

THEME: Pursuing God in 2009
Monthly Series: Pursuing God's Pathway

Title: Making Spirit Led Decisions
Romans 8.11-17

February 15, 2009

REVIEW: Following the Holy Spirit (Without Being Weird)

Religious thought has convinced us that hearing God is next to impossible because He is distant and remote, when He is actually as close as my heart. I am not listening for a voice from heaven – heaven is inside me in the form of the Holy Spirit. We should therefore expect the leading to come from the Holy Spirit in our hearts. JF

There are several issues to address when you desire to be led by the Spirit of God.

- Remember that God wants to lead you more than you want to be led. He is committed to seeing you walk in His plans and purpose for your life.
- He is constantly speaking and the issue is the “noise” in our lives that “clutters” our ears. We must get on “His frequency” so we can get the message He’s sending.
- We must be diligent in following the leading already given and being faithful where we already serve in order to gain more clarity and direction.

1. Acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is there ([verses 9-10](#))

But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.
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2. Embrace His power to bring life through divine input!

11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. NASU

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3. Decide to accept Him as your Heavenly Dad! *Rom 8:13-15*
- He does not want to hide from you, He wants you to grow up!

14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, " Abba! Father!" NASU

1. Following the Spirit frees us from death

- When life follows the flesh and its dictates it leads to death
- When life is held on to and not laid down it leads to death
- When we make decisions based on our own pain and hurts it can lead to death.

2. Following the Spirit releases the inheritance into our lives

- The bondage of slavery produces death
- Adoption into His family defeats fear!
- The inheritance is ours but He must release it to us

Acts 20:32

32 "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. NASU

The inheritance is not for children but for sons and daughters!

3. Following the Spirit is a test of patience.

Prov 3:5-6

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart
And do not lean on your own understanding.

6 In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He will make your paths straight. NASU

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Step 1 – Determine if this is even something you should be considering.

Step 2 – Decide from the beginning that if He doesn't want it neither do you!

Step 3 – Don't make the decision before you make the decision.

Too often our prayer is more akin to “Lord bless this mess”

Step 4 – Delight yourself in the Lord where you are.

Ps 37:4-5

Delight yourself in the LORD;
And He will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him, and He will do it.

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Notes;

Made alive by the spirit

Put to death the deeds of the flesh by the spirit (how)

Additional Notes:

I am so glad to see you will be dealing with this subject. I think the keys to answering your question arise from the word picture you painted about “Hide & Seek” with daddy in yesterday's sermon. Religious thought has convinced us that hearing God is next to impossible because He is distant and remote, when He is actually as close as my heart. I am not listening for a voice from heaven – heaven is inside me in the form of the Holy Spirit. We should therefore expect the leading to come from the Holy Spirit in our hearts. As such:

Barriers: Just like the hide & seek game – Daddy may seem like he is hiding sometimes, but is so easy to find. What things exist in my life that might stop my sensitivity to the Lord's voice. He is constantly speaking (Blackaby) – it is not a matter of me conning Him out of some words, it is a matter of me removing interference (things that compete for my heart – they become idols) and dullness (things that distract me like worry, anxiety, activities that desensitize me – involvement in sin). Another common barrier I find is people who want God's will but have not done what He already said to do – His will in this case is to do what he already said (sounds like what Momma and daddy used to say, right! You aren't going to the mall until you mow the grass – “yes, mom, but what is your will” – that would earn you a whooping for sure!)

Frequency: If God is already speaking every day, it's a matter of catching what He is already doing in my life – he is not waiting for me – He is already at work (He's Lord!). The situation becomes like being in a room with cell phone, TV, radio signals all around me in the room, but no receiver tuned to the right frequency – I must tune into the right frequency to hear God and catch what He is doing. I find it is not a matter of teaching people who to hear God's voice as much as how to settle down and begin to see the things they are missing all around them because of clutter, business, etc. I have no idea how people think they can clutter up their heart with all of things and still expect to hear God – He usually doesn't shout – the Holy Spirit is a gentleman and waits His turn! Its also like learning to relate to a man or woman when you first start to know them – you get familiar with their way and after a while you can come into a room and know what they are thinking without a word. Being tuned into God is like that – it is often communication without words, but just knowing in your heart.

Life: It is my contention that God is already working His will into my life, and if I pay attention, it becomes obvious. He is not waiting for me – He is already executing a sovereign plan to bring me to the place of maximum fruitfulness, even before I am saved (Clinton – The Making of a Leader). Knowing His will is often simply getting quiet and focused enough to see what He is already at work doing in my life. If I reflect on life, threads become apparent as to where He is moving me and what He wants me to do – I need only align myself and go with His flow. Confirmation of hearing/seeing His will usually comes from multiple sources – other people, events that take me by surprise. I have a burden for people to get over the spooky stuff and get real. Hearing Him is just as natural as breathing because He is that close and always talking through our heart, others, and life circumstances.

These would be the three things that come to mind when I think about discerning God's will.

1. God's Will is a desirable and safe place to live.
2. Knowing God's will requires consistent seeking and listening
3. God uses many instruments/means to reveal His will (written word, voice of the Spirit, godly counsel through others, etc.)

How to Know God's Will for your Life (vocation specifically)

Predilection: 1. My comments are as to someone who is a Christian. 2. Do not look at what God is doing in someone else as measuring rod to what is God's will for one's own life.

Three points

1. I believe that one's gifts and talents are not separate from the gravity of God's will for one's life. This means that God's will calls us through the God given gifts and talents we have (either innate or easily developed).

2. I believe that one's innate passion(s) or expressed passion(s) is/are pointers to an inner knowing even at times before cognitive clarity in reference to God's will. This means that some passions are there revealed in what grasps our attention. Other passions are expressed passions revealed in discussions. What discussions fires one up? What discussions gets one going?

3. Most of all, I believe that God's will is made clear as discerned (or discovered) in prayer, bible study and sometimes thorough religious experience (dreams,

visions, trances, hearing audible "voices and seeing no one"). These are spiritual disciplines that expose God's will in progressive detail.

4. If I had a fourth point, I would suggest (in some cases) trying "it" out (as Scripture says, "try the Spirits" to know if they are of God).

*Some passions are not consistent with scripture. So, passions are tested against scripture. When one tests a passion to discover that it is not consistent with scripture, one is able to redirect that passion in a more biblically based, Spirit inspired direction.

1. Prayer/Study of God's Word - When one fully relates to the heart of God, he will come to know the purpose of God. It is a discovery through a prayer relationship and embracing His word that he will know the direction to take by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I agree pursuing God is not a mystery, it is simply staying connected to Him to find out what He wants to do through us.

2. Service - I believe that as one is engaged in the local church vision, he or she will soon discover their passions while simply serving. "Whatever thy hands find to do, do it with all thy might". I think too many times as Christians, we wait for this "big moment" in which to fulfill purpose, when simply just being available to what is needed. Filling in the gaps. If we do this with an open heart and fully connect with the local church vision, one will soon discover what brings joy to them while serving the vision and one another.

3. Preached Word - (through another) Believe it or not...over the years I have locked into the path of God's will for my life through opening my heart to the preached word of God, that comes through one of God's servants. I believe we can hear God through the voice of another whether it be through the preaching of the word or prophetically. I believe that is why the five-fold ministry is so important to the church body...they prepare the body for service