

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE The Prompting of the Holy Spirit

SERIES We Need the Holy Spirit

DATE 4/3/2022

KEY SCRIPTURE Judges 13:25; Psalm 143:10

SYNOPSIS How does the Holy Spirit lead us? Today's message gives biblical examples and explanations to answer this question.

HIGHLIGHTS Video clip near the end
Then, closing song: Holy Spirit



We Need the Holy Spirit

Review: The Promise of the Holy Spirit

It's the Spirit of God working in the people of God that builds the kingdom of God.

Reality of the Promise: Holy Spirit is a gift sent from God; God is good...

Results of the Promise: Holy Spirit reminds of biblical truths and reveals what can't be known in the natural. Holy Spirit gives insight and power. Power to speak boldly for Christ; power to live a righteous life; power to heal and power to prophesy.

Receiving the Promise: Receiving the Holy Spirit is both an event and an ongoing process. Believe; repent; request; expect; encourage; praise God and practice gratitude.

☞ Today: The Prompting of the Holy Spirit

The past couple of weeks, I've been encouraging you to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit and to begin stepping out in faith by ministering to each other. Some are already accustomed to this, but for others, you may not be sure how this works. So, how do you know if the Spirit is leading you; how does the Spirit direct us?

☞ The Spirit stirs us

Judges 13:24-25

24 The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the Lord blessed him,
25 and the **Spirit of the Lord began to stir him** while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Mahaneh = the camp of...

Dan = from a root meaning to contend; to plead for...

Zorah = from a root meaning stinging

Eshtaol = humble request

☞ The stirring of the Spirit begins when we **start contending for his presence** with us. As we discussed last week, when we believe and begin to request his presence, that's when he begins to stir within us. When there is an itch that drives us to pursue him, he responds with a stirring within, which leads to even greater works down the road.

Very often, **the leading of the Holy Spirit begins with a simple stirring.** There's nothing

☞ specific, **you just sense that God is wanting to do or say something.** That's the Holy Spirit stirring you.

☞ The Spirit shifts us... raises us up; moves us

At least 8 times in Ezekiel, the prophet said that the Spirit lifted him up or raised him up. Then he spoke for God.



This is somewhat like the stirring previously mentioned. **When you begin to feel a need to get up and go talk to someone**, that is very likely the Holy Spirit directing you.

Ezekiel 36:27

I will put my Spirit in you and **move you** to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

In Luke 2:25-28 Simeon was moved by the Spirit to go into the temple courts.

In Acts 20:22 Paul was compelled by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem.

☞ This shifting of the Holy Spirit typically becomes **an irresistible urge**. You can't get it off your mind; you can't just let it go; you feel like you have to do or say something. I have experienced this... often, in a sermon, a thought comes to mind which is not in my notes, but I don't feel like I can just go on without saying it. I know others have been compelled to give a financial gift to someone or to the church. In the natural, they would not have thought to do so, but something just keeps coming to mind over and over again. That's being shifted, moved, compelled by the Spirit.

☞ **The Spirit steers us**

Matthew 4:1

Jesus was **led by the Spirit** into the desert

This is an extension of the stirring and shifting that has already begun. As you sense his stirring, you shift and begin to pray and seek clarity, and the Holy Spirit leads you from there. You know you are being led by the Spirit, but the direction is just beginning to clear up. This is often a hang up for people. They know God is working; they want to do something for God; but they don't know exactly what to do. So, how does the Holy Spirit steer us?

Psalms 143:10

teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit **lead me** on level ground.

☞ **If doors are closing and you cannot keep moving in the direction you thought you should go**, it could be that God is redirecting your path. Yes, we have to make effort in following the Lord, but if there is just one setback after another, after another, it could be that God is redirecting you. Where's the level ground?

Acts 16:6-7... Paul wanted to go to Asia, but the **Spirit wouldn't allow it**. (prevented; forbidden; blocked); then he tried to enter Bithynia, but was again **prevented by the Spirit**.

Jonah tried to go a different direction than God wanted, and a violent storm erupted, preventing his escape. Then when he finally submitted to God, everything went smoothly.

In Acts 13:4-5 Paul and Barnabas were sent on their way by the Holy Spirit.



This steering of the Spirit is all about direction. Closed and opened doors are indicators of his leading.

Isaiah 63:14 (cf. Colossians 3:15, let peace be the umpire)

...they were given rest by the Spirit of the Lord. This is how you **guided** your people to make for yourself a glorious name.

☞ When you are struggling with a decision and wondering if God is in it or not, **let peace and rest guide you**. Kind of like the level ground of Psalm 143:10, do you feel a sense of peace and rest in your heart? This peace does not mean that you don't have any questions. You may still wonder how it's all going to work out, but does it feel right? Is there a contentment within that says, "go this way and it will be okay?"

☞ Paul connects the Holy Spirit with the **conscience** (Romans 9:1) and with **conviction** (1 Thessalonians 1:5) What is your conscience telling you? Is there a conviction in your heart? Those are good indicators of the Spirit's leading. He is steering you.

☞ **The Spirit supports us... anoints; helps**

Isaiah 61:1-3

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has **anointed me to preach** good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, 2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, 3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion — to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

Anoint = to separate for God's service, receiving ability for that service.

Here's an important step of faith as we follow the Spirit. You've been stirred, shifted and even steered in a certain direction, but what exactly are you going to do? What exactly are you going to say? You probably won't have all the details, so what will you do? Trust the Holy Spirit to

☞ support you. **He will anoint you, giving you the ability you need.**

Romans 8:26

☞ the **Spirit helps us in our weakness**. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

As you begin to sense his stirring and you step out in faith, trust him to support you.

☞ **Holy Spirit speaks to us**

In Acts 8:26-35 the Spirit told Philip to go near a chariot; while there he heard a man reading from Isaiah, and he began with that very passage to tell the good news about Jesus.



In Acts 10 and 11, Peter had a vision from the Lord, the Spirit told him to go with some men from Caesarea; this led to Gentiles coming into the faith.

Acts 13:2-3

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

The Holy Spirit speaks to us. When he speaks, is that an audible voice? It can be, but very often it is still a stirring, shifting and steering, but you are more attuned to it.

☞ **The more you sensitize yourself to the Spirit's prompting, the better you will recognize his voice.** What begins as a simple stirring can become a clear word from the Lord. The more you respond to that stirring and shifting and allow the Spirit to steer you, the more you will see his support and will get sharper at discerning when he speaks.

Hebrews 5:14

☞ solid food is for the mature, whose perceptions are **trained by practice** to discern both good and evil. (NET)

Pretty much every person I've ever known to operate in the gifts of the Spirit or share a word from the Lord, started out small and grew over time. Samuel is a great example of this. In 1 Samuel 3, he begins to hear God's voice, but he didn't know what was going on right away. He ran into Eli's room, thinking his mentor had called him. Eli eventually coached him on how to recognize God's voice and Samuel grew from there to become a powerful prophet for God.

☞ **Holy Spirit speaks through us**

1 Corinthians 2:13

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in **words taught by the Spirit**, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

Luke 12:11-12

11 "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, 12 for **the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.**"

You may be stirred, shifted and steered to minister to someone and all you have is a couple of words or a short phrase. That may seem like it's not enough. "What am I going to say?" **Just** ☞ **begin with what you have**, and you may be surprised at how well that little bit ministers to the person. (*Share about the old wing fender picture at Exponential Conference*). You may also be surprised at what the Holy Spirit adds as you begin ministering. (Some here have felt a prompting from God to say something publicly, but they only had a little bit until they started talking...)



☞ **Submit, don't resist the Holy Spirit.** In Acts 7:51 the Jews were admonished because they always resisted the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:25

Since we live by the Spirit, let us **keep in step with the Spirit.**

Romans 8:5, 14

5 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.** ...14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

All of these promptings of the Holy Spirit are connected to us having our minds set on what the Spirit desires. We need to make intentional effort to tune into the Spirit's leading. I'm sure some are still not so sure about all this. "How can I really know it's the Spirit leading me?" I say that if you will follow the ABC's of ministry, then it doesn't matter if you are totally sure or not.

☞ **ABC's of ministry:**

- **Affirming**
- **Biblical**
- **Christlike**

Now, if you have something to say to someone that is affirming, biblical, and Christlike, then how can you go wrong? Even if it is not a direct leading of the Spirit, there is no harm done. But, what if it is an important first step in you learning to sense his prompting?

I want you to submit to the Holy Spirit and minister as he directs. I want you to be stirred by the Spirit. I want you to be shifted and steered by the Holy Spirit. I want you to hear when the Spirit speaks, knowing he will support you and speak through you. Once you start ministering in this fashion, you will be blessed in ways you can't fully comprehend. There is an amazing fulfillment which comes when you follow his lead and allow the Holy Spirit to work through you to bless another person.

☞ **Albert Tate – hearing the father's voice for the first time.**

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says

Let's sing and welcome the Holy Spirit in the room, and then, begin to minister to each other as the Spirit directs. Be sensitive to that inner stirring and just start to follow his lead.

Song: Holy Spirit