

# 4 The Holy Spirit Leads You

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The apostle Paul urges, “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25). We must not only receive the Holy Spirit, but also walk in the Spirit. The apostle Paul had heard of some Christians who were not walking in the Spirit. To them he made this sad announcement: “You are still worldly” (1 Corinthians 3:3).

In his book *The Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, Willard Cantelon points out the importance of walking in the Spirit. “No matter how much a man may receive from God in spiritual gifts, nothing is accomplished unless that man walks in the Spirit” (1951, 29). The Holy Spirit comes to show us the truth. But how can He teach us if we ignore the Bible, the Word of Truth? He has come to give us power to witness and power to pray. But how can He perform His great work through us and in us if we keep silent about our faith and neglect prayer?

*Walking in the Spirit* means letting the Holy Spirit lead you. But just exactly how does He lead? This lesson answers that important question.

### ***The Plan***

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- A. He Leads You by God’s Word
- B. He Leads You by the Church
- C. He Leads You by Spiritual Gifts
- D. He Leads You by Visions, Dreams, and Circumstances

### ***The Goals***

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- 1. Identify ways in which the Holy Spirit uses the Bible to lead believers.
- 2. State the role of God’s people, the church.
- 3. Indicate five standards that spiritual gifts will meet.
- 4. Show how God can lead you through visions, dreams, and circumstances.

## **A. HE LEADS YOU BY GOD’S WORD**

**Goal 1.** Identify ways in which the Holy Spirit uses the Bible to lead believers.

Some people even depend on horoscopes and fortune-tellers. But you have a Friend who knows the future. He knows what is best for you. He loves you and wants to guide you in all your decisions. He is the Holy Spirit.

### ***Application***

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**1** The Holy Spirit is qualified to lead you because He knows the ..... and He ..... you.



The Bible is the road map that the Holy Spirit uses to lead you to heaven. Daily He helps you apply to your circumstances

the teachings of God’s Word. So it is very important for you to read your Bible every day.

The Holy Spirit will sometimes speak to you through certain verses as you read. Time after time Christians have said that in their devotional reading a Bible verse seemed to stand out from the page. And the verse was the exact words of encouragement or healing they needed.

The Holy Spirit will help you recall the Bible verses that you memorized. So when you are tempted to err, a verse may come to your mind as a warning. Psalm 119:9 confirms, “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.”

The Holy Spirit will also speak to you through Bible teaching—preaching or teaching in the church, on the radio, in Bible clubs, in gospel literature, and in study courses such as this one. These are ways that He has chosen to lead you into all truth. Remember John 16:13.

## ***Application***

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- 2** Repeat from memory John 16:13.
- 3** Memorize Psalm 118:9.
- 4** Following are listed ways the Holy Spirit can use the Bible to lead you. Underline those that you need to do more often.

Read the Bible.

Memorize Bible verses.

Listen to sermons.

Attend Bible classes.

Read books that explain truths in the Bible.

Study Bible courses.



## B. HE LEADS YOU BY THE CHURCH

**Goal 2.** State the role of God’s people, the church.

Children learn to walk, talk, run, play, and work from their families. When you were born again, the Holy Spirit made you a part of God’s family—the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. He expects you to accept from your brothers and sisters in Christ the help they give you. You will find much guidance, teaching, and help as you take your place in a local church. Be sure that it is one that believes the Bible, obeys it, and teaches and accepts the work of the Holy Spirit.

Christ has put in the church pastors, teachers, and other leaders. The Holy Spirit provides for them special gifts and power so they can do their work well.

It was he who gave some to be apostles,  
some to be prophets, some to be evangelists,  
and some to be pastors and teachers, to  
prepare God’s people for works of service,  
so that the body of Christ may be built up.  
(Ephesians 4:11–12)

Every member of the church needs to be full of the Holy Spirit. As leaders and members are led by the Spirit, the whole church can work together in harmony. Each one will do his or her part effectively in God’s plan.

### ***Application***

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**5** Pray for your pastor and other leaders that they may be continually full of the Holy Spirit.

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## C. HE LEADS YOU BY SPIRITUAL GIFTS

**Goal 3.** Indicate five standards that spiritual gifts will meet.

The Holy Spirit has spiritual gifts for every Christian. He wants us to accept these gifts so we can help one another.

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4, 7)

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, . . . to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. (vv. 8, 10)

The Holy Spirit may give your pastor or another Spirit-filled Christian the message of wisdom or of knowledge that you need. Or this message may come directly to you in a deep impression or flash of insight. You suddenly understand what God's will is for a certain situation. From outside of your own mind comes the revelation of what a Bible passage means and how it applies to your problem. God gives you the very words that you need to help someone else.

When you talk to people about the Lord or teach a Bible lesson you need this leading of the Holy Spirit. Parents need the word of wisdom from God to give their children the right kind of advice. The work of the Spirit is for practical everyday living, not just for crises.

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. (Ephesians 1:17)

And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts. (Exodus 35:31)

Prophecy, messages in tongues, and the interpretation of tongues are ways the Holy Spirit speaks to a group. Prophecy is God's message in the language of the speaker. It may be telling

something that will take place in the future. Or it may be just a message of exhortation and comfort for the hearers. Sometimes the message comes first in tongues and then is interpreted. These two gifts together are like the gift of prophecy.

Some people are afraid of these gifts of the Spirit because of false messages that they have heard about. This is like refusing to accept money because you might get a counterfeit bill. Satan has always tried to confuse people by imitations of God's work. There were false prophets in the Bible and still some today. But the Holy Spirit does not want you to refuse His gifts for fear of receiving a counterfeit or imitation of His work.

Neither does God want you to be deceived by imitations of His work. That is why one of the gifts of the Spirit is discernment of spirits; it protects the church from the work of evil spirits and mistaken ideas of people. People sometimes mistake their own ideas for revelations from God. Some bring terrible confusion by giving "messages" to tell others whom to marry, where to go, and what to do. So God tells us to test all messages.

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.  
(1 Thessalonians 5:19–22)

Messages from the Holy Spirit meet these five standards:

1. The message must agree completely with God's Word. For example, a message that tells a man to take someone else's wife could not possibly be from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has come to help us obey God, not to tell us to do something God has forbidden. Agreement with God's Word is the most important test; everything has to be measured by it.
2. The message must be true. If what is said in a message is not true, it is not from the Holy Spirit for He is the Spirit of truth. Prophecies that are from the Lord are fulfilled.

“But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true.” (Jeremiah 28:9)

You may say to yourselves, “How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?” If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 18:21–22)

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. (John 16:13)

3. The message will honor Christ. The Spirit of God honors both the Father and the Son.

He will bring glory to me. (John 16:14)

No one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed.” (1 Corinthians 12:3)

4. The message will bring blessing, not confusion.

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. . . . All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. (1 Corinthians 14:4, 26)

5. The one who gives the message is conscious and responsible to do everything in an orderly way. Sometimes Satan imitates the work of the Holy Spirit. In spiritism the mediums may go into a trance and not be conscious of what they say when another spirit takes control of them. But when the Holy Spirit gives a message through a person, He does it with the conscious cooperation of that person. The person can choose when to speak and when to keep quiet so that he or she does not interrupt the message God has given the pastor or others. Paul clearly teaches this in 1 Corinthians 14. The pastor should encourage the use of

the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but at the same time he or she is responsible to see that all is done in order and not confusion. So those who have the gifts of the Spirit must recognize the leadership of the pastor and not resent his or her instructions or advice.

The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way. (1 Corinthians 14:32–33, 40)

## ***Application***

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**6** Memorize 1 Thessalonians 5:19–22.

**7** Circle the letter in front of each word or phrase that gives a standard for judging God-given messages.

- a)** Long with many details
  - b)** Honoring to Jesus Christ
  - c)** Forceful, loud, and authoritative
  - d)** Under the speaker's control
  - e)** Brings a blessing to the hearers
  - f)** Accompanied by tears
  - g)** Agrees with God's Word
  - h)** Has a true message
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## **D. HE LEADS YOU BY VISIONS, DREAMS, AND CIRCUMSTANCES**

**Goal 4.** Show how God can lead you through visions, dreams, and circumstances.

You have read in the Bible about how God spoke to people in visions and dreams. The Holy Spirit still speaks in this way today. What Joel prophesied is happening:

“Your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.” (Acts 2:17)

In 1940, B.T. Bard wrote about a wonderful outpouring of the Spirit in Peking.

There are confessions of sins and shortcomings, messages in tongues and interpretation, prophetic utterances, spiritual dreams, heavenly visions of Christ and the glory land, divine healings, and, above all, a spirit of prayer and worship.

Kao Chu Ju desired the presence of God, but she was afraid to have any show made of herself, or for anyone to lay hands on her. Suddenly she saw Jesus in a vision, and He graciously laid His own nail-pierced hands on her. She fell to the floor under the power of the Spirit and soon was speaking rapturously in other tongues as the Spirit gave her utterance.

Dreams that come from God are very vivid and impress the person deeply. Many people have been warned in dreams to give up sin and accept Jesus as their Savior. You may receive blessing, help, and encouragement in your dreams. Or the Holy Spirit may lead you to pray for someone or warn you of a danger.

Most dreams are not revelations from God. Your subconscious mind keeps on working while you sleep and weaves your thoughts into dreams. However, you can make even these dreams work for you. Use them as a reminder to pray for everyone that you see in your dreams.

## ***Application***

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**8** If you have a dream that seems to have a spiritual meaning, ask God to show you the meaning.

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## Circumstances and Impressions

A Christian missed the bus, and four hours later she caught the next bus, sat down by a woman who needed God, and was able to lead her to Christ. The Holy Spirit had led through that circumstance.

Do the doors of opportunity seem closed before you? Look around. The Holy Spirit may be opening a door to better opportunities. Think of the early Christians who fled from Jerusalem to save their lives. But wherever they went they spread the gospel and souls were saved. Paul in prison was unable to continue his missionary journeys, but while there he wrote some epistles.

Are conditions around you terrible? Maybe God has put you there so you can do something about them. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see what you can do. Then keep your eyes open and go to work to improve conditions. You are one of God's lamps. Do not complain about the darkness. Just shine where you are.

The Holy Spirit will often lead you by impressions, as you trust Him to help you in the choices you must make. When you think about doing one thing, you feel a deep peace about it. But when you think about the other possibility, you feel uneasy.

A Christian businessman had a reservation on a certain plane, but he felt uneasy about it. The more he thought about it the worse he felt. Finally he changed his reservations for a later flight. The plane he had planned to take crashed and all the passengers were killed. The Holy Spirit had saved his life.

Proverbs 16:9 states, "In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps." A pastor, hurrying to an appointment, felt an impression to stop and knock on the door of a particular house. He tried to ignore the idea, but it grew stronger. Finally, he turned around and went to the house. There he found a Christian in desperate need of his help.

A Christian felt an urgent impulse to visit a friend. When he arrived, his friend was preparing to commit suicide. The Christian led him to Christ and his life was saved.

“The Lord told me to bring you this,” a man said as he gave a basket of food to a pastor. The pastor and his wife had been praying for God to supply their needs because they had no money or food.

Life can become a series of thrilling adventures for you as you are filled with the Holy Spirit and learn to follow His leading. He will lead you into great usefulness and blessing.

## ***Application***

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- 9** You have read five different examples of God’s leading through circumstances or impressions. Based on these examples, what could be said about this kind of leading?
- a)** It usually concerns something to avoid.
  - b)** It is definite and the result brings honor to God.
  - c)** It can be easily ignored.
  - d)** It conforms to the plans one has already made.
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## Check Your Answers

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- 1 future, loves.
- 9 **b)** It is definite and the result brings honor to God.
- 7 **b)** Honoring to Jesus Christ.
  - d)** Under the speaker's control.
  - e)** Brings a blessing to the hearers.
  - g)** In agreement with God's Word.
  - h)** Has a true message.