

Learning To Hear God's Voice/Leading

Isa 52:6 AMP

6 Therefore My people shall know what My name is and what it means; therefore they shall know in that day that I am He who speaks; behold, I AM! [Ex 3:13,14.]

There are many ideas about God speaking to us. Some do not believe that God still speaks to individuals or they believe that it is only through the scriptures that we understand what God wants from us. To be sure, the scriptures are the the revelation of God to us, the checks and balances that determine boundaries, the truth that keeps us from establishing wrong ideas, but the scriptures themselves teach us about the heart of the Father and how he desires to communicate with us in several ways.

This lesson will cover the basics of God's history with man as well as practical truths that will help you to determine how the Lord desires to minister to us. It will not answer every thing, but I believe it will be a help to those who are longing to know how to hear and understand Him better.

God has communicated through his creation to all mankind:

Ps 19:1-4 New Living Translation

- 1 The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship.
- 2 Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.
- 3 They speak without a sound or word; their voice is never heard.
- 4 Yet their message has gone throughout the earth, and their words to all the world.

Rom 1:18-20 AMP

18 For God's [holy] wrath and indignation are revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who in their wickedness repress and hinder the truth and make it inoperative.

19 For that which is known about God is evident to them and made plain in their inner consciousness, because God [Himself] has shown it to them.

20 For ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature and attributes, that is, His eternal power and divinity, have been made intelligible and clearly discernible in and through the things that have been made (His handiworks). So [men] are without excuse [altogether without any defense or justification], [Ps 19:1-4.]

- ⤴ God's desire is for mankind to recognize who he is. All of mankind, though fallen in sin, can see and recognize his eternal power and his divine nature.
- ⤴ In these verses, it is not the sound of a voice that communicates, but the message is one that all can understand if they do not close their hearts and minds.

Historically, God has spoken through his prophets. Most of us know this and accept this, but we will look at scriptures so that we can establish the fact, without doubt, that the Almighty God does indeed communicate with mankind.

THE PROPHETS:

Gen 12:1 NIV

12 The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

- ⤴ Abraham believed it was God speaking to him and left his country.(Gen 20:7 he is called a prophet)

Ex 3:4 NIV

4 When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."

⤴ God spoke to Moses from the bush. (Deut 34:10 a prophet)

Judg 4:4-6 NIV

4 Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. 5 She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided. 6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, "The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you: 'Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead the way to Mount Tabor.

⤴ God spoke to Deborah.

1 Sam 3:10 NIV

10 The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

⤴ Samuel began to hear the Lord speaking. (1 Sam 3:20 a prophet)

1 Chron 14:13-14 NIV

13 Once more the Philistines raided the valley; 14 so David inquired of God again, and God answered him, "Do not go straight up, but circle around them and attack them in front of the balsam trees.

⤴ The Lord gave David direction for the battle. (Acts 2:30 a prophet)

1 Chron 17:2-4

2 Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee.

3 And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying,

4 Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:

⤴ God changed Nathan's perspective with a word. (2 Sam 7:2 a prophet)

2 Sam 24:11-12

11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

12 Go and say unto David, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

⤴ Even though David was a prophet God still spoke to him through other prophets.

⤴ This shows that even prophets do not always hear everything, but sometimes need a word from someone else.

1 Kings 14:5 KJV

5 And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.

⤴ The Lord spoke to Ahijah before Jeroboam's wife arrived. (1 Kgs 14:2 a prophet)

1 Kings 16:7

7 And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the Lord against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him.

⤴ God spoke to Jehu.

1 Kings 19:9 KJV

9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

⤴ Elijah heard from God. (1 Kgs 18:36 a prophet)

1 Kings 22:17 KJV

17 And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.

⤴ Micaiah spoke a word that went contrary to the words of 400 false prophets. (1 Kgs 22:7-8 a prophet)

2 Kings 3:14-16

14 And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

15 But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.

16 And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches.

⤴ The Lord gave Elisha direction for the three kings. (1 Kgs 19:16 a prophet)

Isa 1:1-2 NIV

1 The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

2 Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the Lord has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me.

⤴ God spoke to Isaiah. (Isa 37:2 a prophet)

Jer 1:4-6 KJV

4 Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

6 Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

⤴ God spoke to Jeremiah.

Ezek 1:3-4 KJV

3 The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

4 And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

⤴ God spoke to Ezekiel. (Ezek 2:5 a prophet)

Amos 1:1 NIV

1 The words of Amos, one of the shepherds of Tekoa — what he saw concerning Israel two years before the earthquake, when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash was king of Israel.

Amos 7:14-16 NIV

14 Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. 15 But the Lord took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' 16 Now then, hear the word of the Lord. You say, "'Do not prophesy against Israel, and stop preaching against the house of Isaac.'

⤴ Amos was not even a prophet to begin with, he was a shepherd.

2 Chron 12:5 KJV

5 Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak.

⤴ God spoke to Shemaiah.

2 Chron 15:1-2 KJV

And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded:

2 And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

⤴ God spoke to Azariah. (2 Chron 15:8 possible corruption or gloss of the manuscript, a difficulty in verifying this one as a prophet, though I believe he was)

2 Chron 34:21-22 NIV

21 "Go and inquire of the Lord for me and for the remnant in Israel and Judah about what is written in this book that has been found. Great is the Lord's anger that is poured out on us because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord; they have not acted in accordance with all that is written in this book."

22 Hilkiah and those the king had sent with him went to speak to the prophetess Huldah, who was the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the Second District.

⤴ Huldah heard from God.

Ezra 5:1 KJV

5 Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them.

⤴ The prophets Haggai and Zechariah received words from the Lord to encourage the Jews to rebuild in Jerusalem.

Hos 1:1 NIV

1 The word of the Lord that came to Hosea son of Beeri during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel:

⤴ God spoke to Hosea. (No particular verse calls him a prophet, but his book is listed as one of the minor prophets and the words he spoke are definitely those of a prophet)

Jonah 1:1-2 NIV

1 The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: 2 "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me."

⤴ The Lord spoke to Jonah telling him what he should do. (2 Kgs 14:25 a prophet)

Mic 1:1 NIV

1 The word of the Lord that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah — the vision he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

⤴ God spoke to Micah. (Jer 26:18-people referring to his prophecy to Judah, listed as a minor prophet, spoke the type of words that prophets spoke, though not declared as a prophet in any particular scripture)

Hab 1:1 NIV

1 The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet received.

⤴ God spoke to Habakkuk.

Luke 3:2 KJV

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

Matt 11:9-10 NIV

9 Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written: 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

⤴ John the Baptist heard from God.

Matt 21:11 NIV

11 The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

⤴ Jesus heard from the Father.

Matt 24:15-16 NIV

15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel — let the reader understand—

⤴ Daniel heard from the Lord.

Acts 11:27-29 NIV

27 During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)

⤴ Agabus in the New Testament heard from God as a prophet.

Acts 13:1-3 NIV

13 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

⤴ It is not clear which ones were the prophets, but it is easy to figure out that the direction most likely came through one of the prophets hearing from God.

Acts 15:32-33 NIV

32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

⤴ They more than likely were encouraging the people with the words that the Lord was giving them since they were prophets.

Eph 4:11-13 NIV

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

⤴ Jesus gave prophets to the New Testament church after his resurrection for the purpose of preparing God's people for the work of God. Since we have seen that prophets hear from God, it is unlikely that the New Testament prophets have changed in that regard. New Testament prophets will not be adding new scripture to the Bible, but they will be giving insight into the heart of the Father through what is already written, being used in the spiritual gifts of 1 Cor 12, as well as being used like Agabus to foretell an event.

Some will agree with all that is said so far and yet question God speaking to others. As we look further into the scriptures, we will see who else the Lord spoke to.

THE APOSTLES:

Eph 3:4-5 New Living Translation

4 As you read what I have written, you will understand my insight into this plan regarding Christ. 5 God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now by his Spirit he has revealed it to his holy apostles and prophets.

Reveal NT:601-properly, to uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up; to disclose, make bare

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⤴ The Lord made certain truths known to the apostles and prophets by his Spirit.

2 Peter 1:13-15 NIV

13 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, 14 because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

⤴ The Lord let Peter know that his time was about over.

Gal 2:2 AMP

I went because it was specially and divinely revealed to me that I should go, and I put before them the Gospel [declaring to them that] which I preach among the Gentiles. However, [I presented the matter] privately before those of repute, [for I wanted to make certain, by thus at first confining my communication to this private conference] that I was not running or had not run in vain [guarding against being discredited either in what I was planning to do or had already done].

⤴ It is not specified about how Paul received this revelation but it is clear that he believed it to be the Lord and he responded.

2 Cor 13:3-4 AMP

3 Since you desire and seek [perceptible] proof of the Christ Who speaks in and through me. [For He] is not weak and feeble in dealing with you, but is a mighty power within you;

4 For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He goes on living by the power of God. And though we too are weak in Him [as He was humanly weak], yet in dealing with you [we shall show ourselves] alive and strong in [fellowship with] Him by the power of God.

⤴ Christ spoke through Paul. Paul would have had to have known how to discern his voice or means of communicating.

Acts 18:9-11 NIV

9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

⤴ The Lord gave Paul direction through a vision.

Acts 10:13

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

⤴ This was when Peter saw a vision that ultimately led him to minister to the Gentiles.

Rev 1:10-13 New Living Translation

10 It was the Lord's Day, and I was worshiping in the Spirit. Suddenly, I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet blast. 11 It said, "Write in a book everything you see, and send it to the seven churches in the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

12 When I turned to see who was speaking to me, I saw seven gold lampstands. 13 And standing in the middle of the lampstands was someone like the Son of Man.

⤴ John the apostle heard from the Lord.

We usually have no difficulty in believing that the Lord also spoke to the apostles. We hold them in high regard and generally we see that they were used mightily by God in the scriptures. But does God speak to ordinary people?

INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE NOT PROPHETS OR APOSTLES:

Gen 1:27-28 NIV

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that

moves on the ground."

⤴ God spoke with Adam and Eve.

Gen 4:6-7 NIV

6 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?"

⤴ The Lord spoke to Cain.

Gen 6:13-14 NIV

13 So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.

⤴ God revealed his intentions to Noah because he found grace in his eyes.

Gen 16:7-8 NIV

7 The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 8 And he said, "Hagar, servant of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

⤴ The Lord spoke to Hagar, an Egyptian handmaid.

Gen 25:21-23 NIV

21 Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. 22 The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the Lord.

23 The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger."

⤴ The Lord spoke to Rebekah and answered her question.

Gen 35:1 NIV

35 Then God said to Jacob, "Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau."

⤴ God gave instruction to Jacob.

Num 12:5-6 NIV

5 Then the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud; he stood at the entrance to the Tent and summoned Aaron and Miriam. When both of them stepped forward, 6 he said, "Listen to my words:

⤴ The Lord spoke to both Aaron and Miriam.

Josh 3:7-8 NIV

7 And the Lord said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses.

⤴ God spoke to Joshua.

Judg 1:1-2 NIV

1 After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the Lord, "Who will be the first to go up and fight for us against the Canaanites?"

2 The Lord answered, "Judah is to go; I have given the land into their hands."

⤴ God answered the Israelites though it is not revealed how.

Judg 6:12-14 KJV

12 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

⤴ God spoke to Gideon.

Judg 13:3 KJV

3 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

⤴ The Lord spoke to Manoah's wife through the angel of the Lord that she would have Samson.

1 Kings 3:5 NIV

5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."

⤴ God spoke a tremendous thing to Solomon in a dream.

2 Kings 10:30 KJV

30 And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.

⤴ There is no clear indication if he heard God or if it was through a word from a prophet.

Job 42:7 KJV

7 And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.

⤴ The Lord spoke to both Job and to Eliphaz.

Acts 9:3-5 KJV

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

⤴ The Lord spoke to Saul before he got saved.

Acts 9:10-11 KJV

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

⤴ The Lord spoke to Ananias, a disciple.

This next section may surprise some people.

GOD HAS EVEN SPOKEN TO PEOPLE WHO WERE OUTSIDE OF HIS COVENANT

PEOPLE ISRAEL:

Num 22:9 NIV

9 God came to Balaam and asked, "Who are these men with you?"

⤴ God spoke to Balaam who was not an Israelite. Balaam claimed to have his eyes open and he saw visions of God in Num 24:3-4 and scripture clearly does not call him a prophet. He was a soothsayer or diviner (Josh 13:22).

Gen 20:3

3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.

⤴ Abimelech was not a Jew. He was king of Gerar, a Philistine.

Gen 31:24

24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou

Speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

^ Through the dream God told Laban to leave Jacob alone. (Laban came looking for the gods that Rachel stole from him.)

Gen 41:25

25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

^ The Lord revealed what was to happen through a dream to an Egyptian Pharaoh.

Dan 4:4-6 New Living Translation

4 "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living in my palace in comfort and prosperity.

5 But one night I had a dream that frightened me; I saw visions that terrified me as I lay in my bed.

6 So I issued an order calling in all the wise men of Babylon, so they could tell me what my dream meant.

^ God spoke to Nebuchadnezzar through a dream, a Babylonian king.

Acts 10:1-6 New Living Translation

In Caesarea there lived a Roman army officer named Cornelius, who was a captain of the Italian Regiment. 2 He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God. 3 One afternoon about three o'clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. "Cornelius!" the angel said.

4 Cornelius stared at him in terror. "What is it, sir?" he asked the angel.

And the angel replied, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering! 5 Now send some men to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. 6 He is staying with Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore."

^ When Cornelius obeyed the angel, Peter came and it was a major revelation that the Gentiles were accepted by God. God spoke to a Gentile, a Roman at that.

We have seen that God has spoken to many different types of people, but does he still want to speak to us today?

WHAT IS THE HEART OF THE FATHER?

1 Cor 2:9-16 NIV

9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"—

10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. 14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

16 "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Cor 2:16 New Living Translation

For, "Who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?" But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ.

1 Cor 2:16 CEV

The Scriptures ask, "Has anyone ever known the thoughts of the Lord or given him advice?" But we understand what Christ is thinking.

Mind: NT:3563

1. The original meaning of *noús* is "(inner) sense directed on an object," and from this come such meanings as "sensation," "power of perception," and "mode of thought." The main nuances are "mind," "insight," "understanding," "judgment," and "meaning."

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- ⤴ The Holy Spirit is the one revealing the thoughts, understanding, or mind of Christ to us! It is God's desire that we would know the things that are freely given to us.
- ⤴ There has to be some way for us to understand what the thoughts of God are. It is through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. At this point, some would say that it is through the written word. That is true, but the scriptures themselves will show that it goes beyond reading and understanding the scriptures. Even understanding the scriptures is a communication of the Spirit to us. The natural man cannot understand what God has for us.
- ⤴ We have the mind of Christ, we understand what he thinks because we have his Holy Spirit in us.

Amos 4:13 ESV

13 For behold, he who forms the mountains and creates the wind, and declares to man what is his thought, who makes the morning darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth—the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!

- ⤴ Some interpret this to mean that God shows men what is in their (man's) heart. I personally lean to the interpretation that shows God revealing his thoughts to men.

Amos 4:13 New Living Translation

13 For the Lord is the one who shaped the mountains, stirs up the winds, and reveals his thoughts to mankind. He turns the light of dawn into darkness and treads on the heights of the earth. The Lord God of Heaven's Armies is his name!

- ⤴ This verse is understood in two different ways by commentators, depending on the translation you are reading. The first way is that God sees and knows what is in the heart of man as in Ps 139:2. The other way is that God reveals His thoughts to men as in 1 Cor 2:9-16. Both are Biblical concepts and this verse seems to fit either way. I have no problem seeing this used either way along with validating scriptures.
- ⤴ God reveals his thoughts to man. As we have seen in 1 Cor 2, it is the Holy Spirit that enables us to understand his thoughts. The reason for this is also found in scripture:

Isa 55:6-9 NIV

6 Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.

9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

- ⤴ Because God's thoughts are so different from ours, we need to be able to understand his thoughts. This happens through the Holy Spirit.

God does share his thoughts with man. The following verses use the Hebrew word 'cowd' -**Strong's number 5475:**

The primary meaning of the word is "confidential speech" (cf. Arabic *s¹o wada* "speak secretly"), hence,

"counsel." The emphasis on confidentiality marks a distinction between this word and the more general "advice, counsel." (emphasis mine)

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Ps 25:14 AMP

14 The secret [of the sweet, satisfying companionship] of the Lord have they who fear (revere and worship) Him, and He will show them His covenant and reveal to them its [deep, inner] meaning. [John 7:17; 15:15.]

⤴ We see from 1 Cor 2:16 how God does reveal things now for us in the New Testament.

Prov 3:32 AMP

32 For the perverse are an abomination [extremely disgusting and detestable] to the Lord; but His confidential communion and secret counsel are with the [uncompromisingly] righteous (those who are upright and in right standing with Him). [Ps 25:14.]

⤴ The New American Standard Bible says, "he is intimate with the upright".

⤴ He is the one who reveals Himself and His heart to man as we walk with him.

Jer 23:16-18,22 AMP

16 Thus says the Lord of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the [false] prophets who prophesy to you. They teach you vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility) and fill you with vain hopes; they speak a vision of their own minds and not from the mouth of the Lord.

17 They are continually saying to those who despise Me and the word of the Lord, The Lord has said: You shall have peace; and they say to everyone who walks after the stubbornness of his own mind and heart, No evil shall come upon you.

18 For who among them has stood in the council of the Lord, that he should perceive and hear His word? Who has marked His word [noticing and observing and giving attention to it] and has [actually] heard it?

22 But if they had stood in My council, then they would have caused My people to hear My words, then they would have turned them [My people] from their evil way and from the evil of their doings.

⤴ The false prophets had not stood in the sweet council of the Lord because they were not speaking his heart. There is council with the Lord. If they had heard what the heart of the Father was, they would have spoken in such a way as to turn the heart of the people away from their evil ways. The Lord does reveal his ways and heart, he wants us to stand in his council.

Amos 3:7 AMP

7 Surely the Lord God will do nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets. [Rev 10:7.]

⤴ God reveals his counsel to the prophets.

Job 29:4 AMP

4 As I was in the [prime] ripeness of my days, when the friendship and counsel of God were over my tent,

⤴ Job had a wonderful relationship with the Lord before his trials.

⤴ These verses were dealing with the confidential speech that the Lord desires to have with us! He wants to make it personal with each and every one of us.

Some other scriptures showing the desire of the Lord:

Prov 1:23 NIV

23 If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you.

⤴ The context here is speaking of wisdom, but who is the true wisdom except the Lord? He wants

to make his thoughts known to those who respond to him.

Ps 103:7 TEV

7 He revealed his plans to Moses and let the people of Israel see his mighty deeds.

♣ The people saw his mighty acts, but God let Moses have understanding of His very plans!

This is a different word secret, but it shows that God is the revealer:

Dan 2:29-30 NIV

29 "As you were lying there, O king, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. 30 As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than other living men, but so that you, O king, may know the interpretation and that you may understand what went through your mind.

♣ God is the revealer of mysteries. He even showed a heathen king what he was going to do. How much more to us who are his children?

John 14:21 NASU

21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

John 14:21-26

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Disclose or manifest mean:

NT:1718

of a person, to manifest oneself meaning to let oneself be intimately known and understood

(from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised Edition, 1993)

NT:1718

1. This word means "to make visible," "to demonstrate," "to set forth," "to declare," and in the active and middle "to appear."

(from Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, abridged edition, Copyright © 1985 by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. All rights reserved.)

NT:1718

1. to lay open to view, make visible

(from A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition. Copyright © 2000 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved.)

♣ Jesus promised to manifest or disclose himself to the person who loves him. He and the Father would make their abode in him. It is through this Comforter who will teach us and bring all things to our remembrance. It is obvious that this would be communicated to us in a way that we would know and understand.

Isa 45:19 AMP

19 I have not spoken in secret, in a corner of the land of darkness; I did not call the descendants of Jacob [to a fruitless service], saying, Seek Me for nothing [but I promised them a just reward]. I,

the Lord, speak righteousness (the truth — trustworthy, straightforward correspondence between deeds and words); I declare things that are right. [John 18:20.]

- ^ The Lord told Israel that he had not spoken in secret or that they should seek seek him in vain. The Lord desires to speak truth to us today as well.

Heb 4:7 NIV

7 Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts."

John 10:14-16 NASU

14 "I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, 15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

- ^ We are in that 'today', are you hearing his voice? He wants you to! We should not harden our hearts to the fact that he is speaking to us 'today'!

Look at what he said:

Isa 65:24

24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

- ^ His desire is to communicate with us.

Isa 30:19-22 NIV

19 O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious he will be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you. 20 Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. 21 Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it." 22 Then you will defile your idols overlaid with silver and your images covered with gold; you will throw them away like a menstrual cloth and say to them, "Away with you!"

Isa 58:9 NIV

9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

- ^ This word was spoken to those who were fasting and seeking God with a sincere heart.

Ezek 12:25-28 NIV

25 But I the Lord will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious house, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign Lord."

26 The word of the Lord came to me: 27 "Son of man, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision he sees is for many years from now, and he prophesies about the distant future.'

28 "Therefore say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: None of my words will be delayed any longer; whatever I say will be fulfilled, declares the Sovereign Lord.'"

- ^ God's message to this rebellious people was that he would not put off what he was speaking, but they would see it take place. This was in a negative context, but yet we can see that God is desirous to speak and have us hear him and obey him.

Isa 42:8-9 NASU

8 "I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.

9 "Behold, the former things have come to pass, Now I declare new things; Before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."

- ^ He at times lets us know what he is going to do ahead of time.

Those who are born-again have the Spirit of God living within them. God desires that we should know the things that he has freely given us and the one teaching us is the Holy Spirit. We have to recognize his ways of communicating with us. The scriptures have shown that the Lord reveals his thoughts to men, that his communicating is not done in secret, that he reveals things that have not happened yet, and that he wants to show and reveal what his covenant is that we might walk in the fulness of it. How anyone can say that God doesn't speak to us anymore is beyond me and beyond the word of God itself.

Some of these scriptures are taken from the Old Testament, yet we see that God never changes and that the scriptures are given to instruct us in a righteous walk:

Heb 1:10-12 AMP

10 And [further], You, Lord, did lay the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the works of Your hands.

11 They will perish, but You remain and continue permanently; they will all grow old and wear out like a garment.

12 Like a mantle [thrown about one's self] You will roll them up, and they will be changed and replaced by others. But You remain the same, and Your years will never end nor come to failure.

[Ps 102:25-27.]

⤴ God remains the same, he doesn't grow feeble and he doesn't grow old. His character and nature also do not change. So if he desired to communicate with his people and to individuals in the past, doesn't he still desire to do so? Scriptures show that he does!

Heb 13:8 AMP

8 Jesus Christ (the Messiah) is [always] the same, yesterday, today, [yes] and forever (to the ages).

⤴ Jesus never changes. All the promises we see Jesus making are still good for us! The Old Testament as well as Jesus himself speak of the coming of the Spirit and of his revealing truths to us. That has not changed.

2 Tim 3:16-17 AMP

16 Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action),

17 So that the man of God may be complete and proficient, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

⤴ The Lord never changes and his word is inspired by him that we might be instructed in how to walk with him. This includes knowing that he desires to communicate with each one of us.

⤴ He communicated in times past, and he is communicating today.

IN WHAT WAYS DID THE LORD COMMUNICATE?

Hos 12:10 NIV

I spoke to the prophets, gave them many visions and told parables through them."

Num 12:6

6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

⤴ Through visions, parables, and dreams by the prophets.

Acts 2:16-18 New Living Translation

16 No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel:

17 'In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

18 In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they

will prophesy.

- ^ The Spirit would be poured out on all people. It would not only be the prophets or kings as in the Old Testament, but to all men and women. They would have prophecies, dreams, and visions. How would they know what to prophesy except they heard what the Lord wanted to say? Prophecy is still for today as we will see a little later in the lesson.

Acts 8:29 NIV

29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

Acts 10:19-20 NIV

19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. 20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

- ^ The Spirit spoke to individuals.

Num 22:32 NIV

32 The angel of the Lord asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me.

Luke 1:19-20 NIV

19 The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.

- ^ He spoke through angels.

1 Cor 12:7-8 NET Bible

7 To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the benefit of all.

1 Corinthians 12:7

"God gives each person some proof of the Spirit's presence to be used to help the whole church."

(from the UBS New Testament Handbook Series. Copyright © 1961-1997, by United Bible Societies.)

- ^ The manifestation of the Spirit through spiritual gifts is a revealing of himself in the midst of his people. He is also making known his heart, his desire, and his power through these gifts for the good of the whole church. These were given to the church after his ascension. Prophecy is one of those gifts, as is the interpretation of tongues. It is here for us today. We must be able to discern and hear what he is desiring to say.

1 Kings 18:37-39 NIV

37 Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

39 When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The Lord-he is God! The Lord-he is God!"

John 6:2

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

Acts 2:22-23 NIV

22 "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

- ^ There are times when the powerful working of God is manifest and this touches the heart of those who see it.

- ^ God himself attested to the fact that Jesus was sent from him by miracles and wonders. That is a communication that is loud and clear.

Matt 3:17 KJV

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

⤴ He speaks in an audible voice.

SO WHERE DO WE BEGIN IN LEARNING TO HEAR HIS VOICE?

John 10:3-5 NIV

3 The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5 But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."

⤴ From the first day that we give our hearts to Jesus and are born-again, we are his sheep and we learn to hear his voice.

It all begins for us with the Holy Spirit.

1 John 3:24 NIV

24 Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1 John 4:13-14 NIV

13 We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

⤴ We should know that the Spirit of God is within us. How?

Rom 8:16 AMP

16 The Spirit Himself [thus] testifies together with our own spirit, [assuring us] that we are children of God.

⤴ When we are born-again, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us and bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God.

⤴ What does it mean that he bears witness with our spirit?

Definition of bearing witness:

NT:4828 To provide supporting evidence by testifying, confirm, support by testimony

(from A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition. Copyright © 2000 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved.)

NT:4828 To testify jointly, i.e. corroborate by (concurrent) evidence:

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

NT:4828 To testify or bear witness together with another, confirm, add testimony

(Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words)

Romans 8:16

The verb which Paul uses in this verse (joins himself...to declare) occurs also in Rom 2:15 and appears again in 9:1. In the present context the verb may mean either "to bear witness with" or else "to confirm another's witness." Most translators take it in the former sense. In some languages this meaning of "bearing witness with" may be translated as "God's Spirit says at the same time with our spirits" or "God's Spirit and our spirits both say."

(from the UBS New Testament Handbook Series. Copyright © 1961-1997, by United Bible Societies.)

Romans 8:16

16. [The Spirit itself, &c.] The "Spirit of Adoption" is here seen, as it were, at His mysterious work, teaching us to "cry Abba, Father." He "witnesses" with a witness which concurs with a witness borne by our own "spirit,"—our own consciousness of will and affection. On this "secret of the Lord" (Ps 25:14) some light is thrown by ch. 5:5. There the Holy Spirit is said to "shed abroad the love of God in our hearts;" i.e., in ways of His own, to assure the believer of the love of the Father for him. Meantime, the human heart thus visited is humbly but clearly conscious that it loves the Father. Thus the family

affection of Divine Grace is owned on both sides. The Divine Spirit evermore meets the Christian's filial love with fresh assurances of the Paternal Love which is the origin of the whole blessed relationship.—The witness of "our spirit" is so met as to be verified by the witness of the Paraclete. (from Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges. Biblesoft Formatted Electronic Database Copyright © 2014 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

Romans 8:16

WE received the Holy Spirit of God when we were made alive in Christ. One of the first effects of this stupendous and miraculous work is that we know that we have become children of God. We have not received the spirit of bondage that we might relapse into fear, but we have received the Spirit of God in our public manifestation as sons. We immediately are the objects of a spiritual experience. We cry "Abba, Father," the Holy Spirit Himself testifying along with our human spirit that we are the children of God.

Several things about this experience must be examined closely. First, it must be understood that no spiritual experience is valid in itself. Every experience can be counterfeited, and therefore, no experience is valid that is not solidly based in correct theology. It is disastrous to build one's theology upon some experience; it is always necessary to explain our experience by the Word of God. In the course of the past centuries of church history abundant evidence has been accumulated to show that it is possible to mistake the voice of Satan for the voice of God, and that it is even more possible to mistake the voice of self for the voice of God. That is why we must always be willing to turn to the Word of God, why we must repudiate any voice that speaks contrary to the Word of God, and avoid any experience that is an end in itself. We want no "inner light" experience, "divine voice" experience, we want no ecstatic mysticism that feels rather than thinks. The certain fact of our reception as sons of God must be based objectively on the written Word of God, and then, subjectively, on the fact of the Holy Spirit's joint witness with our spirit. (emphasis mine)

(from Romans: Expositions of Bible Doctrines © 1966 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. All rights reserved.)

- ⤴ I put this last commentary in because it contains an important truth. Many people have called certain feelings the leading of God, even though scripture would not validate the direction of those leadings. Don't get me wrong, we have feelings at times when the Spirit of God ministers to us (this is covered in a different part of this study), but we must compare everything with scriptural truth.
- ⤴ One other way that I recommend to help validating if what you have heard is from the Lord or not, is to share it with the Pastor or leadership of the church. They are not the Holy Spirit and sometimes they will not be able to give you a clear yes or no, but they might be able to judge the validity of the direction through their understanding of the word of God as well as having discernment from their past experiences (based in scripture). There have been many people who have made mistakes in their lives by going solely on what they felt was a word from God. This has included the Lord telling them that they are to marry a certain person (I am not ruling out that he can do this, but the bad examples that I have heard about over the years were done without the counsel of others as well as being carnally motivated), making a move to a faraway place, wanting to start a ministry, etc. **Prov 11:14 AMP** Where no wise guidance is, the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.
- ⤴ In **1 Cor 14:29 NASU** it says, "Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment." Even they need to be judged regarding what they are hearing and saying. We should always be willing to hear from and be established by a multitude of counsel.
- ⤴ Even Paul the apostle did this: **Gal 2:2-3 NIV** I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

- ♣ We have the Spirit letting us know that we are children of God and our own spirits acknowledging this. The point that I wanted to lead you to is this, when the Spirit bears witness with our spirit it is usually the first time we truly recognize the Spirit's touch in our hearts. One of the ways to start learning how the Spirit is speaking to you is to think back to that time. We have seen that it is the Spirit of God who reveals to us the things of God. The natural man cannot receive the things that come from the Spirit of God, they are foolish to him and he can't understand them. When I first got saved, I was not crying for joy like the lady next to me. In fact, I thought that I did not receive salvation until I stood up and that was when the Holy Spirit spoke plainly in my heart "You will never be the same again." It was not an audible voice, yet I knew that it was not my own thoughts trying to affirm that something had taken place. I could not tell you what the voice sounded like, it just seemed like my own thinking, but then again not. Each of us will have the Spirit letting us know that we are his children. You alone will be able to determine what the Spirit's voice is to you. That is why you should look back to that time and remember it. That is a starting point for us.
- ♣ The Spirit is the beginning of our relationship to the Lord and the Spirit (with the word of God as the check and balance) will primarily be the one that leads you and speaks to you (The Lord can still speak to you through angels, dreams, etc.). We must learn to hear him because when we are faithful in responding to him, he is able to give us more.

Mark 4:24 AMP

24 And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you — and more [besides] will be given to you who hear.

THE SPIRIT IS THE ONE WHO WRITES GOD'S LAW IN OUR HEARTS

Heb 8:10-12 NIV

10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

11 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.

12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

- ♣ This is the covenant that we are under. As we are seeing through this lesson, God himself desires to reveal himself to us and communicate with us through his Spirit. The Old Covenant was through external laws that people had to communicate and encourage one another to see and obey, saying "Know the Lord". Now, we have the Spirit of God living inside of us and each one of us has Him writing his laws on our hearts and minds.

2 Cor 3:3 NIV

3 You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

1 John 2:27 NIV

27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit — just as it has taught you, remain in him.

- ♣ It is the Holy Spirit, the anointing, who writes God's laws upon our hearts. This is why it says we have need for no man to teach us saying "know the Lord", for we have the Spirit of God within us revealing him to us.
- ♣ This does not mean that we have no need of teachers or instructors because Jesus has given us

the five ministries in Eph 4:11-13 to equip the saints. The saints are also able to speak into one another's lives Rom 15:14. We must keep all scriptural truths applicable and not take one verse or portion out of context of the rest of the word of God.

Gal 4:6-7 NIV

6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT LEADS US.

Rom 8:14

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

⤴ This indicates that there must be a willingness on our part to respond and follow him.

Rom 8:5 AMP

5 For those who are according to the flesh and are controlled by its unholy desires set their minds on and pursue those things which gratify the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit and are controlled by the desires of the Spirit set their minds on and seek those things which gratify the [Holy] Spirit.

⤴ Being led by the Spirit will depend on what you have your mind set on. What are we pursuing? Later in the lesson we will see what characteristics the Spirit has.

Gal 5:16-18 NIV

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

⤴ Since the Spirit and the flesh oppose each other, you cannot walk in the flesh and accomplish what the Spirit desires. If you walk in the Spirit, he will not have you doing the things of the flesh.

Rom 8:13-14 NASU

13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

⤴ It is only through the Spirit that we can put to death the deeds of the body. We have to learn to be led by him.

⤴ We must learn what things the Spirit will lead us to, what things he produces, and what things will keep us walking in step with the Spirit.

⤴ The more we are yielded to the Spirit in putting off the fleshly deeds, the more we will increase in hearing him clearly. This is not to say that the Holy Spirit won't speak to us in our struggles, but rather that if we set our hearts on the things of the flesh, our hearts can be hardened to hearing him and we cannot accomplish the things of the Spirit.

⤴ We need to understand what he is telling us so that we can follow his leading.

An example of someone being led by the Spirit.

Luke 2:25-28 NIV

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

Luke 2:27-28 AMP

27 And prompted by the [Holy] Spirit, he came into the temple [enclosure]; and when the parents brought in the little child Jesus to do for Him what was customary according to the Law, 28 [Simeon] took Him up in his arms and praised and thanked God and said,

♣ Simeon was in the Old Testament era and was not a born-again Christian. The Holy Spirit prompted him to be in the right place at the right time to fulfil the promise that the Holy Spirit had spoken to him. There is no indication here on how the Spirit prompted him.

In order to get a better understanding of certain situations, in this case of Jesus being led of the Spirit, we need to compare all of the available information:

Parallel versions of the same experience:

Matt 4:1 NIV

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

Mark 1:12 KJV

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

Mark 1:12-13 NIV

12 At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert,

Luke 4:1 NIV

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert,

There are three different Greek words used in these three versions. In order to get a better understanding of how Jesus was 'led' into the wilderness, here are some commentaries:

Driveth in Mark 1:12 NT:1544

(1:12) Driveth, ekballō, stronger than Matthew's anagō, "was led up," and Luke's agō, "was led;" literally, "to throw out from within, to cast out, to drive out." It is used of our Lord's expulsion of demons (Mark 1:34,39). Expositor's Greek Testament says; "The first thing the Spirit does is to drive Jesus into the wilderness, the expression not implying reluctance of Jesus to go into so wild a place (Weiss), but intense preoccupation of mind. Allowing for the weakening of the sense in Hellenistic usage (H. C.), it is a very strong word; and a second instance of Mark's realism: Jesus thrust out into the inhospitable desert by force of thought. DeWette says that the ethical significance of the temptation is lost in Mark's meager narrative, and that it becomes a mere marvelous adventure. I demur to this. The one word ekballō tells the whole story, speaks as far as may be the unspeakable. Matthew and Luke have tried to tell us what happened. but have they given us more than a dim shadow of the truth?" Thus, the first act of the indwelling Holy Spirit was to bring Messiah to the place of testing and temptation.

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Mark 1:12

There is no doubt about the fact that the Greek word ekballoō implies a strong action, but it is possible to translate this word in such a way as to give quite a wrong impression. In one language in West Africa the term used meant literally 'to chase him away' and in one Eskimo dialect the word was one generally used of 'driving dogs.' The force of this Greek verb applies primarily to the psychological compulsion, not any physical violence, and hence to use an expression which emphasizes the physical aspects may ultimately result in a distortion of the meaning. Accordingly, many translations simply use a causative form, 'the Holy Spirit made him go' or 'caused him to go.' In Balinese the expression is 'by the might of the Holy Spirit, Jesus went,' meaning that the Holy Spirit was the force which caused Jesus to go.

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♣ The word does not always have a violent meaning, in some cases it means to put forth the sheep, and a good man bringing forth out of a good heart good things. In most of the cases it does have the stronger meaning.

Led in Matt 4:1 NT:321

- ⤴ The word led used here is NT:321 from aná (303), up, again, or away, and ágœ (71), to bring or lead. To bring, lead, carry, or take up
(from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised Edition, 1993)

Led in Luke 4:1 NT:71

- ⤴ to direct or guide the movement of an object, without special regard to point of departure or goal - 'to lead, to bring.'
The Spirit of God is also regarded as an agent in leading or directing the movement of a person, for example, 'he was led by the Spirit into the desert' Luke 4:1. It also occurs in contexts in which the leading involves force:
(from Greek-English Lexicon Based on Semantic Domain. Copyright © 1988 United Bible Societies, New York. Used by permission.)
- ⤴ What we do see here is that there was an impelling or motivating factor through the Holy Spirit that caused Jesus to go out in the wilderness.
- ⤴ There are times when the Spirit of God will move us with a greater urgency.

WHAT ARE SOME SCRIPTURAL WAYS OF BEING LED?

Sometimes it is through the ministry of others being led by the Spirit.

Hag 1:13-15 NASU

13 Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke by the commission of the Lord to the people saying, " 'I am with you,' declares the Lord." 14 So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king.

Hag 1:13-15 New Living Translation

13 Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave the people this message from the Lord: "I am with you, says the Lord!"
14 So the Lord sparked the enthusiasm of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the enthusiasm of Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the enthusiasm of the whole remnant of God's people. They began rebuilding the house of their God, the Lord of Heaven's Armies, 15 on September 21 of the second year of King Darius's reign.

- ⤴ Sometimes our stirrings come through the ministry of others. In these cases, God gave a word to a prophet that stirred and motivated the people to do what the Lord desired. This still happens to us today. It can come through the pulpit ministry, a prophecy, or an exhortation that someone gives. It can still be considered the leading of the Spirit because it touched your heart and caused you to respond and be obedient to the Lord.

Luke 4:18-19 NIV

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

- ⤴ We obviously received a spiritual stirring because of the things Jesus said and did. He did them because the Spirit of the Lord was on him.

Acts 1:1-2 AMP

1 IN THE former account [which I prepared], O Theophilus, I made [a continuous report] dealing with all the things which Jesus began to do and to teach [Luke 1:1-4.]
2 Until the day when He ascended, after He through the Holy Spirit had instructed and commanded

the apostles (special messengers) whom He had chosen.

- ^ It was the anointing, the Holy Spirit that was upon Jesus. Jesus was full of the Spirit, the Spirit was upon him, and through the Spirit he gave instructions to the apostles and they responded. Two scriptural examples of what through the Holy Spirit could mean:

Acts 11:28 NIV

28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)

Acts 21:4-5 NIV

4 Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.

Mark 12:36 NIV

36 David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared: "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet." "

- ^ The Holy Spirit gave David these words. Jesus used David's words in Matt 22:43-46 to silence the Pharisees. Holy Spirit inspired words, given by others will continue to influence, give life, and give direction.

Acts 11:28-29 NIV

28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)

- ^ Agabus did not come up with this word on his own, it was through the Spirit. The people responded by wanting to send help.

Acts 21:4-5 NIV

4 Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.

- ^ The Holy Spirit spoke a particular word to the disciples and they urged Paul in a particular course of action. It was through the Spirit.

1 Peter 1:11-12 AMP

11 They sought [to find out] to whom or when this was to come which the Spirit of Christ working within them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow [them].

12 It was then disclosed to them that the services they were rendering were not meant for themselves and their period of time, but for you. [It is these very] things which have now already been made known plainly to you by those who preached the good news (the Gospel) to you by the [same] Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Into these things [the very] angels long to look!

- ^ The predictions that the Spirit gave them were meant for us. They have been made known to us through other men moved by the Spirit.

Acts 13:2-5 NIV

2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

4 The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

- ^ This was more than likely a word that the Lord gave through one of the prophets.

Zech 7:12 NIV

12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the Lord Almighty was very angry.

- ⤴ God sent words by his Spirit, but it was through the earlier prophets. God uses men to speak his words to others.

1 Thess 5:19-22 NIV

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; 20 do not treat prophecies with contempt. 21 Test everything. Hold on to the good. 22 Avoid every kind of evil.

- ⤴ We are not to despise prophecies because it is the Spirit of God communicating through man. We are to test prophecies and this is also confirmed in 1 Cor 14:29.

1 Peter 4:11 Bible in Basic English

11 If anyone has anything to say, let it be as the words of God; if anyone has the desire to be the servant of others, let him do it in the strength which is given by God; so that in all things God may have the glory through Jesus Christ, whose are the glory and the power for ever.

Rom 15:14 AMP

14 Personally I am satisfied about you, my brethren, that you yourselves are rich in goodness, amply filled with all [spiritual] knowledge and competent to admonish and counsel and instruct one another also.

2 Cor 5:17-20 AMP

17 Therefore if any person is [ingrafted] in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old [previous moral and spiritual condition] has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come!

18 But all things are from God, Who through Jesus Christ reconciled us to Himself [received us into favor, brought us into harmony with Himself] and gave to us the ministry of reconciliation [that by word and deed we might aim to bring others into harmony with Him].

19 It was God [personally present] in Christ, reconciling and restoring the world to favor with Himself, not counting up and holding against [men] their trespasses [but cancelling them], and committing to us the message of reconciliation (of the restoration to favor).

20 So we are Christ's ambassadors, God making His appeal as it were through us. We [as Christ's personal representatives] beg you for His sake to lay hold of the divine favor [now offered you] and be reconciled to God.

- ⤴ God speaks through us to both the saved and the unsaved. God makes his appeal through us, therefore let us speak as he does.
- ⤴ We must also keep an open heart to hear others who speak into our lives.

Sometimes we are moved by a burden in our hearts (which comes from God).

Neh 1:2-5 NIV

2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

3 They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."

4 When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. 5

- ⤴ Just hearing the condition of Jerusalem caused Nehemiah to sorrow, fast, and pray. As you read on in the story, when the king asks why he is sad, he is ready to answer him about what he would like to do. Somewhere in the midst of his seeking the Lord, he got his answer as the following verse shows:

Neh 2:12 NIV

12 I set out during the night with a few men. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on.

- ⤴ God used this burden for Jerusalem to lead Nehemiah into seeking him. God gave direction and also gave favor with the king to release Nehemiah to go do this work.

God does place stirrings in our hearts.

Ex 36:2 AMP

2 And Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab and every able and wisehearted man in whose mind the Lord had put wisdom and ability, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work;

- ⤴ The stirring of our hearts is one of the ways that the Lord moves us. There are some things to consider before we rely totally upon a 'stirring' of the heart.

2 Cor 8:16 AMP

16 But thanks be to God Who planted the same earnest zeal and care for you in the heart of Titus.

The Spirit leads us using God's word.

John 6:43-47 NIV

43 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. 44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.

- ⤴ The Father draws us. In 2 Thes 2:13-14, they were called to salvation through the gospel. God used the message of the gospel to draw them. He uses his Spirit and his word. He will teach us.

Luke 16:31 AMP

31 He said to him, If they do not hear and listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded and convinced and believe [even] if someone should rise from the dead.

- ⤴ Look at what Jesus says, the power of the scriptures would override even seeing someone raised from the dead. We must have our hearts open to see and receive what the scriptures say.

Dan 9:1-3 New Living Translation

2 During the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, learned from reading the word of the Lord, as revealed to Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years.

- ⤴ Daniel received understanding of the timing of God by reading Jeremiah's writings.

Luke 24:27 NIV

27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

- ⤴ Jesus used the scriptures to clarify the truth of who he was to these brothers. Holy Spirit inspired scriptures, whether they are read by an individual or taught through someone else, can lead, clarify, give insight, and change our lives.

Heb 9:8 New Living Translation

8 By these regulations the Holy Spirit revealed that the entrance to the Most Holy Place was not freely open as long as the Tabernacle and the system it represented were still in use.

- ⤴ The Holy Spirit speaks to us through the types and shadows of the Old Testament.

Acts 13:27 NASU

27 "For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him.

- ⤴ The scriptures give insight if we are of an open heart and mind. They failed to see.

Acts 28:23-25 New Living Translation

23 So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul's lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the

Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening. 24 Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe.

^ We learn from the scriptures, especially about Jesus. In John 15:26 it says that the Spirit will testify of Jesus.

Eph 6:17 AMP

17 And take the helmet of salvation and the sword that the Spirit wields, which is the Word of God.

^ The Spirit of God uses the Word of God. It is a sword that will help us to fight our spiritual adversary as well as speaking into our hearts.

Heb 4:12-13 NASU

12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

^ The word of God can penetrate and show us what we are really intending. This can work in both negative and positive ways, by correcting us or giving us direction. The word made alive through the Spirit can cause us to change our lives by putting things off or by adding things that we need.

2 Peter 1:3-4 NET

3 I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. 4 Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire.

^ Everything we need for life and godliness is found in the knowledge of him. Where is that knowledge found? It is through his word! We become partakers of his divine nature through these promises that we find in the scriptures. So many times we are desiring to know what we should do in life, wanting God to speak to us, and all that we have to do is to continue searching his word and applying it. He makes the word alive in our hearts as we yield to him.

^ When you have scriptures that are bringing you understanding, it is not your own mental ability, but it is the Spirit of God who is giving you understanding. It may seem like your own ability to put truths together, but it is by his leading. I am not implying that you have a different 'voice' in your head telling you things, but we need to recognize that it is Him.

God uses the truths he has already established in our hearts to guide us.

Dan 1:8 AMP

8 But Daniel determined in his heart that he would not defile himself by [eating his portion of] the king's rich and dainty food or by [drinking] the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might [be allowed] not to defile himself. [Num 6:1-4; 1 Cor 10:21.]

^ Daniel already knew that he should not defile himself and he wisely found a way to keep himself upright before the Lord and before man.

Prov 15:28 YLT

28 The heart of the righteous meditateth to answer, And the mouth of the wicked uttereth evil things.

^ The meditation would be on what the heart of the Father would be from what they know in their heart.

Prov 16:23 NASU

23 The heart of the wise instructs his mouth And adds persuasiveness to his lips.

^ These come from what God has placed in you.

Ecl 8:5 NASU

5 He who keeps a royal command experiences no trouble, for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure.

▲ This verse is speaking about relationship to an earthly ruler, but it would also apply to us using the wisdom God has given us through his word-everything we need for life and godliness.

Ecclesiastes 8:5-6

Discernment (vv. 5 b-6). The wise servant understands that "time and judgment [procedure, NASB]" must be considered in everything we do, because it takes discernment to know the right procedure for the right time. The impulsive person who overreacts and storms out of the room (v. 3) is probably only making the problem worse. Wisdom helps us understand people and situations and to figure out the right thing to do at the right time. "The wise heart will know the proper time and procedure" (v. 5 b, NIV).

This is illustrated beautifully in the lives of several Old Testament believers. Joseph didn't impulsively reveal to his brothers who he was, because he wanted to be sure their hearts were right with their father and their God. Once he heard them confess their sins, Joseph knew it was the right time to identify himself. His handling of this delicate matter was a masterpiece of wisdom (see Gen 43-45).

Nehemiah was burdened to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, but he was not sure the king would release him for the task (Neh 1-2). He waited and watched and prayed, knowing that God would one day open the way for him. When the opportune hour came, Nehemiah was ready and the king granted him his request. Nehemiah knew how to discern "time and procedure."

A prisoner of war in a Gentile land, Daniel refused to eat the unclean food set before him, but he didn't make a big scene about it. Instead, he exercised gentleness and wisdom by suggesting that the guards permit the Jews to experiment with a different diet. The plan worked and Daniel and his friends not only kept themselves ceremonially clean, but they were promoted in the king's court (see Dan 1).

The apostles exercised spiritual discernment when they were arrested and persecuted (Acts 4-5). They showed respect toward those in authority even though the religious leaders were prejudiced and acted illegally. The apostles were even willing to suffer for their faith, and the Lord honored them.

We have the options of disobeying, running away, defying orders, and even fighting back. But before we act, we must first exercise wisdom and seek to discern the right "time and procedure." It's not easy to be a consistent Christian in this complicated evil world, but we can ask for the wisdom of God and receive it by faith (James 1:5; 3:17-18).

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The Holy Spirit can speak through a godly 'committee'.

Acts 15:5-29 NET Bible

5 But some from the religious party of the Pharisees who had believed stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise the Gentiles and to order them to observe the law of Moses."

6 Both the apostles and the elders met together to deliberate about this matter. 7 After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that some time ago God chose me to preach to the Gentiles so they would hear the message of the gospel and believe. 8 And God, who knows the heart, has testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, 9 and he made no distinction between them and us, cleansing their hearts by faith. 10 So

now why are you putting God to the test by placing on the neck of the disciples a yoke that neither our ancestors nor we have been able to bear? 11 On the contrary, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they are."

12 The whole group kept quiet and listened to Barnabas and Paul while they explained all the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. 13 After they stopped speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me. 14 Simeon has explained how God first concerned himself to select from among the Gentiles a people for his name. 15 The words of the prophets agree with this, as it is written,

16 'After this I will return, and I will rebuild the fallen tent of David; I will rebuild its ruins and restore it,

17 so that the rest of humanity may seek the Lord, namely, all the Gentiles I have called to be my own,' says the Lord, who makes these things 18 known from long ago.

19 "Therefore I conclude that we should not cause extra difficulty for those among the Gentiles who are turning to God, 20 but that we should write them a letter telling them to abstain from things defiled by idols and from sexual immorality and from what has been strangled and from blood. 21 For Moses has had those who proclaim him in every town from ancient times, because he is read aloud in the synagogues every Sabbath."

22 Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to send men chosen from among them, Judas called Barsabbas and Silas, leaders among the brothers, to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. 23 They sent this letter with them:

From the apostles and elders, your brothers, to the Gentile brothers and sisters in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, greetings! 24 Since we have heard that some have gone out from among us with no orders from us and have confused you, upsetting your minds by what they said, 25 we have unanimously decided to choose men to send to you along with our dear friends Barnabas and Paul, 26 who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas who will tell you these things themselves in person. 28 For it seemed best to the Holy Spirit and to us not to place any greater burden on you than these necessary rules: 29 that you abstain from meat that has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what has been strangled and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from doing these things, you will do well. Farewell.

^ Peter shows:

1. How God chose the Gentiles and verified it by giving them the Holy Spirit the same as the Jews.
2. Also, both Jews and Gentiles have their hearts purified by faith.
3. Why put a yoke on them that neither their ancestors nor they were able to bear.
4. We believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus the same as they are.
5. Barnabas and Paul share what mighty things God has been doing among the Gentiles through them.
6. James shares his summary after hearing everything. He shares a scripture portion that validates what Peter shared about the Gentiles being saved.
7. Then James shares what things the Gentiles should pay attention to.
8. Where was there anything said about the Holy Spirit speaking? How did they know it was good to the Holy Spirit to write these things?
9. Through a discussion of the matter, hearing the testimony of the works of God among the Gentiles, and a confirmation of scripture (and there had to be an inner witness in their hearts) that this is the mind of the Lord. (1 Cor 2:16 AMP For who has known or understood the mind (the counsels and purposes) of the Lord so as to guide and instruct Him and give Him

knowledge? But we have the mind of Christ (the Messiah) and do hold the thoughts (feelings and purposes) of His heart. [Isa 40:13.]

The spirit speaks into our hearts and minds.

Matt 10:27 NIV

27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.

⤴ This is what it seems to be more times than not for me. It seems like a whisper of a thought going through my head. It has more of an impelling or force than my own thoughts. Usually, if I fail to do it, there is a kind of regret that I did not do it. It is not a sense of condemnation, but rather a feeling of disappointment that I did not do what the Lord desired. Sometimes it has been a learning experience in order to respond better the next time He speaks to me and sometimes he has allowed me a second chance to do it. It all depends on the circumstances at the time.

Luke 12:11-12 AMP

11 And when they bring you before the synagogues and the magistrates and the authorities, do not be anxious [beforehand] how you shall reply in defense or what you are to say.

12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour and moment what [you] ought to say.

⤴ He has to speak it somehow, have we learned to listen?

John 14:26 NIV

26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

⤴ This is said by Jesus himself, he says that the Spirit will teach and remind us.

Matt 11:25

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

⤴ He wants us to be as children before him. I do not believe that you have to be 'old ' in the Lord in order to hear him, it begins when we become his children!

John 16:13-15 AMP

13 But when He, the Spirit of Truth (the Truth-giving Spirit) comes, He will guide you into all the Truth (the whole, full Truth). For He will not speak His own message [on His own authority]; but He will tell whatever He hears [from the Father; He will give the message that has been given to Him], and He will announce and declare to you the things that are to come [that will happen in the future].

14 He will honor and glorify Me, because He will take of (receive, draw upon) what is Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you.

15 Everything that the Father has is Mine. That is what I meant when I said that He [the Spirit] will take the things that are Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you.

⤴ How can we get around this verse and say that the Spirit does not speak to us? Wrap your heart around scriptures like this.

Acts 10:19-20 NIV

19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. 20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

Acts 8:29 NIV

29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

John 18:37 AMP

37 Pilate said to Him, Then You are a King? Jesus answered, You say it! [You speak correctly!] For I am a King. [Certainly I am a King!] This is why I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the Truth [who is a friend of the Truth, who belongs to the Truth] hears and listens to My voice.

⤴ As God's children, we are to be friends of the truth. The Spirit of truth will be speaking into our hearts.

WHAT THINGS WILL HELP US TO DISCERN THE LORD'S VOICE?

A) Realize that good intentions do not equal the will of God.

1 Chron 17:1-5 NIV

After David was settled in his palace, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of the covenant of the Lord is under a tent."

2 Nathan replied to David, "Whatever you have in mind, do it, for God is with you."

3 That night the word of God came to Nathan, saying:

4 "Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord says: You are not the one to build me a house to dwell in.

⤴ We can have good intentions, but they are not necessarily the mind of God.

⤴ David's heart was for a good thing and Nathan felt so too until God gave a clarification.

Prov 16:1 NASU

16 The plans of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.

Proverbs 16:1

This cannot mean that wise thoughts are human, but wise words divine, that man unaided can plan well, but only by God's help can speak well; but rather that after man has done his utmost in planning, his wisest plans may come to nought in the comparatively easy act of giving utterance to them with a view to their accomplishment, unless Jehovah guides his tongue. And the implied moral of the proverb is, If you cannot do the less without God, do not attempt to do the greater without Him; "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths," Prov 3:5-6. Comp. Prov 16:9 of this chapter.

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Prov 16:9 NIV

9 In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

⤴ We at times make plans that we feel are good, like David wanting to build a house for God. Yet at times we see our plans fall to the ground or not get accomplished at the time that we thought they should take place. We must always remember that God ultimately is going to accomplish His purposes and we must be constantly pursuing him, especially if our plan did not work out. Sometimes he gives us a reason, but at other times he does not. When Paul wanted to go into Asia, the Holy Spirit stopped him. He then wanted to go into Bithynia, but again, the Holy Spirit stopped him. God did not give him a reason as far as we can see, but as he continued desiring to be used, the Lord gave him direction in a vision (Acts 16:6-9). We must always be open to God changing our plans.

Are you having trouble discerning the difference between your thoughts and his?

Heb 4:12 AMP

12 For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart.

⤴ Reading the word of God will cause you to become aware of the differences between the

purposes of your own heart and God's heart as you seek him with an open heart.

- ⤴ Some people will read the scriptures with the purpose of trying to validate their 'pet' theme or idea. This is not the way to get true direction or leading from the scriptures. You must be willing to search out the truth as it is, not as you wish it to be.

B) He speaks differently at times.

1 Kings 19:11-13 KJV

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

- ⤴ God can speak in a still small voice.

Ps 29:3-9 NASU

3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The Lord is over many waters.

4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, The voice of the Lord is majestic.

5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon.

6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox.

7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire.

8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, "Glory!"

- ⤴ The voice of the Lord can also be powerful.

Ezek 43:2 KJV

2 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

Ezek 43:2 NIV

2 and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. His voice was like the roar of rushing waters, and the land was radiant with his glory.

- ⤴ Ezekiel heard his voice as a powerful one in this portion of scripture.

C) The character of God is imbedded in the words he gives.

1 Cor 12:3 AMP

3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking under the power and influence of the [Holy] Spirit of God can [ever] say, Jesus be cursed! And no one can [really] say, Jesus is [my] Lord, except by and under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

- ⤴ The Spirit will never put down Jesus.

Gal 5:22-26 NIV

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each

other.

^ This is what the Spirit produces in us because this is what his nature is. In determining a 'leading' from the Lord, evaluate if it is in line with these characteristics that are His.

1 Cor 13:4-7 AMP

4 Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily.

5 It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].

6 It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail.

7 Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening].

^ These are character traits of the love of God. It describes him and how he loves and is written for us to emulate. God can and does rebuke and reprove us, but it is his love that causes him to do so as the next verse shows.

Heb 12:5-13 New Living Translation

5 And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, "My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you.

6 For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child."

7 As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? 8 If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. 9 Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever?

10 For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. 11 No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

12 So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. 13 Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong.

^ Are you hearing condemnation, judgment, harshness without the love and correction that will strengthen you? If you are, you are not hearing him speak to you.

Jer 1:10 AMP

10 See, I have this day appointed you to the oversight of the nations and of the kingdoms to root out and pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

^ God's heart was to tear down the things that hindered their relationship to him and then to build and to plant the right things. His heart is toward us!

Eph 4:30-5:12 AMP

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God [do not offend or vex or sadden Him], by Whom you were sealed (marked, branded as God's own, secured) for the day of redemption (of final deliverance through Christ from evil and the consequences of sin).

31 Let all bitterness and indignation and wrath (passion, rage, bad temper) and resentment (anger, animosity) and quarreling (brawling, clamor, contention) and slander (evil-speaking, abusive or blasphemous language) be banished from you, with all malice (spite, ill will, or baseness of any kind).

32 And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tenderhearted (compassionate, understanding, loving-hearted), forgiving one another [readily and freely], as God in Christ forgave you.

Chapter 5

1 THEREFORE BE imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father].

2 And walk in love, [esteeming and delighting in one another] as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a slain offering and sacrifice to God [for you, so that it became] a sweet fragrance. [Ezek 20:41.]

3 But immorality (sexual vice) and all impurity [of lustful, rich, wasteful living] or greediness must not even be named among you, as is fitting and proper among saints (God's consecrated people).

4 Let there be no filthiness (obscenity, indecency) nor foolish and sinful (silly and corrupt) talk, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting or becoming; but instead voice your thankfulness [to God].

5 For be sure of this: that no person practicing sexual vice or impurity in thought or in life, or one who is covetous [who has lustful desire for the property of others and is greedy for gain] — for he [in effect] is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no one delude and deceive you with empty excuses and groundless arguments [for these sins], for through these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of rebellion and disobedience.

7 So do not associate or be sharers with them.

8 For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light [lead the lives of those native-born to the Light].

9 For the fruit (the effect, the product) of the Light or the Spirit [consists] in every form of kindly goodness, uprightness of heart, and trueness of life.

10 And try to learn [in your experience] what is pleasing to the Lord [let your lives be constant proofs of what is most acceptable to Him].

11 Take no part in and have no fellowship with the fruitless deeds and enterprises of darkness, but instead [let your lives be so in contrast as to] expose and reprove and convict them.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of or mention the things that [such people] practice in secret.

⤴ Does what you think you are hearing from the Spirit lead to goodness, uprightness of heart, and trueness of life? What are the things that are displeasing to the Holy Spirit?

⤴ Verse ten says to try to learn in your experience what things are pleasing to the Lord. The KJV says 'proving' what is acceptable to the Lord. **The word proving means:**

NT:1381

1. to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing be genuine or not), as metals

2. to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy:

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NT:1381

to try to learn the genuineness of something by examination and testing, often through actual use - 'to test, to examine, to try to determine the genuineness of, testing.'

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It is used in the negative sense in the following verse:

Rom 1:28-29 NIV

28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

⤴ The Lord is telling us to be obedient in our responses to him and we will see by the application of the truth in our lives that his ways work in transforming us into his image. The people in

Rom 1:28 did not want to recognize his ways, they did not want to examine his ways because their hearts were set on their own ways.

D) How are we to prove his word?

Heb 5:12-14 NIV

12 In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! 13 Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

- ⤴ We must constantly put it into practice. The word use in this verse deals with practice or habit that comes from doing something over and over again. The word trained is a word used for those who trained naked or meaning to exercise vigorously.
- ⤴ The following scriptures show how that same word train is used:

1 Tim 4:7-8 NIV

7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.

- ⤴ What are we listening to and hearing as the influence in our lives? To discipline yourself to be godly (like our Father), you have to have the right influence in your life.

Heb 12:11 NIV

11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

- ⤴ When we receive correction, do we apply it and practice it? If we do, then we get a good harvest in our lives.

James 1:22-25 Today's English Version

22 Do not deceive yourselves by just listening to his word; instead, put it into practice. 23 Whoever listens to the word but does not put it into practice is like a man who looks in a mirror and sees himself as he is. 24 He takes a good look at himself and then goes away and at once forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks closely into the perfect law that sets people free, who keeps on paying attention to it and does not simply listen and then forget it, but puts it into practice — that person will be blessed by God in what he does.

- ⤴ Do not deceive yourself.

2 Peter 2:14-15 NASU

14 having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; 15 forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

- ⤴ This is a negative example, but it shows how they practiced the wrong principles and formed their hearts to be something very undesirable.
- ⤴ We have to prove by habitual practice the truths and principles of God. If we do so, we will become a mature people who can discern good and evil. The work of the word of God in our lives, along with the Holy Spirit, will will cause us to recognize God's truths as genuine and will enable us to mature through the application of his word.

You have to put it into practice.

Mark 4:24-25 AMP

24 And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you — and more [besides] will be given to you who hear.

25 For to him who has will more be given; and from him who has nothing, even what he has will

be taken away [by force],

- ⤴ We must give thought and study to the things we hear. He will give us more as we use what he gives us. If we do not use whatever truths he is ministering to us, we stand a chance of losing it. Just consider the parable of the talents. The one who hid his lord's money in the ground had it taken away from him.

Luke 8:18 NASU

18 "So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

Luke 6:47-49 AMP

47 For everyone who comes to Me and listens to My words [in order to heed their teaching] and does them, I will show you what he is like:

48 He is like a man building a house, who dug and went down deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood arose, the torrent broke against that house and could not shake or move it, because it had been securely built or founded on a rock.

49 But he who merely hears and does not practice doing My words is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation, against which the torrent burst, and immediately it collapsed and fell, and the breaking and ruin of that house was great.

- ⤴ If we do the things that the Spirit is revealing to us (I believe that this is primarily speaking about his word, but remember that it is the Spirit who makes the word alive to us) we will be unshaken by the floods.
- ⤴ By not applying the word of God, we forget that he has shown us what we are truly like. He does not show us our hearts to make us feel bad, but rather that we would see where we need to change. We have already seen that if we do what the Lord tells us, he will give us more.

1 Sam 15:22 New Living Translation

22 But Samuel replied, "What is more pleasing to the Lord: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice? Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams.

- ⤴ Obeying him in what he tells us to do is better than trying to substitute with deeds or actions that we 'think' will be just as good.

E) What do we do in order to know what things are pleasing to the Lord?

Rom 12:1-2 NASU

12 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Rom 12:1-2 AMP

1 I APPEAL to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

2 Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

- ⤴ We can learn what is pleasing to God. It takes dedicating ourselves as living sacrifices and

having our minds renewed (this takes place through the washing of the Word Eph 5:26). This is the same principle as mentioned in Rom 8:5 and Gal 5:16-18, it happens by putting to death the deeds of the body and being led by the Spirit. The word of God has many things that are very clear and precise as to how we should conduct ourselves. Yielding to the word of God by application is the best way to be conformed to his image and know what things are pleasing to Him.

F) The fruit bears witness to the word.

⤴ We have already seen that no man speaking by the Spirit will call Jesus accursed **1 Cor 12:3**

Matt 7:15-20 NIV

15 "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

⤴ If listening to someone else, what is their life like? Are they walking righteously in Christ? What type of fruit are they exhibiting?

Mic 3:5 New Living Translation

5 This is what the Lord says: "You false prophets are leading my people astray! You promise peace for those who give you food, but you declare war on those who refuse to feed you.

⤴ This is an example of speaking from a selfish motive. There was personal gain involved. As oracles of God, we must not speak out of selfish ambition as we will see in James 3. You will know them by their fruit! These were ready to lash out if they did not get their own way.

Matt 24:24 AMP

24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise, and they will show great signs and wonders so as to deceive and lead astray, if possible, even the elect (God's chosen ones).

⤴ Signs and wonders are not enough to say that a person is being used by the Lord, the motive expressed will show what type of fruit they are bearing:

Deut 13:1-5 NIV

13 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, 2 and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," 3 you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The Lord your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 It is the Lord your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. 5 That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the Lord your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

⤴ They show signs or wonders but lead you away from the Lord.

James 3:14-18 AMP

14 But if you have bitter jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry, selfish ambition) in your hearts, do not pride yourselves on it and thus be in defiance of and false to the Truth.

15 This [superficial] wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual (animal), even devilish (demoniacal).

16 For wherever there is jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry and selfish ambition), there will

also be confusion (unrest, disharmony, rebellion) and all sorts of evil and vile practices.

17 But the wisdom from above is first of all pure (undefiled); then it is peace-loving, courteous (considerate, gentle). [It is willing to] yield to reason, full of compassion and good fruits; it is wholehearted and straightforward, impartial and unfeigned (free from doubts, wavering, and insincerity).

18 And the harvest of righteousness (of conformity to God's will in thought and deed) is [the fruit of the seed] sown in peace by those who work for and make peace [in themselves and in others, that peace which means concord, agreement, and harmony between individuals, with undisturbedness, in a peaceful mind free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts].

- ⤴ Look at the attributes of wisdom that come from God. Also, look at the carnal attitudes that will cause confusion, disharmony, and unrest. Speak from a sincere heart with the wisdom that comes from above. It is the Spirit who reveals the things God has freely given us and it has the stamp of his character on it.

1 John 4:1-3 AMP

1 BELOVED, DO not put faith in every spirit, but prove (test) the spirits to discover whether they proceed from God; for many false prophets have gone forth into the world.

2 By this you may know (perceive and recognize) the Spirit of God: every spirit which acknowledges and confesses [the fact] that Jesus Christ (the Messiah) [actually] has become man and has come in the flesh is of God [has God for its source];

3 And every spirit which does not acknowledge and confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh [but would annul, destroy, sever, disunite Him] is not of God [does not proceed from Him]. This [nonconfession] is the [spirit] of the antichrist, [of] which you heard that it was coming, and now it is already in the world.

- ⤴ The context of this verse is speaking about recognizing false teachers. If they do not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh from God, they are not from God. This helps us to discern when the Holy Spirit is teaching us things through others.

G. What are some ways to know that he is speaking to me?

1. There is an impelling from God.

2 Peter 1:16-21 New Living Translation

16 For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes 17 when he received honor and glory from God the Father. The voice from the majestic glory of God said to him, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy." 18 We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

19 Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place—until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, 21 or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God.

2 Peter 1:21 NIV

...as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21 AMP

...but men spoke from God who were borne along (moved and impelled) by the Holy Spirit.

NT:5342

(II) To bear with the idea of motion, bear along or about, carry (Luke 23:26; Sept.: Isa 30:6). In the pass. *phéromai*, to be borne along, as in a ship before the wind, be driven (Acts 27:15,17). Figuratively to be moved, incited (2 Peter 1:21; Sept.: Job 17:1). In the mid. part., *pheroménēs*, to bear oneself along, move along, rush as a wind (Acts 2:2). Figuratively to go on, advance in teaching (Heb 6:1).
(from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised Edition, 1993)

NT:5342

1. to carry; a. to carry some burden: *to/n stauro/n o&pisqen ti/no\$*, Luke 23:26; *to bear with oneself* (which the Greek writings express by the middle) (A. V. *to bring*): *ti/*, Luke 24:1; John 19:39. **b. to move by bearing;** passive, like the Latin *feror* equivalent to *moveor*, *to be conveyed or borne*, with a suggestion of speed or force (often so in secular authors from Homer down): of persons borne in a ship over the sea (A. V. *to be driven*), Acts 27:15,17; of a gust of wind, *to rush*, Acts 2:2 (cf. Jer 18:14); *fwnh/ e) nexqe isa*, was brought, came, 2 Peter 1:17,18 (see **u(po/**, I. 2 a.); of the mind, to be moved inwardly, prompted, *u(po/ pneu/mato\$ a(gi/ou*, 2 Peter 1:21; *fe/romai e)pi/ ti/* (R. V. *press on*), Heb 6:1.

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⤴ There is an inner compelling from the Holy Spirit that causes us to respond to him.

Amos 3:8 KJV

8 The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?

Amos 3:8 TEV

8 When a lion roars, who can keep from being afraid? When the Sovereign Lord speaks, who can keep from proclaiming his message?

[The Lion hath roared: who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken: who can but prophesy?] that is, there is cause for you to fear, when the Lord "roareth from Zion;" but if ye fear not, God's prophets dare not but fear. So Paul saith, "necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation" of the Gospel "is committed unto me" (1 Cor 9:16-17); and Peter and John, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye! For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20); Moses was not excused, though slow of speech; nor Isaiah, though of polluted lips; nor Jeremiah, because he was a child; but God said, "Say not, I am child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak" (Jer 1:7). And Ezekiel was bidden, "be not rebellious, like that rebellious house" (Ezek 2:8). And when Jeremiah would keep silence, he saith, "His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay" (Jer 20:9).

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⤴ That inner compulsion works not only for spiritual gifts, but also in being motivated to do what is right.

2. It can seem to be a burden.

The word can come as a 'burden'. You are feeling a 'weight' that is only lightened by being obedient and speaking it. In many of the cases using the word 'burden', it was a serious word of correction or

impending judgment. As you will see from some of the scriptures listed, that is not always true and therefore I believe that it is applicable as one of the ways that the Lord impels us.

OT:4853

A masculine noun meaning a burden or load; by extension, a burden in the form of a prophetic utterance or oracle. It is derived from the verb (5375) meaning to lift, to bear, to carry. When used to express a burden or load, it is commonly used to describe that which is placed on the backs of pack animals, like donkeys (Ex 23:5); mules (2 Kings 5:17); or camels (2 Kings 8:9).

(from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament Copyright © 2003 by AMG Publishers. All rights reserved.)

Isa 13:1 KJV

13 The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see.

Jer 23:33 KJV

33 And when this people, or the prophet, or a priest, shall ask thee, saying, What is the burden of the Lord? thou shalt then say unto them, What burden? I will even forsake you, saith the Lord.

Jer 23:34-36 New Living Translation

34 "If any prophet, priest, or anyone else says, 'I have a prophecy from the Lord,' I will punish that person along with his entire family. 35 You should keep asking each other, 'What is the Lord's answer?' or 'What is the Lord saying?' 36 But stop using this phrase, 'prophecy from the Lord.' For people are using it to give authority to their own ideas, turning upside down the words of our God, the living God, the Lord of Heaven's Armies.

Jeremiah 23:33-40

When the people sought for an oracle from God, Jeremiah was to announce that there was none. It had already been given; and the word from God was that He would forsake them. God said He would punish those who claimed any other oracle. The people were misusing the term so much in claiming divine authority for their own words that God told them not to mention the word again. Its misuse had caused the people to distort the true words of the living God. Those who continued to claim divine oracles would be judged. God vowed to cast them out of His presence along with the rest of Jerusalem. These false prophets faced the threat of unending disgrace and shame for their wicked words.

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Jeremiah 23:33-40

Their disrespectful attitude (vv. 33-40). The key Hebrew word in this section is massa, which means "a burden." Jeremiah used it to refer to bearing burdens on the Sabbath (Jer 17:21-27), but in this context it means the burden of the message that the Lord places on His prophets (Nah 1:1; Hab 1:1; Mal 1:1). For this reason, some scholars translate it "oracle," but "burden" is perfectly acceptable (see the NIV and NASB, both of which put "burden" in the margin).

God cautioned Jeremiah not to encourage the careless attitude of the priests, people, and false prophets when they asked him, "What is the burden of the Lord?" The phrase "burden of the Lord" was almost a cliché; it was used to poke fun at God's true prophet. (The phrase "born again" often gets the same kind of treatment.)

Why should the false prophets ask for an oracle from the Lord when Jeremiah had already told them what God wanted them to hear? If they hadn't obeyed what God already commanded, why should He tell them more? Their attitude toward God's message was careless and disrespectful; they weren't taking seriously God's message or God's messenger. The false prophets had distorted the truth to make it mean what they wanted it to mean, and yet they called their messages the "oracles of the Lord."

Jeremiah was to reply, "You are the burden." (v. 33, NIV margin) The Living Bible catches the spirit of the passage:

When one of the people or one of their "prophets" or priests asks you. "Well, Jeremiah, what is the sad news from the Lord today?" you shall reply, "What sad news? You are the sad news, for the Lord has cast you away!" (Jer 23:33)

A worldly church puts an emphasis on fun and entertainment and forgets about tears. We now have Christian comedians who generate laughter for thirty minutes and then tack on the Gospel and give an invitation. While there's a proper place for humor in the Christian life, the church today needs to hear the words of James: "Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (James 4:9-10, NKJV). The church isn't taking God's Word seriously at an hour when the world is in serious trouble. (from The Bible Exposition Commentary: Old Testament © 2001-2004 by Warren W. Wiersbe. All rights reserved.)

3. It can seem to bubble up in you.

Prophecy: Hebrew 5012

To cause to bubble up, hence to pour forth words abundantly

(From Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament)

OT:5031

נ'בִּיָּא . **Spokesman, prophet.** The derivation of נ'בִּיָּא is a matter of controversy. The old Gesenius Lexicon (ed. Tregelles), for example, derives this noun from the verb נ'בִּאָ, "the ayin being softened into aleph, " and meaning to bubble up, " "boil forth," hence, "to pour forth words, like those who speak with fervour of mind or under divine inspiration, as prophets and poets." Ewald, Haevernick and Bleek agree (see Samuel Davidson, Introduction to the OT, II, p. 230) as does also Oehler (OT Theology, p. 363). For these reasons this group of authors have supposed that to utter revelations from God's spirit (ecstatic speech) is the function of the נ'בִּיָּא . The mood is said to be active. Other, older writers, including S. Davidson (ibid., p. 430), have employed the same derivation and said the mood is passive, to receive God's speech and then to proclaim it, emphasizing the reception of divine communication by the נ'בִּיָּא . Most recent scholarship turns the relationship of נ'בִּיָּא and נ'בִּיָּא around doubtless rightly, regarding the verb as denominative (BDB, TDNT, VI, [p. 796](#)).

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▲ There are some different camps with interpreters when it comes to the meaning of this word. I see both sides of the issue since the following scriptures seem to imply a bubbling up.

Num 11:25-27 NIV

25 Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again.

26 However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the Tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. 27 A young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

1 Sam 19:20-24 NIV

20 so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men and they also prophesied. 21 Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied. 22 Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" "Over in Naioth at Ramah," they said.

23 So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. 24 He stripped off his robes and also prophesied in Samuel's presence. He lay that way all that day and night. This is why people say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

- ⤴ These are two portions which show the Spirit moving upon individuals in a powerful way.
- ⤴ Perhaps this is the reason that Paul gives instruction in 1 Cor 14 regarding a person who receives a revelation while another is speaking. We are instructed to have self-control and wait for the first person to be done speaking before having our turn. The spirits of the prophets are subject (subordinate, under the control of) the prophets. You may feel it bubble up, but you do not have to blurt it out or be out of order.

1 Cor 14:29-33 NET Bible Two or three prophets should speak and the others should evaluate what is said. 30 And if someone sitting down receives a revelation, the person who is speaking should conclude. 31 For you can all prophesy one after another, so all can learn and be encouraged. 32 Indeed, the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, 33 for God is not characterized by disorder but by peace.

4. It can seem like your own thoughts.

Matt 16:15-18 NIV

15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

- ⤴ Jesus had to tell Peter that this came from the Father.

Rom 1:19-21 TEV

19 God punishes them, because what can be known about God is plain to them, for God himself made it plain. 20 Ever since God created the world, his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen; they are perceived in the things that God has made. So those people have no excuse at all! 21 They know God, but they do not give him the honor that belongs to him, nor do they thank him. Instead, their thoughts have become complete nonsense, and their empty minds are filled with darkness.

- ⤴ God spoke to the thoughts of men through the things he created.

- ⤴ The word perceived in TEV or being understood in NIV in verse 20 is:

NT:3539

To perceive with thought coming into consciousness as distinct from the perception of senses.

(from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised Edition, 1993)

NT:3539

1. to perceive with the mind, to understand:

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NT:3539

to think over a matter with care - 'to think about carefully, to consider well.

(from Greek-English Lexicon Based on Semantic Domain. Copyright © 1988 United Bible Societies, New York. Used by permission.)

NT:3539

1. to grasp or comprehend someth. on the basis of careful thought, perceive, apprehend, understand, gain an insight into

(from A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition. Copyright © 2000 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved.)

⤴ If any man gives honest thought to creation, he will see God's eternal power and Godhead in the created works of God. This does not mean salvation, but it is a recognition that helps the heart remain open to have the Lord work further in their lives.

⤴ God does speak through our thoughts. We must learn to discern when it is him.

1 Cor 14:24-25 NET

24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or uninformed person enters, he will be convicted by all, he will be called to account by all. 25 The secrets of his heart are disclosed, and in this way he will fall down with his face to the ground and worship God, declaring, "God is really among you."

⤴ In this instance, God is speaking through an individual or individuals and it reaches the heart and mind of an unbeliever. It is God touching a person through their thoughts.

⤴ This is one of the ways that he speaks to his children as well. It can come through him speaking to us or by him using others to speak to our minds.

1 Cor 2:11-3:3 AMP

11 For what person perceives (knows and understands) what passes through a man's thoughts except the man's own spirit within him? Just so no one discerns (comes to know and comprehend) the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have not received the spirit [that belongs to] the world, but the [Holy] Spirit Who is from God, [given to us] that we might realize and comprehend and appreciate the gifts [of divine favor and blessing so freely and lavishly] bestowed on us by God.

13 And we are setting these truths forth in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the [Holy] Spirit, combining and interpreting spiritual truths with spiritual language [to those who possess the Holy Spirit].

14 But the natural, nonspiritual man does not accept or welcome or admit into his heart the gifts and teachings and revelations of the Spirit of God, for they are folly (meaningless nonsense) to him; and he is incapable of knowing them [of progressively recognizing, understanding, and becoming better acquainted with them] because they are spiritually discerned and estimated and appreciated.

15 But the spiritual man tries all things [he examines, investigates, inquires into, questions, and discerns all things], yet is himself to be put on trial and judged by no one [he can read the meaning of everything, but no one can properly discern or appraise or get an insight into him].

16 For who has known or understood the mind (the counsels and purposes) of the Lord so as to guide and instruct Him and give Him knowledge? But we have the mind of Christ (the Messiah) and do hold the thoughts (feelings and purposes) of His heart. [Isa 40:13.]

Chapter 3

1 **HOWEVER, BRETHREN,** I could not talk to you as to spiritual [men], but as to nonspiritual [men of the flesh, in whom the carnal nature predominates], as to mere infants [in the new life] in Christ [unable to talk yet!]

2 I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough [to be ready for it]; but even yet you are not strong enough [to be ready for it],

3 For you are still [unspiritual, having the nature] of the flesh [under the control of ordinary impulses]. For as long as [there are] envying and jealousy and wrangling and factions among you, are you not unspiritual and of the flesh, behaving yourselves after a human standard and like mere (unchanged) men?

- ⤴ We can understand the thoughts of God because of his Spirit that resides in us. These thoughts are communicated to our spirit. Many times they come across to us as our thoughts.
- ⤴ In my studies, I have received revelation from God concerning spiritual truths. When it happens, it seems like I have put together or found an answer. I realize that it is not my great thinking ability, but rather it is God revealing himself or his truths to me. I do not necessarily 'hear' the Spirit telling me these truths, like a voice in my head, but it is an illumination or revelation in my heart and mind. Jesus sent the Spirit so that he would teach us all things (John 14:26). He is the revealer!
- ⤴ This portion of scripture also shows that our carnality can cause us to not be able to hear and understand spiritual truths.

5. He can speak in an audible voice.

He can do this whenever he wants to do it.

Matt 3:17 KJV

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

- ⤴ At his water baptism.

Mark 9:7 KJV

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

2 Peter 1:17-18 New Living Translation

18 We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

- ⤴ On the mount of transfiguration.

John 12:28-33 NIV

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again." 29 The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

30 Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. 31 Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. 32 But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."

- ⤴ The time when the Greeks asked Philip if they could see Jesus.

Acts 7:31-32 NIV

When he saw this, he was amazed at the sight. As he went over to look more closely, he heard the Lord's voice: 32 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.' Moses trembled with fear and did not dare to look.

- ⤴ To Moses at the burning bush.

Heb 12:18-21 New Living Translation

18 You have not come to a physical mountain, to a place of flaming fire, darkness, gloom, and whirlwind, as the Israelites did at Mount Sinai. 19 For they heard an awesome trumpet blast and a voice so terrible that they begged God to stop speaking. 20 They staggered back under God's command: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." 21 Moses himself was so frightened at the sight that he said, "I am terrified and trembling."

- ⤴ To Moses and all of the Israelites.

Acts 9:4-8 NIV

4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. 6 "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.

- ⤴ To Saul on the road to Damascus.

WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKS TO YOUR HEART, IT CAN HAVE AN INTERNAL AND/OR EMOTIONAL EFFECT UPON US.

1 Cor 9:16-17 NASU

16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.

1 Cor 9:16-17 CJB

16 For I can't boast merely because I proclaim the Good News — this I do from inner compulsion: woe is me if I don't proclaim the Good News! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if I do it unwillingly, I still do it, simply because I've been entrusted with a job.

⤴ Paul took very seriously the word that he had received from the Lord—it set the course of his life. Jesus spoke to him on the road to Damascus in an audible voice and Paul responded to it:

Acts 26:15-16 KJV

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

Gal 1:15-16 KJV

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

⤴ As he received this word from Jesus, it became the motivating and compelling force in his life. The words that Jesus speaks to us can change the direction of our lives and give us a good idea of what he wants us to do.

Jer 20:8-9 AMP

8 For whenever I speak, I must cry out and complain; I shout, Violence and destruction! For the word of the Lord has become to me a reproach and a derision and has brought me insult all day long.

9 If I say, I will not make mention of [the Lord] or speak any more in His name, in my mind and heart it is as if there were a burning fire shut up in my bones. And I am weary of enduring and holding it in; I cannot [contain it any longer].

⤴ As Jeremiah tried to keep from speaking, the word of God touched his emotions and he felt like it was burning in him until he couldn't contain it anymore.

Luke 24:32-33 NASU

32 They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

⤴ Jesus' words caused them to feel something within. It touches us.

Dan 7:15 AMP

15 As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved and anxious within me, and the visions of my head alarmed and agitated me.

⤴ What he was hearing and seeing from the Lord caused some emotional turmoil in Daniel.

⤴ There is emotion and passion in our hearts that comes from the Lord. Who can be in the presence of God and not have something take place in their heart?

⤴ Passion or emotion should not be the only factor in determining if it is the Lord speaking to you. It should always be weighed out with the other factors found in the scriptures.

Ezek 43:3 NIV

3 The vision I saw was like the vision I had seen when he came to destroy the city and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown.

^ It moved him to fall on his face when he saw this vision!

There are times when the Holy Spirit moves upon us in a greater way.

As we look at the context of these verses, you will see that there are times that we are moved by the Lord because we are filled with the Spirit. This is not talking about getting baptized in the Holy Spirit, but rather specific times where God uses a person or persons in a mighty way.

Acts 4:31 KJV

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Definition of filled: NT:4130

Persons to be filled with something, i.e., to be wholly imbued, affected, influenced with or by something, with the gen. of thing as with the Holy Spirit

(from The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament © 1992 by AMG International, Inc. Revised Edition, 1993)

Various examples of filling:

Luke 1:67 NASU

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

Matt 27:48 KJV

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.

Luke 4:28 KJV

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

Luke 6:11 KJV

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

Acts 5:17 KJV

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

Acts 13:45 KJV

45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

Acts 2:4 KJV

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 4:8 KJV

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

Acts 13:9 KJV

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him,

^ There are times when the Holy Spirit will have a greater impact, a greater sense of his presence, a time of a greater impelling. The word filled is used of wrath, madness, indignation, and envy as well as of the Holy Spirit. In these cases, people felt a greater sense of the particular emotion than they normally did. This seems to show that the Holy Spirit will move upon us at different times in a greater sense, even though he is constantly dwelling in us.

^ One of the ways that we can keep our hearts filled in our daily lives is to follow what this scripture has to say:

Eph 5:18-20 AMP

18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but ever be filled and stimulated with the [Holy] Spirit. [Prov 23:20.]

19 Speak out to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, offering praise with voices [and instruments] and making melody with all your heart to the Lord,

20 At all times and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.

♣ As you do these things, as well as the next scripture, you will find yourself being filled with the things of God, as well as the peace of God. This will help you in hearing the Spirit because you are flooding your heart, mind, soul, and spirit with the things of God. You will have a heart of appreciation growing in you as you sing songs of praise and thanksgiving. Your mind will also be filled with affection for the heavenly things.

Phil 4:8-9 AMP

8 For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them].

9 Practice what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and model your way of living on it, and the God of peace (of untroubled, undisturbed well-being) will be with you.

Definition of full:

NT:4134 of the soul, thoroughly permeated with

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NT:4134 2. pert. to being complete and with nothing lacking, complete, full, in full

(from A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, Third Edition. Copyright © 2000 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved.)

Acts 19:28

28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

Acts 9:36

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

Luke 4:1 KJV

4 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

Acts 6:3 KJV

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

Acts 7:55 KJV

55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

Acts 11:23-24 KJV

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

♣ In the scriptures relating to Christians, we see individuals who were yielded to the Lord, people who were complete in him, who were controlled by him, they were full.

WHAT IS GOD' PURPOSE IN THE WORDS HE GIVES?

Jer 23:22

22 But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.

⤴ With the prophets in the Old Testament, they had words to turn a rebellious people back to the living God.

Ezek 13:4-6 NIV

4 Your prophets, O Israel, are like jackals among ruins. 5 You have not gone up to the breaks in the wall to repair it for the house of Israel so that it will stand firm in the battle on the day of the Lord.

Ezek 22:30-31 New Living Translation

30 "I looked for someone who might rebuild the wall of righteousness that guards the land. I searched for someone to stand in the gap in the wall so I wouldn't have to destroy the land, but I found no one.

Ps 106:23 NIV

23 So he said he would destroy them — had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach before him to keep his wrath from destroying them.

Isa 63:5 NIV

5 I looked, but there was no one to help, I was appalled that no one gave support; so my own arm worked salvation for me, and my own wrath sustained me.

Isa 58:12 NIV

12 Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

⤴ The words or counsel of the Lord will always be to turn people from their evil ways, not encourage it.

⤴ The heart of the Father through his messengers is to repair what is broken in the relationship.

⤴ Standing in the gap is defined by the verse as rebuilding the wall of righteousness. Some of the words of the Lord are for this purpose.

Rev 19:10 NASU

10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

⤴ What is one way to discern if the word of prophecy you have in your heart is from the Lord?

Does it point to Jesus and who he is and what he has done? If you have a word of prophecy as seen in 1 Cor 12 and 14, it should point to the Lord and a closer walk with him.

Hos 12:10 New Living Translation

10 I sent my prophets to warn you with many visions and parables."

⤴ The prophets of old were the 'watchmen' of God. They spoke many warnings as well as encouragement:

Jer 1:10 AMP

10 See, I have this day appointed you to the oversight of the nations and of the kingdoms to root out and pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.

1 Cor 14:3-4 NASU

3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

⤴ A note of caution should be placed here. There are times when we admonish one another or even rebuke one another, those are scriptural principles. The gift of prophecy used in the church service will be to edify, exhort, and to comfort. The ministry of the leadership is to watch over the flock and words that reprove the church as a whole will usually come through

them. If you have a word that seems judgmental and reproofing, check with your leadership before speaking it out. The leadership are to be shepherds under the Lord, watching over the flock.

1 Cor 14:30

30 If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace.

- ⤴ This is speaking about the Lord revealing a word while another is speaking. Sometimes he reveals more of his thoughts, possibly because the first word was stirring the heart of the individual, or possibly because he wanted to use someone else, or it stirred up something related to the first word. The second person is to wait until the first one finishes and not interrupt the first person. These are just probabilities concerning why it might happen, I am not trying to box God in by my thoughts. It just shows that God is desiring to reveal his thoughts!

THE RESULT OF GOD GIVEN WORDS.

1 Tim 1:18-20 NASU

18 This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, 19 keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

- ⤴ God given prophetic words can help us to continue our fight in the Lord. They point us in the right direction

1 Tim 4:14-15 New Living Translation

14 Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you.

- ⤴ Through the ministry of the presbyters there was a spiritual gift given through prophecy. Somebody had to be hearing something from God.
- ⤴ It is best to have someone judging your word if you believe that you have a personal word for someone else (prophecies are judged, so why not a word that might change someone's life?). There have been cases of individuals giving direction through a 'word' that they received for someone else that have been erroneous and have had traumatic effects on the individual.

2 Peter 1:17-21 NIV

17 For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. 19 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- ⤴ They believed the words of the prophets, but they heard the audible voice of God confirming that Jesus was God's Son. This made it even more certain in their hearts. The voice of God confirmed, rather than changed all that they had learned and believed from the prophets (who received it from the Spirit).

Ps 119:28 NIV

28 My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.

- ⤴ The written word can strengthen us. The Spirit makes it alive to us.

2 Cor 1:3-5 NIV

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble

with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

⤴ We can pass along God's comfort in getting through times of trouble.

Prov 27:5-6 KJV

5 Open rebuke is better than secret love.

6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

⤴ Even corrective words from a friend are better than secret or concealed love.

THINGS THAT AFFECT OUR HEARING.

Having a hardened heart will keep us from understanding what the Spirit is wanting to do.

Mark 8:15-21 New Living Translation

15 As they were crossing the lake, Jesus warned them, "Watch out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod."

16 At this they began to argue with each other because they hadn't brought any bread. 17 Jesus knew what they were saying, so he said, "Why are you arguing about having no bread? Don't you know or understand even yet? Are your hearts too hard to take it in? 18 'You have eyes—can't you see? You have ears—can't you hear?' Don't you remember anything at all? 19 When I fed the 5,000 with five loaves of bread, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up afterward?" "Twelve," they said.

20 "And when I fed the 4,000 with seven loaves, how many large baskets of leftovers did you pick up?" "Seven," they said.

21 "Don't you understand yet?" he asked them.

⤴ There are times when we still think according to the natural ways. Our walk with the Lord involves learning to discern what he is speaking to us. That is why we need to understand the principles of how he does lead us and have our minds renewed in him.

Mark 16:14 AMP

14 Afterward He appeared to the Eleven [apostles themselves] as they reclined at table; and He reproved and reproached them for their unbelief (their lack of faith) and their hardness of heart, because they had refused to believe those who had seen Him and looked at Him attentively after He had risen [from death].

⤴ Unbelief and hardness of heart are two things that keep us from hearing the Lord. We have already seen in Heb 3 that 'Today, if you hear his voice, harden not your hearts'.

Matt 13:13-17 AMP

13 This is the reason that I speak to them in parables: because having the power of seeing, they do not see; and having the power of hearing, they do not hear, nor do they grasp and understand.

14 In them indeed is the process of fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah, which says: You shall indeed hear and hear but never grasp and understand; and you shall indeed look and look but never see and perceive.

15 For this nation's heart has grown gross (fat and dull), and their ears heavy and difficult of hearing, and their eyes they have tightly closed, lest they see and perceive with their eyes, and hear and comprehend the sense with their ears, and grasp and understand with their heart, and turn and I should heal them. [Isa 6:9,10.]

16 But blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied) are your eyes because they do see, and your ears because they do hear.

17 Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous men [men who were upright and in right standing with God] yearned to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

⤴ In speaking to his disciples, he told them that they did have ears to hear and eyes to see. We

should not allow our hearts to be hardened and calloused.

- ♣ The way that we keep our hearts soft and tender is by hearing and responding to the Lord as he reveals truths to us.

John 6:60-63 AMP

60 When His disciples heard this, many of them said, This is a hard and difficult and strange saying (an offensive and unbearable message). Who can stand to hear it? [Who can be expected to listen to such teaching?]

61 But Jesus, knowing within Himself that His disciples were complaining and protesting and grumbling about it, said to them: Is this a stumbling block and an offense to you? [Does this upset and displease and shock and scandalize you?]

62 What then [will be your reaction] if you should see the Son of Man ascending to [the place] where He was before?

63 It is the Spirit Who gives life [He is the Life-giver]; the flesh conveys no benefit whatever [there is no profit in it]. The words (truths) that I have been speaking to you are spirit and life.

- ♣ There are times when what the Lord tells us seems difficult to understand. Do we continue to seek him for clarification or do we just drop him as some of these disciples did?

John 8:43 AMP

43 Why do you misunderstand what I say? It is because you are unable to hear what I am saying. [You cannot bear to listen to My message; your ears are shut to My teaching.]

- ♣ May we ever keep our 'ears' open.

There are many things that can harden our hearts:

Luke 8:13 having rocky soil. We have not given every area over to him.

Luke 8:14 worries, riches, and pleasures of this life keep us from being productive in Christ.

Deut 6:10-13 When you receive the blessings of the Lord and are full, beware that you do not forget the Lord your God. It seems like many people call out to the Lord when they are desperate, but we need to beware of forgetting him when everything is going smooth.

Prov 28:26 AMP

26 He who leans on, trusts in, and is confident of his own mind and heart is a [self-confident] fool, but he who walks in skillful and godly Wisdom shall be delivered. [James 1:5.]

- ♣ We cannot rely on our own reasoning apart from God's word.

Matt 6:21 AMP

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

- ♣ Our hearts are affected by what we treasure, and that can go God's way or our own way. If we continue to hold our 'treasure' above what God treasures then we will be more resistant to hearing what the Lord desires.

GOD IS GRACIOUS TO LET US KNOW IF WE GET OFF TRACK.

Phil 3:14-16 NASU

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

- ♣ As we continue our walk with the Lord and desire to know his ways, he will reveal to us if we are getting off track of his purposes. How gracious is our God.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. God desires to share his heart and thoughts with us.
2. He does communicate to us through dreams, visions, angels, others, the word of God, burdens in our hearts, an audible voice, and by the Holy Spirit speaking to us.
3. We have scriptures that show the fruit that the Spirit produces and that should be involved in what he is speaking to us and in what we are speaking. We are to keep in step with him, allowing the fruit that is part of his nature to grow in us.
4. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter who is to teach us and bring all things to remembrance.
5. The Holy Spirit will always glorify Jesus.
6. There are scriptures that show what the Holy Spirit is not like.
7. There may be times when you have a greater sense of the Spirit.
8. You do not have to be stoic, the Spirit of God causes an internal compelling to accomplish some work or can have an emotional effect when he is speaking to you.
9. You learn the voice of the Spirit from the day you get saved. Learn to respond to him on a daily basis and you will begin to see that you are hearing from him. Each of us can have testimonies of how God speaks to us that are very different from how the Spirit deals with the others. You might be encouraged by someone else's testimony, but your experience might be slightly different. The things that will not change are the scriptural definitions and attributes of the Spirit. You are encouraged scripturally to test or approve by testing what is acceptable to the Lord.
10. The words that the Spirit speaks, whether to us personally or to be given to the body or an individual, will always have the heart of the Father foremost. We must not allow our personal feelings to crop up and be the driving force of any word we receive from the Lord, otherwise we will cause disharmony, confusion, and ungodly effects, especially if those words are a specific word for someone else.
11. A point not brought up but very important is to have a vibrant prayer life. If you are being filled with the Spirit by singing psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, and thinking about the type of things mentioned in Phil 4:8, along with a vibrant prayer life, you will be hearing from him.
12. You do not have to be a mature Christian in order to hear him and to be used by him.
13. Guard your heart. Do not allow your heart to be hardened. Prov 4:23 says that we should guard our hearts because out of it spring the issues of life.
14. Apply his truths and obey his instructions and you will see him giving you more.

NOTE: Many people feel that the Spirit is not speaking to them like he is to others. Sometimes it is because we are looking for the voice of the Holy Spirit in our hearts or minds and haven't realized that he is giving his direction in one of the other ways mentioned above. As we continue to recognize, appreciate, and obey the Lord's direction and guidance, however it comes, I believe that more will be given to us.

Many of us will seem to understand the Spirit's leading in certain areas better than others. Some are better at discerning what the Spirit is saying through the scriptures, others seem to hear his voice clearly, etc. Whatever the case, we need to be aware of the different ways in which the Holy Spirit ministers and leads, so that we do not miss out on his leading if he speaks to us in one or more of the other ways. He wants us to be well rounded and mature so that he can use us in any circumstance that he desires to.

May you grow in grace and understanding of the Holy Spirit's work in your life.

We do not need a direct 'word from God' to be led by his Spirit. His word is Spirit and his word is Life. We need to walk in the truths that he has given us and continue to grow in that. We know we are to put off certain behaviors and to put on others. We have his Spirit in us to strengthen us in doing that,

and we have his truths that tell us we are free from bondage to sin. When we walk out our Christian walk, we are not doing it on our own, but rather, we are learning to be led by him. Thank God that he also communicates with us through all of the ways mentioned.

Eph 3:16 AMP

16 May He grant you out of the rich treasury of His glory to be strengthened and reinforced with mighty power in the inner man by the [Holy] Spirit [Himself indwelling your innermost being and personality].

This material is meant to help balance out some of the craziness that is found in some circles. Some people are almost in 'bondage', needing a word from God to know what color socks they should wear that day!

This is not a comprehensive study on the leading of God. My desire was to give some scriptural tools that will help you in discerning the voice and leading of God, as well as showing that the Lord speaks to us in multiple ways. May you grow in grace and obedience to him.