the Lord? Why is the fear of the Lord so important to a good ministry? How do you see Christ demonstrating the fear of God? How do we grow in the fear of the Lord? What place does the Word of God have with the fear of the Lord? Lastly, relate one or two incidences where the fear of the Lord was significant in some circumstances. Discuss how the fear of the Lord will help a parent properly discipline a child.

Daily Study #4: Waiting on God for Ministry

The guidance takes several unexpected turns in our lives. For some, the full-time ministry is clear from early on. They need to wrestle with obedience and how to follow through on their calling. Others, however, are in the midst of a career and are sensing the Spirit of God leading them. They need to take some significant steps of faith to serve the Lord. Regardless of the case, God often has special surprises for us as we ready ourselves to serve Him. Read the Waiting on God for Ministry page and related scripture.

Check out the special lessons God had for David. Discuss at least two lessons that you could benefit from.

Daily Study #5: Study on Righteousness

When the Spirit of God works in our lives, we see changes in how we conduct our lives. Read the series on *Righteousness, not Compromise*¹⁰ and answer the following questions. What is righteousness? What words do we use in our language that carry the same meaning? What

⁹ <https://wwwFOUNDATIONSforfreedom.net/Topics/FearGodMan/FearGod01.html>

¹⁰ <https://wwwFOUNDATIONSforfreedom.net/Topics/Righteousness/Righteous00.html>

does it mean to have the 'righteousness of Christ?' How can we obtain this righteousness? How does a spirit of toleration ruin righteous living? How about a compromise? Discuss one area of toleration or compromise that you need to eliminate in your life. What practical steps will you take to do this?

Themes for Isaiah 11:1-5

- The church follows Christ's leading through the Spirit. The church is subject to Christ, the head.
- The Spirit of God influences Christ the same way, though not to the same degree, as upon His church.
- God's people need to depend upon the Lord for wisdom and understanding.
- Many of God's people, unfortunately depend upon godless counsel rather than Spirit-led counsel.
- The fear of the Lord is essential to godly living.
- God's Spirit changes the way His people perceive the world.
- God's Spirit will always care about the poor, humble, and afflicted.
- A godly person is a Spirit-controlled person who hates sin and its effects.

- A Spirit-guided person is characterized by righteousness and faithfulness.

Detection of Error in Isaiah 11:1-15

I have often found it helpful to identify ways people have drawn false conclusions from the passage by comparing them with the truth.

Wrong conclusion: *The church is not dependent upon the Lord for help or guidance except in emergencies.*

The church often hobbles about with its limited resources. She doesn't rely on Christ. It would be similar to a little boy trying to live without his parents' resources. The church is the fruit of Christ's work and depends on her Lord's power, wisdom, strength, and guidance. Many churches living bound under a secular mindset only ask God to bless her work rather than to lead her in His kingdom work. This always has a catastrophic end. One's dependence upon the Lord can usually be observed by how one prays dependently upon the Lord.

Wrong conclusion: *Serve with our resources, knowledge, and experience rather than being Spirit-reliant.*

Many so-called Christian books are only reworked secular books. They do not drive people to their knees on dependence upon the Lord but instead try to build their self-confidence. We are not saying that one should ignore methodology or ignore our experiences, but instead resist the ways they strip God from your plans. For example, they limit us to our temperaments, natural giftings, and roles rather than discerning what the Spirit of God might lead us to do. Church plants become something a big church does through its resources.

Wrong conclusion: *We train others to be self-sufficient rather than Spirit-dependent.*

Instead of leaning on the close leading of the Holy Spirit, as in Isaiah 11:1-5, many Christian leaders are being trained at a great cost on how to handle things on their own. Teachers leave out the embarrassing, humble moments of waiting upon God and instead run through

statistics, charts, and man's counsel to do what seems noble and good. God gets no glory for what man does on his own. Where is the teaching and training on how to wait upon God in prayer? Where do they train you how to submit to authority?

Wrong conclusion: *We assume the life of Christ is not to be imitated by Christians because they cannot do the same things.*

Many Christians have considered Christ's life a symbol of victory rather than a means to obtain victory. They do not see Christ's holiness as a template for their lives or Father-dependence as a mode of life. They care nothing about imitating Christ's prayer life and prefer budgets over seeking God's day-to-day provision. If anything, Christ's ways are disdained and rejected for a modern, so-called Christian lifestyle that has no room for crosses and suffering.

Study Questions for Transformation

A) Isaiah 11:1 The Life of the Christian

“Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.” (Isaiah 11:1)

- Who is Jesse?
- Why is he referred to?
- Write down the verses in 2 Samuel 7 that give us a prophecy concerning this matter. Please explain the relevance of this prophecy to the Messiah and the kingdom of God.
- Draw a picture of a tree with both roots and branches.
- Identify the parts of the picture connected to Isaiah 11:1.
- Which part is more important? Why?
- Is the Christian dependent on the church or God?

- How is John 15:1-5 connected to this verse?
- Make sure you comment on 'bearing fruit.'

B) Isaiah 11:2 The Spirit in the Christian

“And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD” (Isaiah 11:2).

- List the seven marks of this person listed in Isaiah 11:2.
- Do you think this passage can also refer to Christians who walk full of God’s Spirit? Why or why not? Make sure you connect the passage of 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 with your answer.
- Describe your struggle to live full of God’s Spirit since you have become a Christian.
- How has what other Christians taught you either helped or hurt you in living by the leading of the Holy Spirit?
- What experiences has God used to build up your dependence upon the Holy Spirit?
- Is this Spirit-led learning related to your spiritual disciplines at all (e.g., devotions, prayer, fasting, meditation, etc.)? Explain.
- List your strongest area out of the list of seven. Thank the Lord for your strongest area. Describe why that is your strongest area.

- What is your weakest area out of the list of seven? Write out a prayer to seek God to make you stronger in that weakest area.

- What area of self-reliance or self-glory holds you back the most?

- Write out a prayer asking Him to help you grow in this area.

C) Isaiah 11:3-5 The Walk of the Christian

“And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. 5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist” (Isaiah 11:3-5).

- List the characteristics of those with whom the Spirit of God rests.
- Mention any patterns that one might notice in this list.
- Identify at least three phrases, concepts, or words one is unfamiliar with. Look them up and do your best to capture their meaning or usage.
- Describe the “fear of the Lord” the best you can. How does it work?
- What attitude should one have as he thinks upon the fear of the Lord? Why?
- Explain how one can make a wise decision if he does not follow what he sees and hears.

- What is God's treatment of the poor? In what way has the church consistently cared or not cared for the poor?

- Explain the tension between proclaiming a redemptive message of love and bringing justice to others. How shall God's people find the right balance? How did Jesus do it?

Appendix 1: Chart on Isaiah 11:2

The Spirit's Spheres

| Isaiah 11:2 Spirit-dominated Spheres | | |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Spirit of God at Work in His People | Areas of Work | Dependent on Man's Resources Without God |
| The presence of God occupies a person and influences His thoughts, decisions, and relationships with others. | God's Presence | The absence of God (spiritually dead) leaves only the body and a darkened mind (flesh) to dictate all decisions. |
| Special abilities from God connect the consequences with what has been done with what is being or will be done. | Wisdom | The accumulation of discernment built up over the years of experience and knowledge. |
| Special discernment from God enables a person to grasp the proper perspective of a certain situation. | Understanding | Grasping an acceptable perspective of a situation with one's accumulated knowledge. |
| Special words of wisdom from the Spirit of God that enable one to bring special words of comfort, healing, and warning. | Counsel | Words and advice stemming from what one has learned and experienced in the world. |
| Special divine strength empowers God's people to do His will when their physical bodies would otherwise give up. | Strength | The ability to do what my body and stress levels tolerate. |
| Special insight brings attention to what is needed to handle a certain situation properly. | Knowledge | Guesses what is needed from one's past learning and experience. |
| The special awe of God provides guidance and caution in times of temptation, leading a person always to trust in the Lord. | Fear of the LORD | The fear of man influences people's decisions rather than what God says or does. |

