

Learning to Be Led By the Holy Spirit

By Dave Roberson

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture notations are taken from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

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Chapter 1 ***The Importance*** ***Of the Holy Spirit's*** ***Leadership***

One of the most important teachings a person can receive is how to be led by the Holy Spirit. There are so many sincere believers who think God is leading them from one situation to another, yet many times, they end up confused because the outcomes aren't what they expect. Then they are left wondering why God would tell them to do things that rarely turn out right.

If you've ever been a victim of this type of situation, you know that nothing can be more confusing than to believe you heard from God and then to be confronted with overwhelming evidence that says you did not.

Satan's Deceptive Tactics

Over the years of ministry, I've seen a pattern emerge in this area of learning to be led by the Spirit. I've seen people stumble and fall, only to get up and repeat the same mistakes, and Satan uses this scenario over and over again on believers all around the world.

There is something about our potential to be led by the Holy Spirit that really scares the devil. He has gone to a lot of trouble to keep us confused, using every deception at his disposal to make sure he keeps us walking down the wrong road.

How does the devil do this? First off, he's smart enough to know that he

won't succeed by telling us that we can't be led by the Spirit. He realizes that we know better. Therefore, the only chance he has of neutralizing our walk with God is to indoctrinate us into his program, where we look to our emotions or outward circumstances as the basis for God's leadership and direction in our life instead of yielding to the Holy Spirit's inner witness in our spirit man.

One of the devil's favorite strategies is to send a bunch of low-level, second-rate, expendable devils to confuse us by parading believers across our path who claim to be "led by the Holy Spirit" in everything they do. If we look to these believers as role models of being led by the Spirit, we can easily become confused. Although they claim to be divinely led, they go through one situation after another, making bad decisions and suffering defeat until the bottom falls out of everything they do.

This is the same tactic the devil uses to confuse the issue of healing. He makes sure we hear about every believer who has ever "believed God" for a healing and did not receive a manifested miracle. In this way, Satan attempts to discredit all of God's promises in our life.

Why is the devil so avid in his opposition to our being led by the Holy Spirit? Well, just the fact that Satan fights it so hard ought to tell us how powerful and how dangerous this divine leadership can be to his kingdom.

Three Categories of Believers

When it comes to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, believers can be divided into three categories. The first category includes those who already understand how to be led by the Holy Spirit. These people have faith-inspiring testimonies and live lives that shine with the love and wisdom of God.

The second category is made up of believers who have been indoctrinated by the devil to operate out of the emotional realm of their soul and, consequently, have never learned how to operate out of their spirit man. These believers do experience the wonderful emotional highs that everyone feels when things go right, but they are also more susceptible to being weighed down by the emotional lows—torments, fears, and insecurities—that can be brought on by the pressures of life.

Many Christians fall into this second category because feelings are such an integral part of a person's makeup. Whether or not a believer is led by the inner witness of the Holy Spirit or by the devil's counterfeit is determined by how susceptible that believer is to pressure and the enticement of lust. The first type of leadership—the inner witness—originates in a person's spirit; the second type is Satan's attempt to lead through a person's emotions, all the while making that person think he is following God.

Before we discuss this second category of believers further, let's go

on to the third category of Christians: Those who don't acknowledge any form of divine leadership at all. These believers don't believe that a person can be led by the Holy Spirit. As far as they're concerned, God exists and they're going to Heaven. But it's almost as though this category of believers think God has abandoned them while they live on planet Earth. They're just supposed to do as well as they can while they're here. Then, when their lives are over, they'll finally see Jesus.

But we know from God's Word that this isn't the case at all. Our Heavenly Father demonstrated His willingness to fellowship with us and to lead us by His Spirit when He not only saved us but gave us the infilling of the Holy Ghost!

Chapter 2

The Inner Witness vs. Soulish Emotions

Most of us want to be led by the Holy Spirit, and when we've learned how to receive direction from Him, God's counsel and wisdom is made available to us in everything we do. I'm not just talking about receiving divine direction for ministry, but for our jobs, our businesses, and for raising our families. So let's take a look at how the Holy Spirit manifests Himself to us through the inner witness—the foundational, primary way that God leads His children.

In Proverbs 20:27, God compares our spirit to a candle, saying, **The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.** Our spirit is the part of us that God illuminates and through which He communicates. It is through our spirit that the Holy Spirit leads us, and the most dominant method He uses to accomplish this leadership is the inner witness.

Differentiating Between Spirit and Emotions

Romans 8:14-16 talks about the inner witness of the Holy Spirit:

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

**THE SPIRIT ITSELF BEARETH
WITNESS WITH OUR SPIRIT, that we
are the children of God:**

Here we have a scriptural foundation verifying the fact that the Holy Spirit will **BEAR WITNESS** within our human spirit. But in order to understand how the inner witness really works, we must first understand what God designed this form of divine leadership to accomplish in our lives and how we can yield to it.

Let's begin by identifying the difference between what we experience when the Holy Spirit bears witness with our human spirit versus when we are being led by our emotions. We have to differentiate between the emotional realm of the soul—which can fluctuate from excitement when everything is going right to depression when it isn't—and the steadfast, stabilizing quality of the born-again human spirit.

So consider this: Have you ever tried to give up on God, but something down on the inside just wouldn't let you do it? No matter how hard you tried, how bad things got, or how intense the pressure became, something on the inside kept crying out, "Abba, Father." (*Abba* is the intimate Greek term for "Daddy." Therefore, *Abba, Father* is an expression that says, "I am yielding to You, Daddy, because You are the Father of my spirit.")

Now, you probably didn't walk around actually hearing the words "Abba, Father" going off on the inside

of you. But even though your flesh was screaming at you to quit, exerting fifteen tons of pure emotional pressure through torment and fear, something way down, deep inside you simply refused to give up. That inner something kept saying, “I don’t care how bad it is—You are the Father of my spirit, and I’m not moved by what I see, hear, or feel. I’m only moved by what I believe!”

So here’s how you can tell the difference between your spirit and your emotions: The part of you that refused to give in was your spirit. The part that reacted to the pressure was your emotions—your soul. The key is to learn how to operate out of the part of you that would not give up.

The Holy Spirit Bears Witness With Your Spirit

Look again at what Romans 8:16 says: **The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.** This means that when circumstances in your life get so bad that you feel like giving up, the part of you that the Holy Spirit strengthens is your spirit. And as you sense that strength, your spirit responds by acknowledging its salvation. This is what verse 15 refers to when it says, **We cry, Abba, Father.**

The flesh, the devil, and the world may heap condemnation on you. They may put pressure on you and badger you to give up. But the Holy Spirit will combat all that opposition by continually bearing witness on the inside of your spirit that you are a child of God!

Not only does the Holy Spirit bear witness to your salvation, but He also bears witness to whether you are thinking the right or wrong way, making right or wrong decisions, or believing right or wrong doctrine. Therefore, the quicker you can differentiate between the emotional realm of the soul and the stabilizing quality of the born-again human spirit, the quicker you will learn how to be led by the inner witness—out from the bondage of the flesh and into a walk of liberty and maturity.

Led by the Holy Spirit, Not by Your Emotions

For many years, I’ve watched ministers, businessmen, and people in general endeavor to make decisions according to the Holy Spirit’s direction. One thing I’ve noticed is that even though the Holy Spirit illuminates the spirit of every child of God, many Christians still fall into the devil’s trap of deception, being led around by their emotions. Mistaking emotions for the leadership of the Spirit, they believe God is leading them from one place to another and from one situation to another.

When I was first born again, I was excited about the prospect of being led by the Holy Spirit. Like most people, my concept of the leadership of the Spirit was that He would lead me from place to place or even from poverty into wealth. But later on I found out—as so many have discovered before me—that it is almost impossible for the Holy Spirit to lead a believer in this manner as long as the devil has access to the

believer's emotions and can overpower the leading of the inner witness.

Christians who give the devil an open door to their soul find themselves on a continual emotional merry-go-round. Many run from place to place, claiming "God sent them" and causing confusion, because they are almost always confused themselves. They often prophesy "direction" over other people's lives, yet they need much help in their own lives.

However, it would do God no good to send people like this anywhere so long as the devil can overpower them once they arrive. In all truth, these people wouldn't be able to stand up under the pressure or temptations of sin.

That's why the Holy Spirit wants to take believers into the next step of the born-again experience. He wants to develop our character to such an extent that the still, quiet voice of our inner man is louder than the turmoil of pressures and stronger than the temptations of sin. Therefore, the Holy Spirit's first goal is to lead us out of a walk based on the flesh and dominated by our emotions into a walk of the spirit in which we can know how to discern His voice.

The truth is, our road to a life of victory will always direct us toward that which is more powerful than our carnal emotions—and that is the operation of our inner man. This brings us to a study of the operation of spirit, soul, and body.

Chapter 3 ***Dividing Between*** ***Spirit and Soul***

When God created His first man Adam, He fashioned a body for Adam from the dust of the earth—a substance that already existed. But when it came time for the creation of Adam’s spirit man, God reached down on the inside of His own Being and literally brought Adam’s spirit into existence. And when God placed that spirit into Adam’s body, the Life in that spirit activated his vital signs, and man became a living soul: **And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul** (Genesis 2:7).

Adam’s body was the most incredible thing God ever created. It was a physical suit of clothing that flowed in absolute harmony with the natural laws of physics governing the world. This “suit” gave the man Adam—a spiritual being—the ability to coexist on two levels of creation—God’s natural and spiritual kingdoms—much like an astronaut’s suit allows him to operate both on earth and in space.

There was nothing like man’s physical body in the entire universe. It was designed to house Adam’s spirit in every aspect. His spiritual hand fit into his natural hand—finger for finger; his spiritual eyes fit into his natural eyes; and his spiritual ears fit into his natural ears. God made this natural body to so perfectly encompass the operation of the inner man that if the natural man and the spiritual man

stood alongside each other, they would look almost identical.

A Physical Soul To House the Spiritual Soul

Now, when I say God created our natural body to house our spiritual body, most people don’t have any trouble understanding this principle. A more difficult concept to understand is that when God created the spirit of man, He placed within that human spirit certain spiritual forces, such as love, joy, and peace. These forces make up the nature of our inner man.

Then in exactly the same way that God created our physical hands and feet to be receptacles for our spiritual hands and feet, He created a physical soul that acts as a receptacle for the spiritual forces of love, joy, and peace. So when God placed Adam’s spirit into his body, the spiritual hand fit into its counterpart—the physical hand—and the spiritual soul fit into its counterpart—the physical soul!

You see, the difference between the spiritual soul and the physical soul is this:

- The spiritual soul possesses the **FORCE** of love.
- The physical soul possesses the **EMOTION** of love.

Man is the only part of God’s creation that possesses a spiritual soul. Take your pet dog or cat, for example. Dogs and cats can be so warm and friendly that the emotions of their physical soul can almost parallel the operation of a spiritual

soul. But when your pet dies, even though you may miss it terribly, its physical soul perishes with it.

When we die, however, our inner man is disconnected from our outer man and we simply step out of our physical body. Likewise, our spiritual soul, which consists of the forces of love, joy, and peace, is disconnected from our physical soul, which consists of the emotions of love, joy, and peace.

The same way your physical hand is designed to serve your spiritual hand while you are on this earth, the physical emotions of the soul are designed to serve the spiritual forces of the inner man. God designed these spiritual forces of love, joy, and peace to operate through the emotional realms of your soul to affect your entire being.

The New Nature Of the New Birth

But when Adam fell from God's grace and died spiritually, he received the nature of sin into his spirit. At that point, not only was his spirit capable of such things as hatred, murder, and lies, but this sin nature also infiltrated the chromosomes of his physical man, breaking the cycle of his perpetually self-renewing physical body. Thus that physical body laid down and died some nine hundred and thirty years later.

Centuries passed until Jesus came, and the new nature—God's nature—was once again made available to man through the new birth.

When we are born again, a new nature is received into our human spirit. Because of this new nature, our inner man no longer has the capacity to fluctuate between love and hate, truth and lies, peace and murder. Once again it remains constant in the spiritual forces of love, peace, and joy.

There's just one problem. The spiritual soul with its forces of love, peace, and joy must operate through the physical soul. But the physical soul still has death working in it, inherited from the first Adam. It still has the capacity to fluctuate between the emotions of love and hate.

Through our physical soul, the cares of this life can enter in if we allow them. Torment and fear can take hold and begin to control our emotions, causing them to fluctuate back and forth. But in the midst of it all, our spirit man will remain constant, almost as if to say, "You can fluctuate back and forth between hatred and love or between fear and faith if you want to, but I'm not going with you!"

The devil likes to build strongholds within the emotional realms of our soul. But as we learn more and more how to be led by the Holy Spirit, we'll grow to the place where our actions are controlled by the constant, stabilizing forces of our spirit man rather than by the emotional highs and lows of life.

Chapter 4 ***The Value of*** ***Praying in Tongues***

The primary key to help you reach past the emotional highs and lows of the world and in opening a channel directly to your inner man is: **PRAYING IN TONGUES**. First Corinthians 14:14 says, **For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.**

The truth is, I hate to think of the disadvantage a person has who hasn't been convinced of the significance of praying in tongues.

Using this precious gift, you can turn yourself over to the Holy Spirit on purpose, at any moment, to deliberately kindle and activate the fire of the inner witness. As soon as you start praying in tongues, you begin operating out of your inner man, for the Bible says that in the Spirit you speak mysteries: **For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries** (First Corinthians 14:2).

Building a Foundation Through Praying in Tongues

The Holy Spirit lives within that still, quiet place of your spirit where tongues originate. He quietly waits for you to either close the door to His incredible, life-changing forces or to throw that door wide open. Through the revelation gift of praying in tongues, He wants to put a foundation

underneath your character so strong that no matter what has you bound or how loud the voices of pressure and turmoil have become, He is able to lead you out of it all into victory.

You see, even though the origin of tongues is the Holy Spirit, it is your human spirit that does the praying. The Holy Spirit is actually creating the language of tongues within your human spirit as you speak it forth. Therefore, the prayer you are praying is in no way influenced by the soulish emotional highs or lows you may be experiencing at the time.

That's why praying in tongues strengthens the part of you from which you derive strength to resist sin. It also sharpens your discernment to differentiate between the emotional realm of the soul and the peaceful operation of the inner witness.

So the next time the enemy delivers a package of bad news to your door, don't immediately react out of your emotions. Instead, enter into the Spirit. Deliberately begin to operate out of your inner man by praying in other tongues. As you do, you'll bypass the soul altogether and drive your emotions back to where they're supposed to be—submitted to your spirit!

'Throwing a Lifeline' To Your Inner Man

Praying in tongues can be likened to finding a man who is lost at sea. The chances of finding one person in the vastness of the ocean are pretty slim. But when it does happen, the

helicopter comes over the horizon, spots a tiny, little dot in the great expanse of water, and throws the man a lifeline.

Well, sometimes the cares of this life can make you feel as though you're drowning in an ocean of emotional turmoil. But praying in tongues throws you a spiritual "lifeline" that can lead you out of trouble and into victory.

At first, when your foundation is still changing from operating out of the emotional realm to operating in the realm of the Spirit, your emotions can scream so loudly that they overwhelm the quiet place out of which your spirit operates. In fact, the operation of your inner man can seem rather weak next to your soul when it's raging with negative emotions. But just keep throwing a lifeline to your inner man. Every minute you pray in tongues, you edify yourself, cultivating the forces of love, peace, and joy resident within the new nature of your spirit.

As you allow the Holy Spirit to cultivate these spiritual forces within your inner man through praying in tongues, you'll eventually be able to tell the difference between the Holy Spirit's inner witness and your emotions—between the force of love and the emotion of love, the force of peace and an emotional sense of wellbeing, the force of joy and the emotion of happiness. You'll even grow to a place where your emotions serve **YOU** instead of you serving **THEM**.

That's when you can enter a rich, full life in which God leads you to

victory in every situation. He communicates with you, bearing witness when you are heading in a right direction. He checks you when you are heading in a wrong direction. He is able to do that now because the "giants in Canaan land" no longer control you through torment and fear. Instead, the calm, stabilizing operation of your spirit holds your mind and emotions steady, enabling you to discern the Holy Spirit's inner witness in any situation.

So go forth to possess the promised land of your inheritance in Jesus Christ. Yield to the Lord's work within your inner man as He leads you out of bondage and corruption into a mature walk of sonship and liberty. You **CAN** be led by the Holy Spirit!

Chapter 5 ***Present-Day Speaking***

The greatest thing a believer can do for Me, says the Lord, is yield himself to the power of My Holy Spirit. For have I not said that He will guide you into all truth and that My Word is truth? Outside of His Presence, there is no leadership and no illumination of the mind.

There are those who have entered into a relationship with Me in the generations and decades past, yes, even in other centuries, says the Spirit. Those few who were caught up into My Presence held the standard as they passed through their generations.

To any child of God who yields himself to Me, I would say it is your Father's pleasure to place all the keys to the Kingdom into your hands. There is nothing I am withholding from you, nothing I will not reveal to you. For I have called you to cross this place with your anointing and your call and to do exploits in these last days.

Be strong, My child, in the power of My might, and you will be elated and full of joy. Thirst on but know this: No man can give you what you thirst for. You must allow the Holy Spirit to bring you from glory to glory and reveal the fullness of Jesus Christ in your life and in your call.

Oh, that you would enter into My Presence and be full of My joy and power! says the Spirit. So learn to spend time with Me. Tune yourself up

to walk with Me, and you will do exploits for Me.

Before My coming, your eyes will see what you desire to see—the fullness of the moving of My Spirit in people's lives and in the blessings of God.

Do You Want the Holy Spirit To Lead You?

In this book, Dave Roberson presents a unique scriptural understanding of what it means to be led by the Holy Spirit through the inner witness. Dave teaches from the Scriptures that before anything else, the Holy Spirit leads you “out of a walk based on the flesh and dominated by your emotions into a walk of the spirit in which you can know how to discern His voice.”

So if you want to learn how to be led by the Holy Spirit, don't try to skip the first step. As you yield to the Holy Spirit's leadership in your life, you'll find a life of liberty and victory waiting on the other side!

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