

## Prayer Part 5 - Spirit-Led

### *True Children of God*

Rom 8:13-14 - 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, 14 because those who are **led by the Spirit of God** are sons of God.

#### **Discussion:**

- 1) Scripture says if we are led by God's Spirit, we are sons (or children) of God
- 2) But what if we are not led by the Spirit?
- 3) Should we strive to be led by God's Spirit?
- 4) How do we do that, and what would it look like?

### *Spirit-Led = Faith Over Fear*

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

#### **Discussion:**

- 1) At this point, Saul (later apostle Paul) was a persecutor of Christians, and watched them killed & imprisoned
- 2) Would you be scared if you were Ananias?
- 3) Would it take a "leap of faith" to approach someone who could have you killed, tortured, & imprisoned?

Acts 9:13-16 - "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name." 15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

#### **Discussion:**

- 1) Ananias was as human as you and me; he even tried explaining to God who Saul was, as if God didn't know
- 2) Did Ananias have some doubts and an internal struggle? Did it take faith to trust God?
- 3) Did Ananias obey, was he led of the Spirit? What was the outcome?

Acts 9:17-19 - Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here — has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." 18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

*Because Ananias was Spirit-led, Saul became one of the most influential apostles ever, Paul...*

#### **Discussion:**

- 1) What are some things God may be calling us to do, but we are hesitant because of fear or doubt?
- 2) Remember, Ananias had some fear and some doubt, but they did not hinder his faith or his obedience
- 3) How can we overcome our fears/doubts and follow after the Spirit?

2 Cor 13:1 - .....Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Mark 16:20 - Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

#### **Discussion:**

- 1) We should get to the point (through prayer & fasting) that we are familiar with the voice of God in our lives
- 2) However, the reality is sometimes we are "unsure" and need confirmation; this **is not** the same as "fleeing" God
- 3) When God speaks, and then confirms things in our lives, at that point, are we still unsure or are we disobedient?
- 4) **Caution!!!** When it is something we want ourselves (job, relationship, etc.), **confirmation helps keep us safe**

## *Spirit-Led = Faith Over Tradition & Religion*

Acts 10:13-16 - Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." 14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have ever eaten anything impure or unclean." 15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Peter was told by God to kill and eat things that Peter's tradition told him was unclean and should not be eaten
- 2) Was God trying to lead Peter out of tradition and into a new work of the kingdom?

Acts 10:17 - While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Was Peter automatically certain what the vision meant and what to do about it?
- 2) Does this show that sometimes God will give us things in preparation of something He's about to do?
- 3) Peter pondered the vision, and then men from a Gentile's home showed up and asked him to come
- 4) Jews did not associate with Gentiles because they were viewed as "unclean"

Acts 10:44-48 - While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Peter allowed the Spirit to lead him past man's tradition, and the result was the salvation of the Gentiles
- 2) Was it easy for Peter to overcome tradition?
- 3) Did he face criticism and opposition, even from well-meaning believers who were stuck in tradition?
- 4) Religious tradition could have hindered what God wanted done, but thank God Peter was Spirit-led!!!

Acts 11:2-3 - So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Tradition is a powerful thing, and even Peter was "called on the carpet" for bringing the gospel to Gentiles
- 2) We must be able to move when God wants us to move, that is Spirit-led

Mark 7:13 - Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that."

John 9:40-41 - Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" 41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Throughout the scriptures people often miss God's will because they aren't currently Spirit-led
- 2) It's not enough to have heard from God and be doing what He said to do yesterday, last year, or 10 years ago
- 3) We must be current and fresh in His will today; that's the essence of being Spirit-Led
- 4) The Jews were God's chosen people, but when He fulfilled prophecy through Jesus, they wouldn't make the shift
- 5) They literally made God's Word of no effect (for them) through their traditions
- 6) What traditions or religious views are we holding onto that God wants us to let go of and be Spirit-led?

## *Spirit-Led = Faith Over Comfort & Status Quo*

Acts 8:26-29 - Now an **angel of the Lord said to Philip**, "Go south to the road — the desert road — that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." 27 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, 28 and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. 29 The Spirit told Philip, "**Go to that chariot and stay near it.**"

### **Discussion:**

- 1) Do you know what Philip was doing prior to this? Having a great "meeting" in Samaria complete with miracles, signs, wonders within the city and many coming to Christ through the gospel message
- 2) Was it comfortable for him to leave that amazing work and just go into the desert?
- 3) Did God tell Philip why the desert or what he'd do there? There's no indication that he did, He just said "Go"
- 4) Would your faith be tested if you were in Philip's shoes?

Acts 8:36-40 - As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" 38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39 When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

Matt 4:1 - Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) What was the ultimate outcome of the Spirit's leading?
- 2) Could Philip have known this at the beginning? Doubtful...
- 3) Philip preached Christ and opened the gospel to a whole new region because he was Spirit-led
- 4) In Matt 4:1, where did the Spirit lead Jesus?
- 5) Does our present circumstance and/or comfort always determine whether we're in God's will?
- 6) What areas is God calling us into/out of, but we're struggling because we like the status quo or are comfortable?

## *The Power of Being Spirit-Led*

Rom 8:5-8 - Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; 7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

Gal 5:16-18 - So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

1 Cor 2:14 - The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

### **Discussion:**

- 1) If we live according to our natural, human nature, can we really be pleasing to God?
- 2) What's the remedy to living according to our human (sinful) nature? Being Spirit-led
- 3) It's only through the Spirit that spiritual things are truly discerned, we must be Spirit-led!!!

What are some things we could start doing (or not doing) to become more Spirit-Led?

We know God has given us a body of believers to help us stay balanced and for things like confirmation, but what is something else He's provided to help us stay rooted and grounded in truth?

In the next series, we'll discuss the scriptures, the written Word of God that He's provided for this purpose...