

Guidance

Have you ever heard someone say, "How can I hear the voice of the Lord?" It seems that while we as believers want guidance from the Lord, we often miss it. Since we are creatures who are subject to feelings, emotions, and our senses, we often look to the natural for God's guidance. That is, we look for a sign or an "open door".

When we were in the world, we were guided by the things of the world, by our sight, our hearing, our intuition, and our reasoning powers. However, now that we are born again, the first thing we must realize about guidance is that God does not lead us in natural ways. Guidance in the Christian life is by supernatural means. Another thing I often hear people say is, "I'm afraid that if God speaks to me, I'll miss it." When you are afraid, you are no longer in faith and you probably will miss God!

However, as a born-again believer you can have confidence in the words of Jesus found in John 10:27, *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* Still another scripture which tells us that we can be led by the Lord is Romans 8:14, *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* The Holy Spirit lives in us to lead us and guide us.

We sometimes view God's supernatural guidance as being elusive because it deals with things that will happen in the future, an area yet unmarked by time, whereas we humans are bound by time. We know what happened to us yesterday. We know what is happening to us right now. However, we don't know what is going to happen even ten minutes from now, much less tomorrow. The good news is that *we don't need to know* because the Holy Spirit, who lives in us and who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, is already out there ahead of us to lead and guide us. When I say "ahead of us," I mean that He is actually out there in time, for He is not bound by time as we are. Thus, the Holy Spirit is now, in the present, and He is also in tomorrow. In the spirit realm there is no time. The Holy Spirit knows tomorrow and next week just as He knows the present and the past. He is forever the same.

Let's look again at Romans 8:14, *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* The word "led" takes on an even greater significance when we

take into consideration the fact that the Holy Spirit is already ahead of us in time. Since He knows tomorrow, all we have to do is depend on Him. What often happens instead is that we want to trade places with the Holy Spirit and get out in front. However, nowhere do the scriptures say that we are pushed by the Spirit of God. If we were pushed, that would put the Holy Spirit behind us in time, in the past. Why have Him in the past pushing us when we could have Him in the future which He already knows, leading us?

In Jeremiah 10:23, we are given another truth about guidance. *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.* This scripture is clearly telling us that we cannot guide ourselves.

Look at it this way. Could you save yourself? Heal yourself? Prosper yourself? In each of these areas you cannot succeed, but you don't have to. All you need to do is reach out with your faith, and then God does the saving, the healing, and the prospering. This same principle is also true in the area of guidance.

However, problems arise when the subject is guidance, because we often want to get ourselves involved in it. We ask God to "open a door" so that we'll know He is leading us. Then we'll look at the door and say, "Why, this must be God because this door opened and that one closed." Haven't we all done this? Have you ever been led astray by these doors? That could easily happen since doors are not the way God guides us! The devil is in the business of opening and closing doors, too. More importantly, when you are led by the Spirit of God, you will have the confidence and boldness to kick open doors that close!

Another natural sign we try to use.. to determine God's guidance is a fleece. I know what you're thinking, "Gideon was led by a fleece." It's true, he was. However, Gideon lived in the dispensation before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which occurred on the Day of Pentecost. He did not have the Holy Spirit living in him as we do. That's why we are guided in a different manner than Gideon. Instead of being guided from the outside as he was, we are guided from the inside by the still, small

voice of the Lord.

In fact, when we want guidance, we shouldn't even look at the circumstances. The devil comes at us through our eyes, our ears, and our other senses - from the outside. Thus, we often mistake the god of this world for the one true God. And then, when Satan has us by rings in our noses and is leading us around by natural circumstances, we tell everyone, "Glory be, it must be Jesus leading me and guiding me." But, it's not Jesus. He guides you through the leading of the Holy Spirit.

We can be led by the Holy Spirit because, as born-again believers, we are spiritually alive. In John 3:6, Jesus tells us this when he says, *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* In other words, your flesh was produced by man, but your spirit was produced by God. When you were born again, you did not change outwardly; rather, the spirit man on the inside was reborn, and the Spirit of the Lord came to live in your spirit. You became linked up with the living God. God moved you into the presence of the Holy Spirit, and you gained His righteousness. You gained His position. You gained all of His ability. Knowing this, does it make sense to revert to your first birth to be guided by natural means? There is no reason to be guided by our senses when we can be guided by the super-natural Holy Spirit living in us!

As we have mentioned in recent teachings, man is a three-part being made up of spirit, soul, and body. Most of us consider ourselves to be primarily a body which has a spirit and a soul. However, the Word of God defines us as spirit beings which have a soul and are housed in a human body. This body is often referred to in the Word as a temple or a tent, both of which are merely outward coverings. Your body is the temple which houses your spirit. Furthermore, this body is decaying day-by-day while our spirit man on the inside is being renewed day-by-day. This is why guidance does not come from the outside; guidance comes from the Holy Spirit that lives in your human spirit.

We have just begun the subject of guidance. In our next issue we'll cover the seven ministries of the Holy Spirit and how they are revealed in the Word. As this

unfolds, you will see how powerful the Holy Spirit is in us to lead us and guide us.

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