

Learning to Be Led By the Spirit – Part 2: The Basics

How to be led by the Spirit of God

"Rom: 8:14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

The Basics:

Ok - We KNOW (or should anyway) that in God's Word to us (The Bible), we are to be LED by the Holy Spirit. Yet, as discussed in Part 1 - we discovered that there are two areas where the average Christian encounters problems when attempting to do this:

- Very often they do not recognize WHEN it is the SPIRIT that is leading them - and when it is not.
- They don't know HOW to follow the leading of the Spirit. They just don't know what to DO.

IT SEEMS SIMPLE:

Yes it does. But then, *walking* seems simple also: for the person who knows HOW to walk!

However, if you watch a child learning to walk, you will notice that he/she doesn't find it simple at all! As a matter of fact - they find it extremely difficult.

Another thing that you may have noticed is that the child doesn't KNOW that they don't know HOW to walk! They just try to get up again and again, but they will continually fall down. Yet, they are fully convinced that they know how to walk just like an adult.

They don't - but they THINK they do!

However, if someone who DOES know how to walk offers the child the proper guidance and support, the child will eventually learn. First with "baby steps" and then finally strong confident strides.

And, once the child has acquired, thru PRACTICE, the skill of placing one foot in front of the other, balancing them self, gauging the length of their stride, etc - he/she finds it much simpler..

SO IT IS WITH CHRISTIANS

" Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Those that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts..... For precept must be upon precept, ... line upon line, ... here a little, and there a little: [Isaiah 28:9-10]

The way that we as natural children grew by learning the natural things - is the SAME way that we as spiritual children learn the things of God.

We learn by PRACTICING those things that we are taught.

- We take baby steps
- We gain skill by practice
- We grow by applying the knowledge acquired

But notice carefully in verse 9: It is only those who are "weaned from the milk" and "drawn from the breast" that GROW properly. In other words, in order for us to *mature* in the things of God, it is necessary that we GROW UP.

We do this by putting down those childish thoughts, attitudes, ideas, and the natural things that stunt our growth spiritually.

THE BABY CHRISTIAN

Have you noticed that very few Christians like to *admit* that they might not be as mature in some areas as they should be? They refuse to admit that they might have missed it somewhere.

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THE BABY CHRISTIAN

But what they don't realize is that this is exactly the attitude that:

- Identifies them as a baby
- Stunts their growth
- Causes them to remain a baby

Anyone who has ever been a teenager can remember our teenage attitudes. We were NOT adults, but we THOUGHT we were! We didn't know much about life at all - but we sure thought we did!

We were wrong!

But, after a while, the experiences of life and its challenges finally enabled us to gain the knowledge, skill and maturity of an adult.

Notice something else: Somewhere along the line, as we went thru life, we realized that:

- We *didn't* know everything
- We *can* learn from others
- We *do* make mistakes
- We *can* be wrong

And, most important: If we hadn't *admitted* these things to ourselves - we would not have matured *properly* and we would have *remained* children: psychologically and emotionally.

LEARNING HOW TO BE LED

How did we learn as natural children? By following the examples of those who DID know the proper way to do things.

Shocking as this may be to some - just because we receive the Lord does NOT mean that:

- We automatically become a mature Christian
- We are automatically skilled in the Word of Righteousness
- We automatically know all doctrine
- We automatically receive all revelation
- We automatically recognize His voice
- We automatically FOLLOW him when HE leads
- Etc.

"For every one that uses milk is UNSKILLFUL in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe "... but strong meat belongs to them that are of a full age (mature), those who by PRACTICE (reason of use) have their trained (exercised) their senses to be able to judge (discern) what is God (good) and what is not (evil). [Heb: 5:13-14]

Notice in verse 13: that it is possible to BE a Christian - and yet NOT be skillful in the things of God (Word of Righteousness).

WHAT THINGS?

Anything!

- You can be born again and never gain even a basic understanding of the foundational principles of the doctrine of Christ as described in Hebrews 6:1-3.
- You can be born again and never learn the basic truths of healing, prosperity, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, or even the triune nature of God.
- And - like any Christians, you may never have learned HOW to be led by the Spirit of God.

HOW CAN THIS BE?

Simple. When dealing with the things of God - faith ALWAYS comes by hearing: [See Romans 10:14-17]

If you were never TAUGHT properly - OR - if YOU never took the time to seek GOD by asking for revelation of His Word on this subject - OR - if you (like so many have done) have REJECTED the truth when it was offered - then you would not have obtained the knowledge necessary to recognize WHEN the Spirit is attempting to lead you - and HOW to respond when He does.

HOW BAD CAN IT BE?

I cannot tell you how often I have heard some dear brother or sister say something along the lines of: "The Lord told me that..." - or - "The Lord wants me to..." - or something similar.

Then, they go off and try to do what they THOUGHT was God - THINKING that they are "being led" - but it ALWAYS seems to end in failure and defeat.

Why? Because it wasn't the Lord!

SO?

Well, next month it's something else that "The Lord told them to do".

They never completed the FIRST task they thought was God - yet they really believe that they NOW have the REAL task. (I guess God changed His mind about the first task - and the second - and the third - etc).

Didn't Jesus say:

"He that is unfaithful in that which is least is unfaithful also in much: [Lk:16:10]

But here they go again - and - they end up with the same result!

- Failure
- Defeat
- The task goes unfinished - again.

WHY?

Because they never learned:

- When it is the Spirit speaking
- How to follow when he leads

And what's worse - they continue to believe that they DO know when it the Lord - and that they DO know how to respond. Yet the evidence of their error is staring them right in their face:

- Failure to complete the task
- Failure to overcome the trial
- Failure to reach the goal
- Failure to achieve success
- Failure to obtain the victory

LOOK TO THE WORD FOR INSTRUCTION:

Nowhere in the New Testament does it teach, or show examples of God leading of his people who are following Him down the road of failure or defeat. It doesn't glorify him - nor does it inspire or encourage anyone else to follow Him.

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Look to the word for instruction:

God is NOT glorified by failure:

- He is a God that brings Victory - not defeat!
- He is a God that brings Success - not failure!
- He is a God that brings Triumph - not loss!
- He is a God that brings Salvation - not death!
- He is a God that helps us to WIN battles - not lose them!
- He is a God that helps us reach the mark - not miss it!

Anything less than accomplishing the task or vision that one BELIEVES that the Spirit of God directed them to do - brings nothing to the name of the Lord but: *SHAME*.

THAT'S NOT GOD!

"...when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you....He shall glorify me..." Notice that when the Spirit of GOD leads us; it is to GLORIFY Jesus. Defeat, and failure does NOT glorify Jesus?

ARE THERE CONSEQUENCES?

- "For by thy words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." [Mt: 12:37]
- "You are snared with the words of your mouth, you are taken captive with your words" [Prov: 6:2]
- "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." [Rom:14:12]
- "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." [2Cor:5:10]
- "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." [Mt:12:36]

And Jesus himself said:

- "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." [Mt:12:36]
- "Out of your own mouth will I judge you, you wicked servant." [Lk: 19:22]

Uh-Oh!

What these dear people don't realize is that they will be held accountable for NOT doing what they THOUGHT the Lord had instructed them to do - even though he didn't!

Why? Because they declared it with their mouth as God SPEAKING to them! And, if they believed that it was GOD - then they were required to FINISH the task!

A FRESH START:

All right. So you have realized how SERIOUS a matter this is - and you have decided that you really want to learn how to be led by the Spirit of God. Now what?

1. Baby Steps:

The first thing that you must do is simple: If you really WANT to learn how to be led by the Spirit - humble yourself and admit that you DON'T know HOW!

Why: "... God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble." [1Pt: 5:5] As long as you refuse to admit that you just don't *know how*, then you will remain where you are and never learn the truth - because God RESISTS the proud!

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However, if you simply go before God and admit that you have missed it - and that you want to LEARN HOW - then He will give you the GRACE to do so!

2. NEXT: PRACTICE.

Practice what?

Practice the basics described in Part 1 and other accompanying the articles in this series.

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