

'LOVE FROM ABOVE'
(Fullness of Joy through Biblical Fellowship in Christ)
Studies in 1 John

R.I.B.S.

How do you like your ribs? Not the barbecue favorite of Guam, but your actual ribs there between your shoulders and your waist. Most of us never think about them, but without ribs you wouldn't live long or look as nice as you do. Ribs are important bones that give structure, form, and strength to your torso. They also are tremendously important in forming a protective, boney cage around your vital organs. Take away your ribs and you would be a very vulnerable, pudgy, odd-looking caricature of yourself. Although we will probably live our entire life without seeing our ribs, we can know they are there – we feel them when they get hurt or broken; we see them if they get x-rayed, and we can feel them right there beneath the flesh of our side, quietly doing their crucial job of giving support and form all our earthly days.

When we turn from our sinful ways in trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, God the Holy Spirit moves into action by taking up permanent residence within us (*John 14:15-17*). His most immediate function is to perform certain 'non-emotional' things (we don't sense or feel these actions) within us that give strength, structure and form to our new inner Christian life. The Holy Spirit also does 'emotional' things that we feel (convict, comfort, empower, etc.), but they are dependent upon His performance of four basic essentials, summed up in the acrostic R.I.B.S. – these four things give a truly born-again Christian the inner, spiritual structure and form for a secure, attractive Christian life with God, others and oneself:

- R** = *Regeneration* / to enliven and energize a believer's God-consciousness and reverence.
(*Titus 3:5-6*)
- I** = *Indwelling* / permanent residence within the Christian's soul (*mind, will and emotions*)
(*John 14:15-17*)
- B** = *Baptism* / spiritual placement & connection of a child of God into the '*body of Christ*'
(*1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:26-27*)
- S** = *Sealing* / securing one as God's permanent possession by to the Spirit's presence within
(*Ephesians 1:13-14*)

All of these things take place by the power of the Holy Spirit when He comes upon and enters the heart and soul of true Christians. Although these are not felt ministries of the Holy Spirit, they are essential gifts of God needed for a successful, abundant Christian life in this world. This world is hostile to God and those who belong to Him, therefore these things are essential at the beginning of our Christian life in Christ. Without them the initial joyful spiritual birth of a believer would be a short-lived emotion without much lasting substance and leave the child of God as an easy mark of the enemy and the world system under his sinister control.

God hopes you like your R.I.B.S. and the Holy Spirit Who has installed them as a permanent part of Christian life and ministry. You don't have to always think about your R.I.B.S., but it is a real blessing to know that all the other awesome things God the Spirit is teaching you, doing in you and through you is largely possible because of those four unseen doctrinal truths giving daily support, strength and form to your inner spiritual life and relationship with the Father.

PtL

‘Internal Security’

(Safeguarding Our Fullness of Joy Fellowship in Christ)

1 John 2:20-29

Anointing of The Spirit

(Detection of Truth or Error / The Holy Spirit)

2:20-21

*“But **you have an anointing from the Holy One**, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that **no lie is of the truth**.”*

Abiding in The Savior

(Defense of Spiritual Connection / Followers of Christ)

2:22-27

*“Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? **He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also**. Therefore **let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us – eternal life. But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.**”*

Appearance of The Son

(Delight in Christ’s Imminent Return / Disciples of Christ)

2:28-29

*“And now, **little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming**. If you know that He is righteousness, you know that **every-one who practices righteousness is born of Him**.”*