

Being Led by the Holy Spirit

Introduction

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a personal guide in your life who could warn you of future events- good or bad. This personal guide would be 100% accurate all the time. He would always have your best interest at heart, leading you into the perfect will of God. This indescribable Person already lives inside you, the precious Holy Spirit- He knows everything about everything!

John 16:13, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come.”

- Jesus said in John 17:17 “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”
- Jesus said in John 8:32, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”
- 2 Cor. 3:17 states where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom
- So the Holy Spirit through the Word of God brings forth truth and freedom in our lives
 - o Therefore, the Holy Spirit will always lead us in harmony with God’s Word

Romans 8:14, 16

...because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

Romans 8:16 AMP

The Spirit Himself testifies together with our spirit, assuring us that we are children of God.

I want to point out that as Christians, the Spirit of God is constantly communicating with us. Then the obvious question would be, in what forms does He communicate with us?

Plans, Purposes and Pursuits

One of the great blessings to being a child of God is have His plans and purpose for our lives, for us to pursue now and for all eternity. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is multi-faceted, leading the believer into the perfect will of God is a big one.

Jeremiah 29:11-14

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the Lord...

Logos of God's Word

The Logos is God's written Word, absolute fixed and unchangeable. With written Scripture and the analogy of faith applied for proper interpretation (Scripture interprets Scripture) we need look no further in regards to ascertaining the will of God on the matter. Every other utterance, vision, dream or experience must line up with God's written Word to be considered truth.

John 1:1-5, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it."

The Word of God is not just words as we know them, but is actually referring to a person- the second person of the God Head. Before his incarnation and the name "Jesus" was given to Him, He was known only as the "Word of God." He is still referred to this name as we will see in Revelation 19:13. The Bible is more than a book, but represents God himself in the flesh on paper for us to receive. We hear His voice, see His power, and experience His Spirit through the sacred Scriptures. As we partake of the Bible as a living experience, we encounter the "Word of God" Himself by the Holy Spirit. Revelation knowledge bursts in our heart and becomes alive as we become introduced to our living savior, the Father and the Holy Spirit. The light of His Word floods our inner being to impart grace and truth and we are changed forever- Eph. 1:17-19.

1 Thessalonians 2:13, "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe."

- Logos: The written Word of God; the Bible is God speaking to us
 - o Revelation- the revealing of divine secrets, not known to the senses or reason
 - o 1 Cor. 2:6-16- God's secret wisdom, unveiled by the Holy Spirit to our spirit
 - o Our mind enlightened with spiritual understanding and insights- Eph. 4:23
- Ps 138:2 NKJV, "For You have magnified Your word above all Your name"
 - o Nothing in the universe supersedes God's Word- Absolute and Ultimate
 - o What keeps this universe together and spinning – God's Word!

Hebrews 1:3 AMP

Upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power.

- God's Word is our final authority for all matters that pertain to life and godliness
 - God's Word is God's will and is spiritual law that cannot fail or pass away
 - Mark 13:31, "Heaven and earth will pass away , but my words will never pass away"
- So when it comes to being led by the Holy Spirit, He primarily uses God's written Word of God.

2 Tim 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work

2 Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 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.

Psalms 119:130

The entrance and unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.

- Psalms 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
- Let the light of God's Word be the primary source of truth and direction for our lives
- Angles obey, adhere to and follow the God's Word; like for us, our marching orders

Ps 103:20 NKJV, "Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word."

Rhema of God's Word

To be clear, the Rhema "Spoken Word of God" is always derived from, in harmony with and springs forth from the "Written Word of God" Logos. When God's logos "Written Word of God" does not cover specific things in our lives, like where to live, what job to take, who to marry and what career path to take. Decisions in these matters still must be in agreement with the Bible in principle, for example: a spouse, must be a believer- 1 Cor.7:39, other than that, be led as to who. It's the Rhema Word of God that provides the specifics in our case. The Logos Word of God recorded thousands of years ago is unchangeable and timeless; will continue to echo on into eternity. The Rhema Word of God given by the Holy Spirit, is a spontaneous to us and a personal impartation of God's plan, purpose and counsel- specific leadings for us to follow today.

- Rhema GR:NT4487- an utterance- individually, collectively or specifically.
- When God called me into the ministry, it was personal- God spoke to my heart
 - o The details of that call lined up with the Logos of God's Word, so I accepted it
- God continued to provide specifics to what that ministry would look like- Rhema Word
 - o Again those details did not contradict God's written Word
 - o Everything must be judged in line with the Bible- Acts 17:11; 1 Th. 5:21

John 6:63, "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words (*Rhema*) I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life."

To be successful today, we need the map (Logos) of God's Word and the compass (Rhema) of the Holy Spirit's guidance to navigate God's journey for our lives- Joshua 1:6-8; Psalms 1:1-3.

Prov 19:21, "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."

The world which walks in darkness, without God and without hope stumble along making decisions by their senses and reasoning faculties, with a worldly hope for success. In contrast we have divine revelation and a personal counselor, the Holy Spirit who helps us determine God's will, plan and purpose for our lives to pursue with all our heart. Common sense has its uses, but should always take the back seat to the Logos and Rhema of God's Word for our lives.

In high school, they have "Guidance Counselors" who would administer aptitude tests to determine strengths as a guide to what career/trade to pursue. Others would look at what education would make them the most money- a shot in the dark to a fulfilled life. Makes sense for those who don't know Jesus. Since we are speaking to God's children, far be it from us to use the world's methods to make life's decisions. Proverbs 16:9 AMP, "A man's mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps and makes them sure."

Isaiah 1:19-20, "'If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.' For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Luke 1:38 NKJV, "Then Mary said, 'Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her."

- Simple submission and obedience to the will of God for our lives = God's best for our lives
- It's either our thing, way and ideas or we surrender to God's plan for our lives and follow
 - o As Jesus said in the garden in Luke 22:42, "...yet not my will but yours be done"
 - o It's a choice, our free will is in play- choose life!
- I never get tired of hearing these truths, keeps me on the straight & narrow- Mt. 7:13-14

Deuteronomy 30:19-20, "This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Isaiah 46:10-11, "I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do."

Prayer Open Doors

Acts 13:2-4, “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.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.”

- Prayer has a way of aligning our will with God’s in order to follow his plan and purpose
- The secret place of meeting with God opens our heart to hear the Rhema Word of God
 - o Luke 5:16, “But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”
 - o Jesus received the will of the Father through prayer- Mark 1:35-39; Luke 6:12-13
 - o Before His death, burial and resurrection: Jesus prayed-Luke 22:39-46
 - o James 5:13, “Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray”
- Prayer is fellowship, communion, communication, giving and receiving with God
 - o In addition to exchanging words, it’s also waiting on God and resting in Him
 - o We need to pray continually- 1 Th. 5:17
- But some try to do with prayer, what only the Word of God can do
 - o First priority, always put God’s Word first and let it dwell in you richly- Col. 3:16
- After the Lord has revealed His will to us, we need to trust His plan and obey it

Isaiah 48:17, “This is what the Lord says — your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.’”

Ps 37:23-24 NKJV, “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the Lord upholds him with His hand.”

Proverbs 20:24

A man's steps are directed by the Lord. How then can anyone understand his own way?

Jeremiah 10:23

I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.

Speaking in Tongues is a tremendous avenue to receiving direction and paving the way through prayer. God is continually communicating to our spirit through the person of the Holy Spirit. Angels are dispatched (1 Cor 13:1; Heb. 1:14). The plan and purpose of God is released through intercessory tongues (Rom. 8:26-27)- setting in motion and preparing the will of God.

1 Cor. 14:2 AMP, “For one who speaks in an [unknown] tongue speaks not to men but to God, for no one understands or catches his meaning, because by the [Holy] Spirit he utters secret truths and hidden things [not obvious to the understanding].”

The Leadings of the Holy Spirit

Through the new birth, the Holy Spirit dwells within our spirit according to 1 Cor.3:16-17; 6:19. He dwells within and remains within the born again Christian forever- John 14:16-17. Therefore, God primarily speaks and leads us through the Holy Spirit within us. Proverbs 20:27 (KJV) "The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly."

John 7:37-39

On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

This is one reason among many why the New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant- Hebrews 8:6-13. Contrast this to how the Old Testament covenant people received direction from God. It was all external signs, wonders and prophetic words. They did not have the Holy Spirit within them as a counselor to guide them supernaturally- they needed some external spectacular demonstration to get their attention- Matthew 12:38-40; 1 Corinthians 1:20-24.

John 14:16 AMP, "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengthener, and Standby), that He may remain with you forever

Take Gideon in Judges chapter 6, he used a fleece for the Lord to make it dry or wet as a sign for confirmation in regards to God's plan. The Lord put up with that in the Old Testament, but not today; trying to throw out a fleece for God to confirm will only get you fleeced by the devil. The enemy can manufacture events to lead us astray when we resort to the external. "If this happens on this day and that person does that, then I will know it's God's will for me to go."

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, "The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing."

- The Lord can and will use prophecy through others as "Confirmation" in our lives
 - o But God should have already been dealing with us about it on the inside first
- If what we hear or see on the outside is new to us; we should pray about it first
 - o Let's avoid those knee-jerk reactions that get us into trouble
- The test of time is important to know- if it's God today, it will be God tomorrow
- Allow a few days to go by; let the emotion of the moment to settle before deciding

Romans 8:13-17

For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

- Rom 8:16 AMP, "The Spirit Himself [thus] testifies together with our own spirit..."
- Rom 8:16 Weymouth, "The Spirit Himself bears witness, along with our own spirits..."
- Rom 8:16 NKJV, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit..."
- Rom 8:16 NLT, "For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm..."

The Greek word *sumbibazo* for "Bears Witness with" means: to cause to coalesce, to join together, put together, coming to a single conclusion

The Inward Witness

The primary way the Holy Spirit leads us through the decision making affairs of life is by the inward witness. He's always faithful to agree with or against those things that are before us in our spirit. God is a spirit being and He communicates to our spirit by the Holy Spirit- John 4:23-24. The Father God leads and directs His children by their spirit, not their emotions/intellect/feelings- Hebrews 4:12. We know when God is trying to get our attention, communicate or confirm His will in our lives, warn us of impending danger or give us answers to our prayers for wisdom and direction, He communicates to us by this inward witness.

- A inward witness or prompting is not a language; it's a confirmation of peace in our belly
- The "Belly" is the core/center; where our belly button is- that is the seat of our spirit
 - o Pr. 18:20 KJV- "A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth..."
 - o Pr. 20:27 KJV- "...searching all the inward parts of the belly"
 - o Pr 26:22 KJV- "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly"
 - o John 7:38 KJV- "...out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."
- The inward witness is a knowing, a strong intuition, perception, revelation or sixth sense
 - o It grows with spiritual maturity and use- increased sensitivity, awareness & acuity
 - o Spiritual discernment is the ability to see things through the eyes of our spirit
- The world relies on the 5 senses and intellectual reasoning- has its place but is limited
- The reality of things is often hidden, but God knows everything about everything
 - o The Holy Spirit will guide us through the unknowns of life like a candle in darkness

Pr. 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

When the Holy Spirit prompts us to move in a certain direction in those cross-roads decisions of life, it will be accompanied by a supernatural peace and joy that transcends our own understanding. To be clear, the leading of the Holy Spirit is not reserved just for big decisions, but is meant to be a daily integrated part of our regular decision making. Not that we need guidance for every step we take. We can also go by what He doesn't say as much as what He does. If I'm about to make a decision and there no witness at all: agreeing or disagreeing with a move. Then it's a neutral decision that is inconsequential. Practicing the presence and leading of the Holy Spirit in the small matters of life, trains us to be sensitive and prepared for the big ones.

For example, if go to the grocery store and I have a certain preference for cereal, I can choose whatever I desire; 9.9 times out of 10 nothing special happens. But what if one day I get a strong warning in my belly (my spirit) not to pick a particular box of cereal. The un-renewed mind will immediately fight it and say, "What are you so worried about, it's just a box of cereal and is safe- why make a big fuss about it." Unbeknownst to you, some bad actor had added poison to that particular box of cereal. God knows this and is warning you about it. It's a choice, do we follow our heart or our head. We don't have to be weird about this, but the supernatural realm is more real than the natural realm and learning to be led by the Spirit of God will save us a lot of trouble.

I heard a story from a minister that I've never forgotten. One day he and his family were planning to go out for dinner to a fancy restaurant they had a reservation for. When the time came to leave the house this minister had a strong urge in his spirit to wait a few more minutes before leaving. Yet because he was in a hurry and did not want to be late for his reservation, he dismissed it and left anyway; as a result, they got into a bad car accident, everyone was fine but the car was totaled. Afterwards, this minister asked the Lord why He had allowed this to happen, the Holy Spirit reminded him that he was warned to wait a few minutes before leaving- he ignored it. So many accidents, tragedies, bad investments, wrong relationships etc. could be avoided if we just took the time to listen and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Philippians 4:6-7

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Don't be afraid to make mistakes, which is a part of growing up. The precious Holy Spirit is right there to help pick us back up, brush us off and send us off again. Remember, before we can walk, we have to learn to crawl. If our spiritual walk is a crawl right now, let's not despair, we will be walking and running with God in only a matter of time. We are never a failure until we give up!

The inward witness is like the Lord giving us the thumbs up or the green light to move in a certain direction. One of the best analogies to describe the inward witness of the Holy Spirit testifying to those cross-roads decisions in our lives is a traffic light. When the Lord does not want us to do a certain thing, a check like a red light goes off in our spirit; getting our attention and warns us to stop or wait. The Holy Spirit is always faithful to warn us of impending danger or traps ahead.

- **Red Light:** A strong check in our spirit to not proceed any further- “ye be warned!”
 - o Not smart to override this warning in our heart- Proverbs 4:23
- A great example is Paul on his voyage to Rome, he said “I Perceive”- inward witness

Acts 27:9-12 NKJV, “Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, saying, ‘Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives.’ Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, and winter there.”

- **Yellow Light:** is a warning to proceed with caution, be particularly alert and cautious
 - o This is not a “No” but rather proceed slowly and prayerfully
- It’s better to be a little late than to jump the gun and get ahead of God and miss Him

2 Corinthians 2:12-13 NKJV, “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.”

- **Green Light:** an inner peace and joy to proceed- anticipation and expectation of good
 - o A velvety smooth like confirmation, gently urge and prompting to go forward

Philippians 1:25, “Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith.”

- Here are some other road signs that have great Biblical application:
 - o **Stop-** look both ways and listen- wait on God- listen for His direction
 - o **Yield-** do not resist the Holy Spirit (Acts7:51), submit ourselves to God- James 4:7
 - o **One Way-** when it comes to God’s will for our lives- only one way- Romans 12:2
 - o **Do Not Enter (wrong way)-** there’s a good reason why we should not go that way
 - o **Speed Limit-** Stay in step; don’t lag behind or get ahead of the Spirit- Gal. 5:25
 - o **Turn Ahead-** Pay attention to the Holy Spirit showing things to come- John 16:13

The Still Small Voice

Our re-created human spirit becomes a safe guide as far as our conscience goes since it has been redeemed; the new birth is a rebirth of the human spirit. However, the conscience of an unbeliever will allow them do anything, because their spiritual nature is satanic. In which case it is not a safe guide. Human beings have five physical senses by which they contact and detect the natural world. With our spirit we contact, detect and become aware of the spirit world. With spiritual growth comes a greater sensitivity, awareness, comprehension and ability to function in that realm. Conscience is the voice of our spirit. This inward voice, our own conscience is continually speaking to us in our lives; however, due to a lack of proper training we lack the spiritual discernment to identify who is speaking sometimes- God's Word is our guide!

1 Corinthians 14:10, "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices (languages) in the world, and none of them is without signification."

1 Timothy 4:8, "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."

Romans 2:15; 9:1

Since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them. I speak the truth in Christ- I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit.

Now if we keep overriding our conscience (Eph. 4:18-19), and the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our lives to show us the right course of action to take, we will sear our conscience and grieve the Holy Spirit. When this happens, God help us, because we have just cut off the only true moral and spiritual compass by which we can navigate through life- to avoid danger and walk in the blessings of God's will for our lives. The still small voice of our own human spirit will also pick up things from the Holy Spirit.

1 Timothy 4:2- Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

Ephesians 4:30, "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

Acts 7:51- "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!"

Hebrews 3:13- "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness."

- We are a trichotomy, three dimensional beings- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Conscience is the voice of our human spirit
- Reason is the voice of our soul & Feelings is the voice of our body

The Bible identifies sinners as spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-2); not at all meaning that their spirit is non-existent or non-functioning. Their spirit is fully functional, but is full of spiritual death, having the sin nature of Satan; therefore, they are separated and alienated from God. Sinners who openly give themselves over to the occult, have learned how to function in the spirit realm on the dark side. They are being controlled and influenced by demons. All contact and operation within the kingdom of light or the kingdom of darkness is done by the human spirit.

For example, the practice of idol worship is to participate with demons- 1 Corinthians 10:20, *“No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons.”* It is interesting to note that underdeveloped countries are usually steeped in witchcraft and various forms of the occult. Those people have developed themselves spiritually over time- Acts 19:18-19, *“Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly.”* Yet in western industrialized nations, intellectualism is king. However, recent years is showing a greater proliferation of the occult via the new age in the western world.

My point being, as Christians let’s develop our human spirit to the point where we are flowing with the Spirit of God, and we are no longer naïve to what the enemy is doing. We grow up spiritually by feeding our spirit through Bible meditation, acting upon the Word, putting the Word of God first place in our lives and instantly obeying the leading of the Spirit of God. Our spirit knows things that our head does not know, because the Holy Spirit is in our spirit.

- Remember that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God are always in agreement
- Be like the Bereans and examine everything in life in light of the Word- Acts 17:11

The Voice of the Holy Spirit

Isaiah 30:21, *“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.’”*

There is a difference between the inward voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to our spirits, and that still small voice which is the voice of our own spirit speaking to our mind. When the Holy Spirit within us speaks, it is more authoritative. Sometimes, it can be so real (although it is inside us), that we look around to see who said it. We think somebody behind us said something, then we realize it was inside of us. A good Biblical example of this is Samuel when he was a little boy. God spoke to him in an audible voice, but he thought that Eli the High Priest was calling him.

1 Samuel 3:6-7

Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

I heard one minister say that when God moves in a spectacular way in someone's life, it was to prepare them for rough sailing ahead. Such a visitation from God serves as an anchor for the individual to hang on to. Paul needed that when he went into Macedonia in Acts 16 and received supernatural confirmation via a vision- he and Silas received a severe flogging and thrown in jail.

Another example, God had a revelation for Peter that was going to be hard for him to accept, having been steeped in Judaism in regards to Gentiles being unclean. After Peter was in a trance, and had seen a vision, God gave him the interpretation in Acts 10:15, "*Don't call anything impure that God has made clean.*" While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, some men from Cornelius the Roman Centurion arrived. If the Holy Spirit had not spoken to Peter to go with these men, he probably would not have gone- Acts 10:19; 11:12.

A similar occurrence happened to Philip the Evangelist. He first received a revelation as to where to go by an angel. Next, the Holy Spirit had to personally direct him to speak to a Gentile. Obviously, God had to move upon Philip in a spectacular way to get the man saved. Of course it's God's prerogative to lead with His children any way He wants to.

Acts 8:26-30

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road--the desert road- that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

In the above cases, when God led His children in such spectacular ways, it was because of something very significant. For good reason, the Lord does not continually speak to someone in an audible voice concerning trivial matters like- what clothing to wear, food to eat, toothpaste to buy etc. This is not in harmony with the Scriptures, and this individual is probably hearing the wrong kind of voices- demons. The Lord primarily leads us through the Word and the inward witness which minimizes the chance for deception by the enemy in this life. Be sure of this, the Holy Spirit is continually speaking, but are we listening- Acts 21:11; Heb. 3:7; Rev. 2:7.

Spiritual Gifts and Prophetic Words

The revelation manifestations of the Holy Spirit: Word of Knowledge, Word of Wisdom and Discerning of spirits provide supernatural insight into God's plan and direction in this life. Even though the manifestations of the Spirit are as He wills (1 Cor. 12:11), we are still admonished to eagerly desire them. 1 Corinthians 14:1, "Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy." As a result, these spectacular revelations from God are to be desired and welcomed in our lives as part of God's way of leading us by the Holy Spirit. They can be manifested through an inward knowing, visions, dreams and through prophecy. Often the manifestation of the Spirit work together, we just separate them for examination purposes.

Word of Knowledge

The Word of Knowledge is the supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God. God is omniscient and He knows everything. Fortunately for us, He does not reveal everything He knows to man. He gives him just a word, or a part of what He knows. A word is a fragmentary part of a sentence; so a word of knowledge is simply a fragmentary part of knowledge- just that part which He wants us to know. Therefore, this supernatural manifestation of knowledge given by the Holy Spirit from God has nothing to do with academics, someone's IQ, experience or studying the Bible a lot. This is divine revelation of information not known to the individual concerning past and present things.

- Elijah encouraged concerning 7,000 who did not bow to Baal- 1 Kings 19:4, 14,18
- Gehazi's deceit revealed to Elisha in 2 Kings 5:25-26
- Elisha warned the King of Israel about the king of Aram's ambushes- 2 Kings 6:9-12
- Jesus knew in His spirit what they were thinking- Mark 2:5-8
 - o Jesus as the Son of Man on earth; anointed with the Holy Spirit- Acts 10:38
 - o Luke 5:17- Jesus relied 100% on the Holy Spirit for miracle ministry- Php. 2:6-7
- Jesus knew about the Samaritan woman's personal life by revelation- John 4:15-19
- How did Peter know that Ananias and Sapphira lied (Acts 5:1-11)- Word of Knowledge

Word of Wisdom

The Word of Wisdom is a supernatural revelation by the Spirit of God concerning the divine purpose in the mind and will of God. Like the Word of Knowledge, the word of wisdom must not be confused with natural wisdom that an individual acquires by experience. Nor is it the gift of wisdom that a believer can operate in continually. The Word of Wisdom according to the Bible is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit as He wills, not as we will. God has all wisdom and all knowledge. He knows everything, but He never reveals to anybody everything that He knows. He just gives them a word of what He knows. A word is a fragmentary part of a sentence, and so it is with wisdom- we are on a need to know basis with God.

For example, if you needed legal advice, you would call a lawyer. But the lawyer would not give you all the legal wisdom he has, because you would not need all of it. He would just give you a part, a word of the legal wisdom that fits your particular case. The difference between the Word of Knowledge and the Word of Wisdom is this. The Word of Knowledge always brings revelation knowledge that deals with present or past information. On the other hand, the Word of Wisdom always deals with future events that have not occurred yet.

- All the Old Covenant revelations about the coming Messiah and corresponding events
 - o These truths came through the gift of prophecy as future events to be fulfilled
 - o Jesus' body would not see decay; resurrection- Ps. 16:8-11; Mt. 17:23; Acts 2:23-33
- The Lord spoke through the prophet Agabus about future events- Acts 11:28-30; 21:10-11

Notice that something was revealed. When any revelation comes, it is always a Word of Wisdom, a Word of Knowledge, or Discerning of Spirits, because these are the only three manifestations of revelation. No others are listed in the Bible.

Of course when spiritual gifts are in manifestation, we have perfect gifts flowing through imperfect vessels. Therefore, the Word instructs us to judge prophecy in light of the Scriptures. *1 Corinthians 14:29, (KJV) "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge."*

1 Corinthians 13:9-10, "For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears."

Be very careful about personal prophecies. Sadly, so many lives have been shipwrecked through the misuse of spiritual gifts. Don't marry someone, because somebody prophesied you should. Homes have been broken up by so-called prophecies. Don't go into the ministry, just because somebody prophesied you should. God will always deal with you first on such matters. Anything said by someone else should only serve to confirm what God had already revealed to you. The simple gift of prophecy that the Holy Spirit manifests through believers is not for direction anyways. Its purpose is to build and edify the Church!

1 Corinthians 14:3, "But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort."

So if what someone says to you does not bear witness, or confirm something you already have, do not accept a personal prophecy. As long as the gift of prophecy stays in the realm of speaking to men for edification, exhortation and comfort, it is wonderful- we need to encourage that. But many times someone who prophesies may see a prophet minister a word of foreknowledge. Then he/she begins to think, "I prophesy, so I can do that too."

So they move out of the place where they should be, into this other realm. Often times, it is not the Holy Spirit, but their own mind, or worse the devil operating through them. It is rare for God to lead His children in a spectacular way, like an open vision or an angelic appearance. Out of all the methods that the Holy Spirit uses to guide us, the most common is the inward witness. We can eagerly desire manifestations of the Holy Spirit as He wills, but we have no Biblical right to claim a vision or ask for an angel to speak to us. We can only claim what the Bible says is ours to claim. Leave the spectacular to God; rather we should be looking to the Word and the supernatural inward witness to lead and guide us through the affairs of life.

One last thing, when faced with tasks, like ministering to the sick with serious ailments, always look on the inside first to see if the Holy Spirit wants to manifest according to 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 for that instance. If there is no special unction or leading, then always fall back on the authority of the believer according to Mark 16:18; Luke 10:19 and James 5:14-15. Exercise the prayer of faith, anointing with oil and the laying on of hands in Jesus' Name!

Dreams and Visions

The Lord wants us to study the Scriptures and be aware of these manifestations of the Spirit of God. So when they happen to us, we'll yield to/allow the Holy Spirit reveal these things to us.

- **Please Read: Acts 2:15-21**
- **2 Corinthians 12:1-4**, *"...I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord."*
- These experiences are not a measure of spirituality; one may never experience them
- **Please Read: 2 Corinthians 12:7-10**
 - o Beware, when these things begin to manifest; become a target for the enemy
 - o Jesus' grace is sufficient for us- His power is made perfect in our weakness
- They operate as God wills, but we mustn't force them or try to work them up in the flesh
 - o This kind of behavior will invite deceiving spirits and lying visions
 - o **Please Read: Ezekiel 13:1-9** Falsehoods/Lies & Deception
 - o **Please Read: 1 Timothy 4:1-5**
- 2 Corinthians 11:14, *"And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light."*
- The Holy Spirit always operates and speaks in harmony with the Word of God- exalts Jesus
 - o Revelation 19:10, *"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*
- **Please Read: John 16:13-15**
- 1 Corinthians 14:29, *"Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge."*
- Everything must line up with Scripture- otherwise reject it

What's interesting is that we see in the Bible that God can reveal things to the godly and wicked in dreams and visions. Genesis chapter 20- the Lord revealed in a dream to Abimelech one night and said to him, "You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman." There is Pharaoh's dreams that Joseph interpreted- Genesis 41:1-32. Then there is Daniel interpreting dreams for Nebuchadnezzar- Daniel 2:1-47.

- Moses had a special relationship with the Lord- Ex. 33:11; Dt. 34:10
- Num. 12:6-8- God spoke to him face to face but a prophet He speaks in visions and dreams
- God spoke to the wise men and Joseph concerning Herod's evil intent- Mt. 2:12-14
- Then when it was time for Jesus and His family to return from Egypt- Mt. 2:19-23
- Concerning John the Baptist, Zechariah saw a vision of the angel Gabriel- Lk. 1:11-20
- Mary also had a vision of the angel Gabriel concerning the birth of Jesus- Lk. 1:26-38

Divine Appointments

A significant part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is ordering our steps in harmony with the will of God for our lives. So it goes without saying that 'Divine Appointments' should be a regular occurrence in the life of a Spirit filled believer.

- We are admonished in Galatians 5 to:
 - o vs 16- 'Live by the Spirit'
 - o vs 18- be 'Led by the Spirit'
 - o vs 25- 'Keep in step with the Spirit'
- Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey

Follow your heart, not your understanding, following your heart, not your reasoning, follow your heart, listen to your spirit, follow your heart for that's where the Holy Spirit will lead us. The greatest obstacle to living a Spirit led life is our intellect- "Well that does not make sense" when the Spirit of God asks you to go to the corner of Elm and 45th street at 4:00pm- Pr. 3:5-6.

Psalms 32:8-9

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

Wait in Jerusalem

Sometimes we are told by the Lord to wait and be patient for something wonderful to occur in our lives. For example in regards to the precious Holy Spirit being poured out.

Luke 24:49

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Jesus had reiterated again in Acts 1:4, the necessity for them to first wait to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, then after that embark upon the Great Commission in Mt. 28:18 and Mark 16:15.

Acts 1:4-5

On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

- What if they had jumped the gun and just started preaching the Gospel immediately?
 - o God would allow them to, free will- but they would not have any power Acts 1:8
- While we are waiting on the Lord’s timing, what should we be doing?
 - o Stay in faith and prayer- for they joined together constantly in prayer- Acts 1:12-14

Go back there and preach the Gospel

Having been baptized with the Holy Spirit and with power in Acts 2, the early church began to kick it into high gear- by Acts 4:4, the early Church had grown to 5,000 men, besides women and children. But not without persecution, until finally the religious leaders arrested the apostles and threw them into jail.

- **Please Read: Acts 5:12-21**
- Upon their supernatural release they were told to go back to where they were arrested
- In the natural, common sense would say to go into hiding somewhere until things cooled
 - o It seemed foolish to go right back to the place where they were formerly arrested
 - o However, later on for Peter that was the right call to hide in Acts 12:1-19
- Each scenario is different, so being led specifically for the occasion is crucial

Acts 5:20

“Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people the full message of this new life.”

Going to an Obscure Place

Philip the evangelist just had a very successful crusade in the city of Samaria and multitudes were saved- mission accomplished. But the Lord had another assignment for him, so He dispatched an angel to direct Philip in Acts 8:26, “Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, ‘Go south to the road — the desert road — that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’”

- Seemed a little vague- just go south to a desert road, but Philip simply obeyed and went
- Often the Lord leads us one step at a time; won’t know the next step until step 1 is taken
 - o Walking by faith and not by sight is how we follow Jesus- John 20:26-29; 2 Cor. 5:7
 - o As we move forward, the destination details become more clear

In Acts 8:27 Philip started out, following the initial instructions which pointed him in the right direction.

Like Abraham in Hebrews 11:8, "...obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going." Soon Philip happened to come across an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official. In Acts 8:29, "The Spirit told Philip, 'Go to that chariot and stay near it.'"

- Assuming the chariot was in motion, the Bible says Philip ran up to the chariot
- At this point the divine appointment has been accomplished with Philip's cooperation
- The Ethiopian eunuch gets saved and water baptized
- Philip is conveniently translated around 60 miles north to a town called Azotus

[The house of Judas on Straight Street](#)

Consider Paul's conversion in Acts 9:1-9, that was a divine appointment of epic proportions. Having seen a vision of Jesus that lead to his salvation was clearly required in Saul's case as he was steeped in religion, ignorance and unbelief- 1 Timothy 1:12-17.

Now onto the next divine appointment between a believer named Ananias, who like Saul, needed a spectacular encounter. Apparently is was known at the church in Damascus, that Saul was coming to arrest Christians and take them as prisoners to Jerusalem- Acts 26:9-20. In Acts 9:10-15, Jesus gave specific instructions to Ananias to meet up with Paul.

Acts 9:11-12, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

- Ananias was obedient to the Lord (the vision helped I'm sure) and went to the address
- Just as Jesus had said, there was Saul who likewise also had received a vision- Acts 9:13-19
- So both parties had vision of meeting together to accomplish God's purpose and plan

I believe the Lord is doing the same today, arranging divine appointments between people to work together in order to accomplish God's great plan in the earth for His glory!

[Cornelius and Peter Become Acquainted](#)

In Acts chapter 10 we see a powerful illustration that God does not show favoritism; honoring any person who reaches out to him in faith- Acts 17:24-27; Hebrews 11:6. Cornelius was a Gentile Roman Centurion who was seeking God the best way he knew how. As a result, the Lord sends an angel to visit Cornelius, acknowledging that his prayers and gifts to the poor had gone up to God as a memorial before Him. Here is yet another example of a supernatural divine appointment of bringing people together who don't know each other for God's great purpose. The angel gives the address of where the apostle Peter was staying at the time.

Acts 10:5-6, “Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea.”

It took some powerful convincing to prepare Peter to preach the Gospel message to the Gentiles. Peter was a Jewish man steeped in prejudice against the Gentiles as being unclean and ungodly people. But Jesus made it clear in John 3:16, that God loves all people in the world.

- In Acts 10:9-16- Peter was in a trance and had a vision
 - o The message was “Don’t call anything impure that God has made clean”
- Meanwhile the messengers that Cornelius had sent to fetch Peter had arrived
- The Holy Spirit told Peter to go with these men, for a divine appointment was awaiting him

Acts 10:19-20, “While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Simon, three men are looking for you. So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them.”

Thankfully, Peter was obedient to follow the Holy Spirit’s directions and as a result, a great number of people were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. This encounter spoke volumes to the Jerusalem church (Acts 11) that Jesus meant what He said in the Great Commission of Mark 16:15 to go into all the world and preach the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

[Barnabas and Paul Sent by the Holy Spirit](#)

There’s a Biblical principle where two or three witnesses establishes a matter (Dt. 19:15; Mt. 18:16). We have already covered more than that in regards to God creating divine appointments to work His plan through His people. Here is another account, where God puts Barnabas and Paul together for the first Church mission trip.

- **Please Read: Acts 13:1-4**
 - o Notice as they were worshipping the Lord and fasting- the Holy Spirit spoke
 - o After they finished ministering to the Lord, they laid hands on Barnabas and Paul
- Notice verse 4, “The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit...”
 - o Some are “Sent” and some just “went”- let’s be the sent ones

[Paul’s Vision to Preach in Macedonia](#)

When we are moving in the wrong direction, we can count on the Holy Spirit to help us make the right course correction in order to stay on track in regards to following the plan and purposes of God.

- **Please Read: Acts 16:6-10**
 - o This account is a great example of being led by the Holy Spirit for us today

Acts 16:6, “having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia”

Acts 16:7, “When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.”

The Holy Spirit had shut some doors in order to direct Paul’s ministry team to the place that God had wanted him to go. I don’t know if the mode in which the Spirit of God kept Paul from going to these alternative places was through an audible voice or not. The point being, is that God’s leading is real and definitive. Paul knowing that he was being supernaturally led, served as an anchor for his soul later on.

God had led Paul and Silas to the city of Philippi, where they were beaten and placed in stocks in the deepest part of the prison. However, we see another divine appointment took place; salvation for the jailer and his family among others- Acts 16:25-34.

Suppose Paul had overridden the Holy Spirit and went into the province of Asia or into Bithynia instead. Perhaps God was trying to prevent an accident or pre-mature death. Yes, God can protect us, but not even Jesus tempted God by putting Himself deliberately into dangerous situations- Matthew 12:14-15; John 11:53-54. Yet other times it seemed as though Jesus was walking right into danger, but He was always being perfectly led by the Holy Spirit during His life and ministry- Luke 2:49; John 11:7-10.

- Bottom line is that the Holy Spirit leads us through various avenues:
 - 1st- the Word of God
 - 2nd- the Inward witness
 - 3rd- the voice of the Holy Spirit
 - 4th- through dreams and visions
- He also confirms God’s will through prophetic utterances as we saw with Agabus

Acts 20:22-24, “And now, compelled by the Spirit , I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.”

Getting God's Timing Right

Note, spiritual things never grow old. In most cases if it is God's will today, it will still be God's will tomorrow, but don't wait forever- our ship might just pass us by. If it is not a time critical decision, we should test the promptings we are experiencing. Simply line it up with the Word, consult a mature believer; allow time to determine if we still sense the same resolution a month from now. If it was an emotional impulse that was driving us, it will fade with time. For baby Christians and even at times for mature believers, it is challenging to discern- is this God's will or just my own will? God's Word is God's will, if the issue is already discussed in the Bible, than our search is over!

- My orientation in Bible school was on Dr Fred Price's- "Faith, Foolishness or Presumption"
- The reason was Bible school students were notorious in having zeal without knowledge

Proverbs 19:2-3, "It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way. A man's own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the Lord."

Proverbs 19:2 AMP

Desire without knowledge is not good, and to be overhasty is to sin and miss the mark.

- Interesting that the Bible equates hastiness with sin in the original Hebrew
 - o YLT- "...and the hasty in feet is sinning"
 - o Rom 14:23, "...and everything that does not come from faith is sin."
 - o Hebrew word for "Hasty" simply means to be in a hurry
- If the Lord is our Shepherd, He leads the sheep- the sheep don't lead Him- Ps 23
 - o Our Christian walk is with Jesus, not ahead or lagging behind
 - o Getting ahead of God is dangerous; forgetting God is what the world does- Ps. 9:17
- Beware of running ahead without a message- 2 Samuel 18:19-33

Israel Acts Presumptuously

You know the story in Numbers 13 when the Israelites made their first attempt to take their Promise Land- ended in epic failure due to their unbelief Hebrews 3:7-19. Joshua and Caleb stood up boldly in a spirit of faith (Numbers 14:5-12) in an attempt to rally the people to simply take God at His Word and go in. Instead they spoke of stoning them to death and God intervened and pronounced judgment (Numbers 14:20-35) those 20 years and older (except Joshua and Caleb) would die in the desert- they were to return to the desert for 40 years until that generation died.

Numbers 14:25

The Lord said, "Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea."

Number 14:39-40, “When Moses reported this to all the Israelites, they mourned bitterly. Early the next morning they went up toward the high hill country. ‘We have sinned,’ they said. ‘We will go up to the place the Lord promised.’”

- Bad idea, Moses warned them that the Lord would not be with them
- They went anyway in their presumption and received a beat down

Numbers 14:44-45, “Nevertheless, in their presumption they went up toward the high hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the Lord's covenant moved from the camp. Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and attacked them and beat them down all the way to Hormah.”

- Exodus 14:13-14- sometimes we just need to be still and let the Lord do His work for us
- It's hard on our flesh to wait for God's timing in a “I want it now” generation
 - o Psalms 37:34; 46:10; 62:5; 130:5-6; Isaiah 40:31; 64:4
- A farmer knows what it means to wait for the harvest- James 5:7-8
 - o Patience and perseverance brings spiritual growth and maturity
 - o Following God's seasons of preparation is never wasted time
 - o Moses was 80 when he started his ministry- Acts 7:23-34

An Appointed Time

In Ecclesiastes chapter 3 we see Solomon addressing the issue of time and its place in the natural order of things. How much more does this apply in the Kingdom of God.

- Eccl 3:1, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven”
- The Holy Spirit will lead and reveal God's timing and appointed times for our lives

Habakkuk 2:2-3, “Then the Lord replied: ‘Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.’”

- Satan is keenly aware of the appointed time for his impending doom- Mt. 8:28-29
- God is a God of order- methodical, organized, strategic, deliberate- 1 Cor. 14:33
- Our God follows His own schedule; sets the boundaries, times and places where we live
 - o Gen. 6:3; 8:22; Ps. 74:17; Acts 17:26

1 Corinthians 4:5, “Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.”

Jesus Followed God's Timing

Since the creation of the earth, Jesus was already appointed to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world- Revelation 13:8. So it was just a matter of time for the incarnation of the Word of God to become flesh, the Son of God becoming the Son of Man- Titus 1:3, "and at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior."

Galatians 4:4-5

But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Ephesians 1:9-10

And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

2 Timothy 1:9-10

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

So when we talk about the earthly life and ministry of Jesus, the timing of God was tightly integrated and woven with every step He took- here are a few examples.

- Jesus at the marriage of Cana in Galilee, Mary wanted Him to fix their wine shortage
 - o His response was, "My time has not yet come" John 2:1-4
- The Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was near and the religious leaders wanted to take His life
 - o His brothers were trying to pressure Jesus to go up with them, but He refused
 - o "The right time for me has not yet come; for you anytime is right" John 7:1-11
- In John 11, we see Jesus following God's timing to minister to His friend Lazarus
 - o vs 9-10- Jesus refers to walking in the light vs darkness as a natural illustration
 - o Walking in the light: following God's Word and walking in love- 1 John 2:9-11
 - o Pride and Hate blinds people and makes them stumble- Pr. 4:18-19; 16:18

Matthew 26:18-19

He replied, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him, 'The Teacher says: My appointed time is near. I am going to celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your house.'" So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and prepared the Passover.

- Jesus did not run headlong into danger, He always obeyed the Father- led by the Holy Spirit
 - o John 11:49-57
- Likewise, the apostle Paul had constant death threats and was led by the Holy Spirit
 - o Acts 9:23-25; 17:15; 19:31

Delay is not Denial

- Important concept in regards to God's timing- "Delay does not mean denial"
 - o Daniel had prayed and it took 21 days for the answer to come- Daniel 10:12-14

Daniel 8:19, "Gabriel said: 'I am going to tell you what will happen later in the time of wrath, because the end will be at the appointed time.'"

Prayer of Consecration

Jesus modeled this prayer for us in the Garden of Gethsemane and is a unique prayer where the wording "If you are willing" and "not my will, but yours be done" is used- the prayer of consecration. Unlike the prayer of faith in Mark 11:22-24; 1 John 5:14-15, where there is no "if" as God's Word establishes the will of God- all the promises of God are "Yes" and "Amen"- 2 Cor. 1:17-20. The prayer of consecration is a beautiful and powerful surrendering of our will to God's will and a commitment to follow His plans, purposes and pursuits.

Luke 22:41-42

He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

- Paul also submitted to the Lord's will over his own
 - o 1 Cor 4:19, "But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing."
- James leaves us with a firm warning about doing our own thing

James 4:13-17

Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil. Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.