

## Session III

### How Then Should We Study

By Cindy Smith – Jan 20, 2009

I would like to begin by clarifying an answer to a question that was asked last week, about the experience I had in Egypt a year ago, when we were up in the Muslim stronghold called the Citadel, having a dinner with Coptic Christians under a tent. The Spirit of the Lord was contending with forces of darkness through the high praise and worship of God with the 70 with whom we were on mission. We were talking about how important it is and will be in the hours ahead of us, in this season we are referring to as “the last days” before the return of the Lord, that we know how to worship God in the midst of darkness and confusion. It will be important for us to get breakthrough into the heavenly places. I told you last week that at the height of worship there, I was losing my dinner in a bag. I also mentioned that I often experience as an intercessor, sensations in my body that indicate the nature of the battle in which we are involved. You may have heard when asked the question, “Do you think that this sickness came from God?” And I said that I believe God used it to tell me that the level of warfare in the room was intense and that I needed to engage in battle. I was not saying that God put sickness on me because sickness is not from God, but from the enemy. It can certainly be a distraction. And the enemy will often use sickness to take us out of intercession.

At the same time, I would have to say that the visceral reaction I was experiencing to the intense warfare in the room is part of how the Lord speaks to me. My body is the Lord’s.

God often with me uses sensations in my body as part of a spiritual gift called the discerning of spirits in conjunction with another gift operating called the Word of knowledge. These are part of a revelatory package that is very useful for an intercessor and they are mentioned in I Cor 12:10.

Discerning of spirits is a gift which distinguishes between spirits: the Holy Spirit, the human spirit or the evil spirits. When operating with the word of knowledge, the revelation is often very specific. God gives us natural senses in which we distinguish different things in the natural realm and for every natural sense, there is a spiritual counterpart. There are hearing gifts, seer gifts, sensory gifts in which we experience sensations in our body. For example, we can hear with our ears the words of the Lord, but we can hear with our heart what the Father is saying. We can see as an observation or we can see with spiritual vision as God sees. When God opened the eyes of Elisha’s servants, he saw the chariots of fire and warriors surrounding Israel’s enemies. We can experience God’s presence with a sensation of tingling or warmth. We can experience in our gut, our bowels, His compassion or mercy, and we can also experience warfare and the presence of darkness in these body parts as nausea or “agitation of the innards”, as I call it. We can taste and see that the Lord is good and we can be quick-scented and discern the presence of God in this way

through the sense of smell. We can have a sense of knowing, that is a combination of several spiritual senses.

Because I wanted to clear up any misunderstanding, I wanted to clarify that what I was experiencing in that moment was a result of the operation of the spiritual gift of discernment of spirits. Our focus is never to be on the manifestation upon us or others, or on the manifestation of the gift, but on the working of God to effect His purpose, which is the revelation of Jesus.. We take note in order to make war. So if you want me to show you where in the Word, someone had that experience of vomiting as a type of discernment, I can’t, but I can refer to those having experiences where they fell down as dead, became pale like Daniel, like Isaiah, and like John the Revelator.

So let us look together at the significance of the Word of God, the study, the meditation, the reciting, the singing, the praying, the proclaiming and the sharing of God’s logos and rhema word of God as we see the darkness closing in during the final chapters of Planet Earth. We have in the preceding two weeks laid the foundation of the “end times” in the gospels, and in several epistles and have looked at the several OT verses in Daniel, in Psalms, in Zechariah, and in Malachi that the times are in the Lord’s hand and even though no man knows the day or the hour of His return, the Messiah is surely returning and when He does, every eye shall see Him. (Rev 1:7) As we have looked at the significance of prayer and fervent intercession and at the place of worship as we see that Day approaching, we also need to consider the Word of God.

At creation in Genesis, the triune God, spoke the Word over the formless void. The spoken Word had it’s place at the beginning and so it will have it’s place at the end. In the book of Revelation, John saw the Lord (Rev 1:16) with a double-edged sword coming out of His mouth. In Rev 22:17 “The Spirit and the Bride say. ‘Come!’ ” The word “logos” refers to 1) the expression of thought, whether written or spoken, of God. In II Tim 3:16-17 it says, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. Whether in writing or with preaching or teaching, whether in song or in prophecy, it will have an effect. It will train us, it will rebuke or correct us and it will teach us. In Psalm 119:105, it says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”. David refers to both the written and spoken general word of God. And this is a psalm, written to be sung. It speaks of the nature of His word which brings light, the enlightening of our heart to know which way to go. How much do you think that we will need to know which way to go in the days ahead? It is our map! And it is a roadmap to eternal treasure that can be found only as we abide in this word and it abides in us. It is a map that will require more than a curious glance or a cursory understanding. It is the way to life! And how we apply ourselves to God’s Word and how we allow this Word to

apply to us has everything to do with our fulfillment of God's destiny for each of us.

In II Tim 2:15 it says, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." It says our **best**. When you do your best at something-say in your personal choice of fashion as say, Miss America, we don't expect someone looking like a hag to walk down the runway, do we? She will have every hair in place, the perfect gown that highlights her physique and when she demonstrates her talent, one that has been honed for years, we don't expect her to sing, "Mary had a little lamb, do we or "Twinkle, twinkle, little star?" Now that Miss America has to compete with The American Idol, we have quite the competition! When it says our best, it refers to diligence in the study of the Word of God, not just in the knowledge but in the conduct of our lives "according to the Word". I like the image of a workman. It reminds of a building that is being built, brick upon brick. And with the Word, it is line upon line and precept upon precept. I Cor 3:7-9 says that "we are God's fellow workers, God's field, God's building." Not only are you building a foundation in your own life, but you are building a foundation in one another's lives as we partake of His Word together. I Pet 2:4-5 speaks of us as living stones built into the spiritual house of the priesthood. So we are to do our best as a workman. Sometimes we are aware that we are knocking the rough edges off of each other as iron sharpens iron! But to be one who is diligent in the Word, means we are careful to take in His Word, to read until something effects us, changes us, arrests us, builds us up "edifies" us, brings encouragement and the word of faith and hope to continue on the journey.

I would caution you about being a "news hog" in these days. Listen only enough to pray with understanding. News hogs can only oink out what they are hearing. We must be so saturated in the Word that even our table conversation is transformed and becomes transformational in those who hear. The Bible says we are to "eat the scroll" like Isaiah. We are to consume the Word of God. The Bible says whosoever is thirsty and whosoever is hungry, come, drink and eat. Let's read from I Tim 4:1-16. Since we are told in the gospels that deceivers and scoffers will come in the last days, this is a very pertinent Scripture for us to consider. Notice in Vs 5, it speaks of our food being consecrated by the Word of God and prayer. We pray prayers of blessing and thanksgiving when we sit to eat. We see here that the word of God consecrates. What else does the Word of God do? It cleanses us. In Eph 5:25. "Husbands love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her, by washing her with the word, and to present her to Himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless." In the passage from I Tim 4:13 Paul says to Timothy, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, and to preaching and to teaching." This "public reading" is something we will put in place

today. We have somehow lost this. We pick out a verse here or there to illustrate our point in teaching or preaching, but there is very little, just reading the Words of God, especially in a public place. In fact, satan is trying to plunder us of this treasure and benefit in our nation. Let's look at II Tim 1:13-14. We are told to guard this deposit that has been entrusted to us.

So we have seen how the word of God gives guidance and we have seen how it cleanses. It feeds us and satisfies our thirst for God. What else does the word of God do in us? Col 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." I think the word of God makes us wise in spiritual truth and also produces thanksgiving in our hearts. In John 17:17 it says, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth". So the Word of God sanctifies us or sets us apart. Heb 4:12 says, "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two edged sword, it penetrates to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Word is like a sword, like the sword we read about in Rev 1:16 in the mouth of God who is coming to take vengeance upon His enemies, to pronounce His judgments. Eph 6:17 speaks of the only offensive weapon in the list of spiritual weapons-the sword of the spirit. It is a weapon of warfare and when combined with praise, it is lethal to our enemies. In Ps 149:6 it says, "May the high praise of God be in our mouths and a two-edged sword in our hands, to inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples..." The sword is a symbol of truth and the severity of the word of God. Do you remember in John 15 where it speaks of the Jesus being the vine and His Father being the vinedresser? It says He cuts off every branch that bears no fruit, while every branch that bears fruit, He prunes, so that it will be even more fruitful. The Word is weapon of warfare, which Jesus used against the enemy when He was tempted.(Deut 8:3 and Matt 4:4) He says "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." But also, this sword, the word of God is used to remove what is not fruitful in believers' lives, whatever does not bring Him glory and honor.

As regards sharing the word of God, we are told in Matt 28 to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and to teach them all that I commanded." Phil 2:16 says, that we are to become blameless and pure children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life..." Let's read from II Tim 4:1-5. We are told to preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction. We are told that the time will come when men will turn away from the truth, but we are encouraged even in that environment to do the work of the evangelist.

The word “logos”, besides meaning the written or spoken expression of thoughts of God, also refers to the Personal or Incarnate Word, Jesus Himself. In John 1:1 it says, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” In vs 14 it says, “The Word was made flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

What about the “rhema” of God. This does not speak to the general word of God, but the specific, personal application of the logos truth to you, your situation, your church, your city, or your nation. We also speak of the word of prophecy which always testifies or gives testimony to the work of Jesus in someone’s life. The logos word always has preference and priority over the rhema word of God. However, like the logos, the specific word of prophecy or word of knowledge or word of wisdom will always correct, comfort, exhort or encourage. It will never be complete in and of itself, but will be a part or piece of the confirmation of the logos word to you. It will agree with the counsel of those that God has placed over you-your husband, your pastor or some spiritual authority. It will never negate or disallow the Bible, but will be specific to its application in your life.

Do you think that we will need rhema words now and in the future? Oh, yes! I Thes 5:19 says, “Do not put out the Spirit’s fire, do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.” How can we test the words we receive? If we have allowed God to write His word on our hearts, we will know the truth. And we will be led by His peace and His peace will guard our hearts and minds. It says in Joshua 1:8 “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth, meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” David says, “Let the words of my mouth and meditations of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord.” In Heb 10, “This is the covenant I will make with them, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”

God wants us to have life and to have it abundantly. He wants us to have His truth in our inward parts. It says in II Sam 22:31 and in Ps 12:6 that His Word is flawless. In Ps 19:7 it says that the law of the Lord is perfect and that it revives the soul. It brings joy to our hearts. Are we going to need joy in the days ahead when we know that the joy of the Lord strengthens? If the joy of the Lord is our strength, then we will need the rejoicing that the word brings to our hearts. His words to us are sweeter than honey. It brings us reward for our diligence as we apply it to our lives. It says the word bring us warnings. It assures us of provision and protection. It brings healing to the broken-hearted. It brings comfort. It will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!

The word of God is dependable and enduring. I Pet 1:25 says, “The Word of the Lord stands forever.” Matt 24:35 says, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.” Read Rev 19:15 and 21 tells us a little more about the sword that comes from the Lord’s mouth:

“Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations.” The voice of the Lord is powerful as it says in Ps 29. As we partner with the Lord in proclaiming His truth with the authority He has given us as His church, we can also affect nations. Because we are at a critical juncture in our nations’ history. It is an unprecedented time. We are about to see a turning of the nation and it will either turn toward God or away from God. These are desperate times. So I have brought a map of the United States and pictures of Barack Obama and those of his cabinet. We are simply going to read publicly the Word of God over our nation and this administration for a period of time and then we will pray at the end.