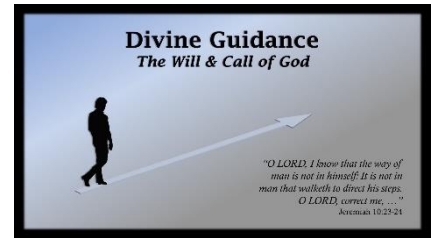


Keystones for Living

Divine Guidance The Will And Call Of God

Lecture 9



And welcome to Keystones! Pastor Jerry here. The other day we talked about the word of God as being the agency of Divine Guidance. Now let's talk about the Spirit of God. This is lecture #9 - the Spirit of God. He guides us by his Spirit. I want you to look at Ephesians chapter one with me. Alright verse 13, let me read it to you. "In whom you also trusted after that you heard the word of truth" How many see that: "the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise".

I just want to read that verse to you to show you there are two things emphasized there. One is the Word of God, but the second thing is the Spirit of God. Did you see that? What I'm saying is Divine guidance comes by the Word of God. We talked about that, AND guidance comes from the Spirit of God. But you can't divorce the spirit of God from the Word of God. They're right here in verse 13, but you're going to see them together all through the Bible. Think about what it says in Genesis chapter one. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

Do you remember that verse? Of course. "And the Earth was without form and void, and darkness covered the face of the deep", it says. "And the spirit of God brooded over the face of the waters" and now listen. "And God SAID" -So you have the Word of God. Next "the Spirit of God brooded"- here you have the Spirit of God.

Why do you bring that up? Well, because there are some people who think that you're only guided by the Spirit of God- forget the word of God. Is it just the spirit of God? No, no. It's also the word of God. Some believe it's just the word of God, but no. It's also the spirit of God. Do you remember that little diagram that we used a while back? Let me just refresh your memory. OK, remember this?

We drew a little pendulum here. On one side we wrote "The word". And on the other side we wrote "the spirit", do you remember? And we said this. If this pendulum swings all the way to one side and it's all WORD and no SPIRIT, we DRY up. And this is this is an issue in churches today. But if it swings all the way over to the other side and it's all SPIRIT, and no WORD, then what? We BLOW up. You see, we need a combination of the two, so that we can GROW up.

That's why we're talking about birth, growth and development, and keystones for living. To dry up is when it's all word and no spirit. To blow up is when it's all spirit and no word. God wants these two to be combined so we can GROW up in him! That is so vital in the church, because it has an effect on how you preach. Remember what Jesus said. He said "the spirit of the Lord is

upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor". You see that the Spirit is indispensable. You need them both, don't you?

So yes, we're talking about divine guidance now. The Spirit still speaks to us. Would you agree that the Spirit still speaks to? Plus, let me just show you that the spirit of God talks to us. OK? He prompts us. He leads us. He guides us. Let's go to the Book of Luke chapter 2, we're going to read verse 25 through 27, listen to what it says, "and behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. Notice the characteristics of this man. He gives us three. You can teach this to your people. They need to know this. He says he was just. And he was devout, and he was waiting. I like those 3 words- just, devout and waiting.

What was he waiting for? It says he was waiting for the consolation of Israel. That's the promise of God that the Messiah was going to come! Notice this. "And the Holy Ghost was upon him" So he was conscious of the promise. He was also conscious of the presence. The Holy Spirit's presence. But look at the next verse. It says in verse 26 "and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost". Do you see that? He's conscious of the presence, he's conscious of the promise. The Holy Ghost is upon him, and it was revealed to him by that Holy Ghost, meaning he was conscious of the presence. Also notice this, "that he would not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ".

All right now, look at the next verse. Oh, I love this! "And he came by the Spirit" How many would say then that he was conscious of a prompting. So we need to see that as he's just, as he's devout, as he's waiting for the consolation of Israel, the Holy Ghost is upon him. The Holy Ghost speaks to him. The Holy Ghost reveals to him. The Holy Ghost prompts him. Don't tell me that the Holy Ghost doesn't speak and doesn't still guide us, because He does!

I know we can go on and on with the good old man named Simeon. But let's look at another one. Let's go to another chapter in the Bible. Let's go to Acts Chapter 9, and we're going to read about another man. Acts Chapter 9 verse 10. "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias, and to him said the Lord" Did you see that? "And to him said the Lord" now let's just jump back for a second. Remember now, the Lord is speaking, but he's never going to talk to Ananias or Simeon, or anyone contrary to the Word. OK, so don't forget they go together. But the Spirit is speaking.

Alright go back to verse 10. It says "there was a certain disciple of Damascus named Ananias, and to him said the Lord". Now if you go to verse 11 it says "and the Lord said". I think you see something, don't you? Is the Lord speaking to him? OK? Yes, he is. It's really interesting, isn't it? Now go to verse 15, "but the Lord said unto him", in other words, here you see Simeon, here you see Ananias, who apparently have a relationship with the Lord.

It says that Ananias was a disciple. It says that Simeon was just and devout, and waiting for the consolation of Israel. This was a man of prayer, a man of waiting on God, a man who had a relationship, and who spent some time in the secret place of the Most High. Would you agree? Absolutely, because the Lord spoke to them and they recognized His voice.

We might hear a lot of voices, but do we recognize the spirit of God speaking to us? So here you have Ananias being spoken to. But notice what he says to Ananias. I'm going to go back now. He says in verse 11, "and the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the street, which is called Straight". Do you see that? What's the Spirit of God doing? Can anybody tell me what the Spirit of God is doing? He's leading him. Arise, go!

If you go back to the Book of Luke Chapter 2 again, it says in verse 27 that Simeon "came by the Spirit into the temple." How did Simeon get to the temple? How did Ananias get to where Saul of Tarsus was? How did he get there? By the Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord prompted Simeon, the Spirit of the Lord spoke to Ananias. He came by the spirit into the temple, and Ananias knew where to go by that same Spirit. Oh, thank you Lord. Lead us by your spirit. Do you know that God can do that? Oh yes he can!

Go to Acts Chapter 8. Let me read something to you. Acts chapter 8, this is great stuff. Let's look now at verse 26. Phillip, a Deacon, had been in Samaria. A great revival broke out. He's having the time of his life. If you were in a revival and people were getting saved and healed all over the place, what would you do? You'd be saying this is a great place. Let's stay here and build 3 tabernacles wouldn't you? OK, let's go to verse 26 now, it says "and the Angel of the Lord spoke unto Phillip, and he said, arise, go toward the south unto the way that goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went."

So who's talking to him? You say, Pastor Jerry, the Lord is. Or the Angel of the Lord. Well that's the Lord. It's the Spirit of God. You see the Spirit of God is the active agent of the Godhead. He is speaking to Phillip, and he's letting him know where he should go. In fact, he says, Arise and go. And what does Philip do? He gets up, and he goes. Now you notice that the Holy Spirit is speaking to him, but he doesn't give him details of everything. He just says arise, go toward the south to this place. That's all you need to know. Philip doesn't argue with him. He just gets up and goes.

Do you recognize the voice of the Lord so well that when you hear just that much, "arise, go south" Do you recognize that voice so well that you'll just get up and go? Lord Jesus, would you help me? You know, sometimes I'm not cognizant. I'm not conscious of that presence, that promise, or maybe that prompting as I should be, as Simeon was. Maybe I need to spend a little more time in the presence of the King so I can hear him tell me, "Do this, Jerry, go here. Jerry don't do this. Jerry, don't do that. Go do this. Go over here. Speak to that person"

You don't have to get strange about it and act like a prophet. You don't have to do that, just tell them simply. Just speak to them. Maybe something like this: So you know I was waiting on the Lord yesterday and the Lord gave me a verse of Scripture, and I thought you would love to hear this verse. Let me just share it with you! And you give them the verse, and they may say that's exactly what I needed! Why can't that happen? It does happen. Yes, it does.

Jesus is walking on the road to Emmaus. He comes and joins these two men that are there and what does he do? He expounds unto them all the things that the scripture says about Jesus,

(about himself) and it says, "and their hearts burned within them". He didn't get all weird in his face, and you know, shake his voice. All he did was say hey fellas, where are you going? How's it going? What are you talking about? And then he begins to share with them. He says "oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the Scriptures have spoken" and he begins to expound the word. But he expounded the word of God by the spirit of God. The spirit of God led Jesus. And if he led Jesus, he will lead you.

Notice, it says in Acts chapter 8, verse 26, one more time, "and the Angel of the Lord spoke unto Phillip, go south." Now if you'll jump down to verse 29, listen to what it says. "Then the spirit said unto Phillip. THEN. Yes, then. How many see that word "then"? Well, what comes before the word then? Well, it was a tremendous revival happening in Acts chapter eight. Well, there was persecution before that, and it was the persecution that pushed Phillip and others to go to other places. He goes to Samaria, a revival breaks out, and the Bible says, the Spirit of God, or the Angel of the Lord, said to him, Arise, go south, and he had to obey and get up and go.

And then he finds this man. I'll bet you Philip was pretty excited when he ran into that Ethiopian eunuch down there. And then it says in verse 20, "Then the Spirit said unto Phillip", he didn't say go south this time. No, he was already there. He said, "go near, go near and join thyself to his chariot" That's detail. That's specific. How many know that the spirit of God will lead you generally, but he'll also lead you specifically.

So we see here in these verses that God the Holy Ghost will lead us and guide us. And you'll notice with all three of these men that we have given you an example of, the Bible says, "and it was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit", "and the spirit of God said," "and the Lord said," "and the Spirit said", How many see that he says, go there, go here, go down this road, go into this house, you're going to find a man. His name is Saul. Do you see detail? Do you see specifics?

Listen, don't tell me God cannot give specifics. Does he always? No, no, but he does and can and will, in his way, in his time. I remember when I was 27 years old and it was the month of January 1987. I'll never forget it. I was in the sanctuary of a church near Cleveland, Ohio. I was a youth Pastor and music director in the church. God had been dealing with my heart this particular day in the sanctuary. I would come early before the pastor would get there, and I would just spend about 1/2 an hour waiting on the Lord in prayer. And I'll never forget this day in January, 1987 that as I was pacing back and forth, the Spirit of the Lord spoke to me. Now I don't care what people say, I KNOW he spoke to me.

I just gave you 3 examples of the Spirit of God speaking to people in the New Testament. And he spoke to me, and this is what he said. I had been at that church almost seven years. And the Lord spoke to me and said, "Jerry", this is what he said, I still remember. "Prepare your heart to leave this place." Exact words. "Prepare your heart to leave this place" Now that wasn't specific, but he did speak to me and I thought to myself, Lord, do you mean prepare my

finances? No, you mean prepare my family? No, my house? No, prepare my things? No, no “prepare your heart” and I could not understand it.

I was trying to figure out why the Lord would tell me to prepare my heart, and I didn't know this then, but I learned later what he meant, when he said prepare your heart. He meant that my heart would be the greatest difficulty I would face. What do you mean? See folks, whenever you're faced with dilemmas and trials and issues and unexpected things, the greatest problem you're going to have, or one of the greatest places you're going to experience trouble is in your heart. And in your mind. I thought you said just your heart. Well now think about it. The Bible says, “as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he”. So can you see that the mind and the heart go together?

Think about this verse in the book of Philippians, “and the peace that passes all understanding will protect your heart and your mind” Do you see that? Your mind and your heart are connected. There's a connection. What I'm saying is the Lord wanted me to prepare my heart, because in the future when I came into issues and troubles and trials as a new pastor, that the trouble would be in my heart and in my mind. The two places where the devil likes to cause trouble. Anybody know what I mean?

I'm telling you today. I'm telling you today, the Spirit of God will speak to you as he did to me, and He said, “I want you to prepare your heart”. You know the Bible says, “out of out of the abundance of the heart,” right? “The mouth speaks”. The Bible, says “guard your heart for out of it are the issues of life” Out of it, the territory of your heart, the boundaries of your life are drawn. So your heart is important. What you think in your heart is important. And God said to me, Jerry, I want you to prepare your heart. Now that was pretty cool for me. Really cool.

I want you, however, to notice something. In each of these three examples that I gave you in the scriptures., as well as my own example. “The Lord said,” I know I brought this up, but the Lord said, the Holy Spirit said, the Holy Spirit revealed, the Lord said, the Angel of the Lord spoke. Do you see that? how many see something here: “said, spoke, said, revealed, said” do you see that? What does that mean? How many see a voice here? Does anybody see a voice? I see a voice, “the Holy Spirit said”. God spoke.

You know the Book of Revelation says something at the end of each one of the Letters to the Churches. It says, “let he who hath an ear hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.” How many know the Spirit has something to say to the churches. Now remember, that's not divorced from the Word of God, and it's not contrary to the word of God. When the spirit of God speaks to you, that's another thing we must not forget. What I'm saying to you is we must remember that when the spirit of God speaks to us, that we recognize his voice. Let's go to another verse before we kind of close this up today. I hope you're getting something out of this. I know that I am, and every time I look at this I get something more!

John chapter 10. I'm going to read a verse to you here. I'm going to begin reading at verse 4, just a couple of verses. I just want to bring them out to you. Verse four says this. “And when he

put forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him.” But why? “For they know”. What? They know his voice. They recognize it. They are familiar with it. When that voice speaks, they know whose voice it is. Let me ask you, do you know, oh, the voice of the Spirit? Do you know the voice of the Lord so well, that any other voice is the voice of a stranger?

Let me ask it again. Do you know the voice of the Lord so well, that any other voice is the voice of a stranger? Oh, I pray that I do. I'm not saying that I do, but I want to. In fact, it was a real, a real desire in my heart many, many years ago to get to know the voice of the Spirit of God. And sometimes I do- ok, sometimes I don't. When I don't then that just means I need to spend more time in the secret place with him. Wouldn't you agree? Look at the next verse. I wasn't going to read verse 5, but I think it's a good verse that we need to read. John 10 verse five. “A stranger will they not follow”

Here's the problem in the church today. They're following strangers because they don't know the voice of God. I'm talking about pastors. This is an encouragement to you Pastor. If you get to recognize his voice, praise God, you're going to go far. You're going to go far, “and a stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him”. Not only will they not follow the stranger, this is the problem, not only will they not follow the stranger, “but they will run from him”. Whoa, I pray that would happen more today. That they would not just recognize that it's a stranger and they would not follow him, but they would flee from him. Why? It says, because they're not familiar with the voice. For they know not the voice of strangers.

Yes, we even teach our kids, don't talk to strangers right? We say that. John Chapter 10 verse 27. Let me read you verse 27. “my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me,” So let us just say we can be led by the word of God and the spirit of God. The spirit of God does lead us. Remember Simeon. Remember Ananias. Remember Phillip, and myself included. And he has also led you, and he will lead you by speaking to you. He will prompt you. There will be a witness in your spirit. The spirit of the living God bears witness with my spirit that we are the sons of God. The spirit of God does lead and prompt and guide. Absolutely. We just gave you some examples of that.

But you see we also mentioned there's a voice here. So we must get to know His voice. Would you agree that we've got to get to know that voice? Would you agree that it is a very detrimental thing in Christianity today that we do not know the voice of the Lord as we should? Or as we need to? We probably know the voice of the Lord, but you know everybody is at a different level, aren't they? Well, sure, be patient with yourself. Don't be too hard on yourself, but have a heart desire to get to know the voice of the Shepherd. Get to know his voice.

Let's say it this way, get to recognize his voice. Let's say it this way, be able to identify his voice. Oh, let's say it this way, be able to learn the voice of the Lord Jesus. And when you do, he can lead and he can guide, and you can experience a tremendous divine guidance according to the

will of God. Now the question is, how do we get to recognize his voice? How can we recognize the voice of God? Identify the voice of God? Discern the voice of God? How, how?

Let me give you 3 things. #1. By Revelation. #2. By Association. This is what my pastor taught me years and years and years ago now, about 40 years ago. OK, Revelation, and Association. And thirdly, by Cultivation. Actually, you can say the first two will come from this third one. OK, in other words, these two are connected to this one, but they can all be 3 separate things. Revelation, association, cultivation. And that's how we can learn, discern, identify, and get to know his voice. And the next time we get together we're going to talk about those three things. So keep praying, keep seeking. Keep loving God. Keep worshiping him. Keep saying to him, I want to know your voice in a greater way. Friends, my sheep do know my voice, so you do know his voice. But how many would agree that you can get closer and closer and closer and closer, so all He has to do is say. "Hey Jerry, it's me".

Oh friends, he might have to shout at me once in a while. But I want to get to the place where all He has to do is nudge me and I'll know it's Him. So next time:

Revelation –association- cultivation.

See you soon!