

GUIDANCE FROM GOD

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1. THE LAW OF THE STATE OF BEING

We are on a new series. A very short one that we will look at what I call the Guidance from God. Even as I pray for each one of you for your growth and for the blessing of God to come upon your lives, the Lord began to speak to me about teaching. The Lord said, “Teach My people to learn My guidance. To learn to hear from Me. To do My perfect will.” I believe that there is no greater joy, no greater blessing than to do the perfect will of God.

But there are some more things we want to touch on and build on - on receiving guidance from God. God still guide and lead His people today. God teaches us. He moves in our heart. He guides by our inward witness by His voice to us and by confirmation through various means. And it is our desire that each one of us learn to hear God. To do God’s perfect will is most important thing in each one of our lives.

Lets look at the gospel of Luke chapter one. We look at the prophecy of Zechariah; the father of John the Baptist. Luke 1:76 onwards, “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

To guide our feet into the way of peace. **The road into the perfect will of God on our lives is also called the way of peace.** The peace of God is not just an attribute; it is not just a state of being. The peace of God is the way. It’s a way in which we could walk. A path, a guidance system that God has ordained for our lives. Since Zechariah prophesied about John the Baptist coming forth and leading and guiding the people of God into the right way and the right way is called the way of peace.

Lets cross reference to the book of Philippians chapter four. Do you realize how important guidance is to each one of us? Many times in counseling we have come across many questions on how do I know that is the will of God. How can I tell if this is God’s will for my life? We hope that through this series that we could help answer some of those questions.

In verse 6, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; **and the peace of God,**” **not human peace, not a state of being of our soul, but the state of being that is brought about by Almighty God Himself.** “The peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

There is a peace that leads, that guides, that surround. Notice here peace is not something passive. It is something powerful. **It says this peace guards, protects.** The Greek word, the word ‘guard’ is a word that means garrison. It speaks of a group of soldiers marching like a garrison around a fortress to protect it from outside attacks. Protect from what kind of attacks? **Protect our hearts from all those forces that would seek to lead us astray.** That would seek to confuse us. That would seek to bring us away and not of God’s perfect will. So that peace is very powerful. That is the way of peace that we see here.

As we look at God's guidance it seems we need a few examples in the bible. We will be looking at people in the New Testament but we will also be looking at people in the Old Testament and the guidance that God brought upon in their lives. Some of them were very well guided. Some of them were guided but they didn't obey fully but there are some scriptures that we want to compare and bring forth some teaching. Right now we will start with the Old Testament. Don't forget that we will consider the New Testament too.

Lets look at the book of I Samuel. In I Samuel 9, the selection of Saul. Saul was an example of a person who started well but didn't end up well. He was anointed by God and selected by God but somehow he didn't know how to flow in God's perfect will. It doesn't mean that if we start well we will end well. Thank God that it doesn't mean that if you didn't begin well that you couldn't end well. If you realize along the way that we are not walking in the way or in the right path, we can still change and move into God's perfect will.

In I Samuel 9:27 "As they were going down to the outskirts of the city, Samuel said to Saul, 'Tell the servant to go on ahead of us.' And he went on."

He wanted to give this prophecy in private. Isn't it interesting? It doesn't mean that if there is a prophecy from God for somebody else that you have to give it publicly. Sometimes you receive a word of God for a certain person who is with two or three others. It doesn't mean that you give it in front of the others. **Some prophecies need to be given in private.** This is where the majority of the prophets come. The majority of the one who give the gift of prophecy, here is where he comes in. Sometimes when we are not experienced enough in operating the gifts of God, when we receive something we just want to blurt it out. It's not the way it should be. Some prophecies are to be given in private. Single one to one. Others can be given in public. We need God's majority to come upon our lives.

So Samuel said, "Tell your servant to go ahead." Why did he ask his servant to go ahead first? So that he could be alone with Saul. Now understand here where the pastoral aspect comes. Samuel was a prophet and a judge. He happens to be also a priest. He stood in three offices. As a priest, in those days a priest is almost like a pastoral ministry too. He is concerned about how the servant will react when he hears that Saul is the next king. Here is where the pastoral aspect comes in. The servant may not be matured enough to know what to do or the servant may go out and broadcast to people ahead of time. Samuel knew this and he doesn't want anybody else to know up to that point.

And so he says, tell your servant to go ahead and he went on to say in verse 27, "But you stand here awhile, that I may announce to you the word of God." Chapter 10:1 "Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: 'Is it not because the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance? When you have departed from me today, you will find two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelsah; and they will say to you, 'The donkeys which you went to look for have been found. And your father has ceased caring about the donkeys and is worrying about you, saying, 'What shall I do about my son?' Then you shall go on forward from there and come to the terebinth tree of Tabor. There three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you, one carrying three young goats, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin of wine. And they will

greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall receive from their hands.”

These groups of peoples are prophets who are being led by the Spirit to do certain things. Verse 5, “After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them, and they will be prophesying.”

I love that kind of atmosphere. We used to have a little prayer room in our office. Once in a while intercessors would go in and they would be praying loudly in tongues. I don't know why some people don't seem to like that kind of prayer sound. I enjoy it. I love to hear prayer. Wouldn't it seem nice when you hear somebody praying in tongues? Some people seem to get disturbed. What happen if your house is right next-door to an intercessor's? Early morning at 4am they pray loudly in tongues. If there are unbelievers around we got to understand not to offend them. That is understandable. You don't go to a non-believer house at 4am in the morning, open your window, shine your speaker on them and then start praying loudly in tongues and frighten them away. But I am talking about with believers. I don't understand believers who get irritated by praying. Maybe it has something to do with our their personal life. For me I enjoy the sound of prayer. It is nice to hear prayer.

We have this group of prophets, they are prophesying away. Of course they don't have tongues at that time so they were probably speaking in Hebrew. They are just doing it out of enjoying God's presence. There was no particular reason why they were there. They were not just there because Saul was going to prophesize that day. It was probably a regular feature in their lives. When Saul comes near to this group of people in verse 6, “Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.” Verse 7, “And let it be, when these signs come to you, that you do as the occasion demands; for God is with you.”

Notice what is being said here. When the Spirit of God has come upon your life, you will prophesy with them and **be turned into another man. And when you are another man you will do as the occasion demands.** In other words, whatever your decision, whatever you do, will be the will of God. That's powerful. Whatever occasion comes to you, whatever demands are made on your side, whatever are your impressions at that time do as you will for the Lord is with you. He is not saying that everything you do will be God's will. There is a condition there: that when the Spirit of God is on him and he is turned into another man. So no.1, the Spirit of God is with you. No.2, you turned into another man. No.3, you do whatever you want, God is with you.

It's tremendous. I like No.3. **When you have reached that stage in No.3, you're thinking, your decision and your inclination are so controlled that it's under the will of God.** At that point in No.3 you don't need a vision to come to you. You don't need a dream. Neither do you need a prophet to come to you. Neither do you need other types of confirmation because **you have that special position where you are guided from your inside.** This is a tremendous passage.

However, Saul never did learn how to cooperate with them. **He never learned how to cooperate with that order of God's guidance.** Some people are just called to be prophets. From young they already started seeing vision and revelation and that's their guidance system. Why I want to use Saul is that Saul represents the common guidance that God uses. Not every one of us is seeing vision or revelation all the time. Not every one of us is seeing angels coming to us every morning and saying, "Here's today's agenda." God works in different ways and according to different calling. I want to touch on the most common guidance. That even prophets and fivefold ministries have to understand this part. Because you could be prophet in God, you could be apostle, evangelist, pastor, and teacher and in the ministry works supernaturally with you, but when it comes to your own decision making of buying a car, buying a house or your own personal life, you need this guidance because this is what I call the basic guidance. This is in the Old Testament and will be carried into the New Testament in a principle form. Let me draw the principle that we are coming at.

No.1, there is a law of the state of being. We are looking at guidance from God. There's spiritual law involved in the guidance from God. The first law is the law of the state of being. Depending on your state of being you will need different types of guidance. The more your state of being is Spirit controlled the less you need that spectacular guidance. The more your state of being is controlled by the Spirit and turned into the inclination of the Spirit even without spectacular guidance, whatever little things and decision making is the will of God. Under the law of the state of being you see three principles operating.

- A. To what degree are you Spirit filled?
- B. To what degree are you changed, transformed? (In the Old Testament the state of change is of a lesser degree than in the New Testament but there is still a state of change.)
- C. Based on A and B the nature is so changed that whatever the occasion demands and your decision involved becomes the will of God and God backs you up.

So all these function under what I called the law of the state of being. Now lets look at (A) how Spirit filled are we? That's an important consideration. We talked about being Spirit filled. **There are degrees of being Spirit filled.** Yesterday you could have been more Spirit filled than today. Tomorrow you may be less Spirit filled than today. Being Spirit filled is not something that you do yesterday for today. You have to do it everyday. That is why if people want this blessing, **it is important to spend time with God.** The purpose of (A) is to get into the state of being. Part of getting into that state of being is allowing the Spirit to dominate our life and being Spirit filled. I could imagine when Saul came among the prophets. As the Lord told him through Samuel there was this group of prophets there and they will be prophesying. Since they were prophesying with harps and stringed instruments and everything else, it would be very musical. So I could imagine the sound. As Saul comes in he began to prophesy with them and he turned into another man. And God said, "Whatever you do is God's will."

You can imagine that there is something about yielding to the Spirit before you get guidance. It's the state of being you must enter. When Saul heard the sound and

somehow he turned into something else, that was the spiritual methodology that took place instantly. He was no more the same Saul. And you know what is like when you yield to the Spirit of God? You can change. Some of the changes for people are temporary but if you keep yielding to the change that the Holy Spirit works in your life, it can become a permanent change. The wonderful news in the New Testament is that change can be permanent because of the born again experience and because the Holy Spirit can now dwell in our hearts.

So something is taking place in Saul's state of being. He was filled with the Spirit. I called it the law of the state of being. The definition for the law is in proportion to the amount of the Spirit controlling your life. Your guidance is automatic. It means whatever you do is the will of God. There is a state of being that we need to enter in. **You can realize that is why sometimes people struggle to get God's guidance. In the first place the Holy Spirit is not filling their lives.** They could be like the Prodigal son, far away from God, saying, "God where are You?" Sometimes God can speak to people in that state. Because of intercession God sends angels, God sends a man of God, woman of God to speak to those people and bring them back. But they don't taste of the guidance of God from this law of the state of being. Their state of being is way out. **They are not yielded to that realm of the state of being of the Spirit of God.**

We always have in mind that the guidance has to be a vision, a dream, some voices or something else and we forget that before we seek the guidance let's seek the state of being. In fact the more our state of being is yielded to the Spirit of God the less spectacular guidance you need. The more the guidance flow from a part of your very being that has been transformed, all these scriptures come together to bring what we call the way of peace.

When you are Spirit filled the fruit of the Spirit flows in your life. It guides you. It garrisons you. How do you know you have entered into that being? The kingdom of God is not meat and drink but love, joy and peace. You enter into that atmosphere first. Some of us could be praying for business decision, secular decision making. God is interested in every aspect of our decision-making. Not only spiritual decision but natural decision. He can guide you in your life in the smallest little decision that you have to make. But sometimes although we have the Holy Spirit in us, we are not Spirit filled. He is not fully controlling us, therefore guidance and decision-making is so hard. We can not discern God's will. **If you will just put aside all these struggles of trying to be led and just learn to enter His presence and be yielded.** Just being with Him first and get into His presence. Get into that kingdom of God of love, peace and joy. Just concentrate on yielding to Him and being Spirit filled. The atmosphere that is always there, praying in tongues and your spirit is free soaring like an eagle above the circumstances, your spirit is free in God and you are just in His presence. You are not even thinking about your business. You are not thinking about your personal decision or thinking about any decision-making. All you want is to be yielded to God and in the state of being of yielding to God. As you enter into that you experience what Philippians 4 says, the peace of God garrison your heart and mind. Something comes upon your life and you are Spirit filled.

Lets look at the book of Ephesians 5 and see what the New Testament definition of Spirit filled is. Ephesians 5:18-19 "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." And then he goes on to tell us what being

filled with the Spirit is like. “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

How do I know I am Spirit filled? You feel very bouncy. Spirit filled people don't feel depressed. They don't go about with a holy sad look. There is bounciness about being Spirit filled. Something that makes you light instead of the spirit of heaviness. You could see some Christians with the spirit of heaviness on them. Their shoulders droop lower and lower and then they come to you say, 'Pastor, I need guidance.' When you look at them, you know that before you can give any guidance to them they need to be Spirit filled first. They say, “I am born again. Tongues talking. Demon chasing. Carrying bible except that I never read it. I only carry it.” They are not Spirit filled. They were baptized in the Spirit twenty years ago in Sunday school. They spoke for three minutes in tongues.

We Christians have to learn to remain in the Spirit. Remain being Spirit filled. When the spirit of heaviness is on us we can not get guidance. Now you know why the majority of Christian has no guidance? They were not even Spirit filled. They were Spirit filled and they were baptized in the Spirit and once in a blue moon they get touched by God. Spoke a few words of tongues and then lost it. There is a bounce about being Spirit filled. Think about that. How can you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs and make melody in your heart with long face. It says making melody in your heart. The Greek implies very bouncy melodies hymns.

Before we talk about being led by the Spirit. Before we talk about getting guidance from God. The most important thing is to get Spirit filled and hear the melody in your heart. Can you hear the melody in your heart? In other words, before you hear God says, 'Thus says the Lord, it is My will for you to go now to San Francisco.' Before you hear God's Word can you hear the music? The Holy Spirit has music when He moves. Can you hear the music in your life? In your heart? In your spirit? If there is no music in your heart, don't talk about guidance. Get back that music first. Somebody stole your heart. If there is no music in your heart guidance is very difficult. Even lets say really by God's grace and mercy, He came to you and sends a prophet or sends a dream or sends an angel or sends a vision and says, “Thus says the Lord, it is His will for you to go to Timbuktu.” You are still not ready because you still don't have the melody. You will be obeying God very reluctantly. You are still not in the right spirit. There's nothing in this world like being filled with the Spirit.

God has never made Christian life easier. The blessing in the New Testament is being Spirit filled. Before that the Holy Spirit can not go out to the people like He can go out in the New Testament. Can you hear the music in your life? I realize sometimes we have sad things that happen, depressing things that happen, things that demand our attention, and things that cause sorrow. Before you talk about guidance get rid of that sorrow.

The bible says in Philippians 4:6 “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

In other words, get rid of anxiety. Get rid of the cares of this life. Get rid of all the worries, the sorrows, and the heaviness. Get rid of them first and then verse 7 “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will garrison your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” That's the position you can receive guidance from God.

So for many Christians they must get rid of their anxieties and worries through Philippians 4:6. It may take some prayer and that is why let's say for the businessman. You have a business deal and decision to make but you are so anxious and it occupies your mind so much so that you can hardly think. It dominates you. You can not think freely. You have to free yourself from it first. Move into what some people called the neutral gear. It's causing you sleepless night. Get out of that situation first. God can not guide you because in those circumstances you may hear wrongly. Or you may even hear wrong voices. Before you try to hear any voice, get rid of all that. Get into the right state of being and let the music comes again into your life. Let psalms, hymns and spiritual songs fill your life. As it fills your life, you get a bounce back. You get the light heartedness, the joy, the peace and the love of God. You feel like hugging the whole world and say, "Jesus loves you." You just flow into the Holy Spirit. You are filled once again. There are no more anxieties, there are no more worries and there are no more cares of this world. Nothing worries you; you are so happy with things as it is in God. You are only thankful that you got His presence in your heart. You are just worshipping God. The music is back. You are just glorifying God and worshipping Him.

If you get into that kind of situation it's easy to get into God's guidance.

Sometimes prayer is not enough. Philippians 4:6 says, "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." For some people they have to pray to release it out first. For other people they need Colossians 3:16, "**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching** and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." So for some other people maybe they need to spend time on the Word, meditating on the Word. Confessing the Word. Speaking the Word. I love to confess God's Word and when you confess God's Word for hours upon hours, something happens on your inside and you feel so happy. And it causes that freedom in the spirit. It unlocks your spirit like a bird out of the cage of your soul to flow into God's realm. So for some people they need the Word of God to come into their lives. Just forget about all your dealings and just read God's Word and enjoy God's Word. Munch God's Word. Just appreciate God's Word and God's Word would cause psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to fill your spirit being and help you to get into the state of being Spirit filled.

So that's (A) to get into that Spirit filled atmosphere. As you enter into that, we will hear the song in our heart, a melody in your heart. Let me share this is also a secret on how to get guidance very fast. When that melody is in your heart, you get guidance very fast. Within five minutes you can discern whether something is the will of God. Within five minutes you could make a decision straight away. It doesn't take long because the melody and the song of the Lord are under girding you and you are just hearing the Lord. Now that melody can be some songs that you already know. But it just happens to come to you that day. Or it can be a new tune or something else and you are almost caught up in it and you are just humming away. You could hear it on your inside.

When you are Spirit filled although you don't sing it out, sometimes all you have got to do is just to be alone and you can feel that song coming out. You could hear it on your inside. You have passed (A) Spirit filled. Your spirit is so full that according to the book of Psalms he encompasses you with a song of deliverance. Your garrison,

you are guarded; you are tapping on the Lord when you are in the state of being Spirit-filled.

And when those things come (B) takes place. You are turned into another man. Your spirit man rises on your inside. It's no more your own self. In your old self you may make a wrong decision based on your carnal desires and your old former ways, but the new self comes in. You are born again a new man. Now for the Old Testament, they only have it temporary when the Holy Spirit is upon them. In the New Testament you have it all the time. Now this is a process that Paul called stirring up the gifts within you.

Lets look over here in the book of II Cor. 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

Now many of us know the first part of the verse. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away. We only know that part. We know that old things have passed away. What old things? Your old way of thinking. Your old habits. Your old desires of your old man. All these old things are now gone.

Remember as long as you are Spirit filled they remain gone. The moment you lose your "Spirit fill-ness," your old man seems to revive. But don't forget that one part of that verse that says 'all things have become new'. Your decision-making, the way your eyes look at the situation is new. Something has changed on your inside. The way you make your decision, the way you look at something is no more your old man. It's something new on your inside coming out. That's the transformation that we have. We are tapping on the spirit of man. Our new born spirit that God has placed on our inside.

Remember this there is no problem and no difficulty in your life that you confront where God has not put a solution on your inside. The bible put it in another way. No temptation has overtaken you except that which is common to man. With every temptation God has provided a way of escape. Now my question is: do you know where the way of escape is? It's from the inside. God has put something in your spirit man whereby you could solve every problem that has come into your life. The secret is to tap on your spirit man.

When Paul was confronting great difficulties and opposition, both in the natural and spiritual, he cried out to God three times. I don't know what he cried out but he would cry out something like, "Lord I don't know what to do. Lord I can't take this. Lord it's too much for me." And his cries were met with silence from heaven. Then he cried out again. When he was hard, maybe with tears in his eyes and heaviness in his voice. "God I can't take it. This is too much." Silence from heaven. Finally Paul cried out again. "God, nothing has change I give up. I quit. I can't do it." Then he heard the voice of God, "Paul My grace is sufficient for you." In other words, God said I have given you enough resources on your inside. If you study the grace of God, it is not something outside. It's something stored in your spirit man. Grace is an inward enablement not an outward enduement. Inwardly he was enabled when he said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." He says, "In my weakness, He is my strength." Where is He? He is on his inside. There is no temptation, no trial; no difficulty that has overtaken you that God hasn't prepared a solution and an

enablement on your inside. That's why (B) is important: to what degree are you changed and transformed?

When we are Spirit filled, for the first time you can hear what we have been teaching in being led by the Spirit. Your human spirit the voice of your own spirit rise up above all the other voices and you find a new strength. You are transformed and all things are become new. That's newness to the way you see the situation.

Lets look at Romans 8:14 onwards, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

Have you figured out why the two are connected? Why is it that God says as many as are led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God? How come the two are connected? In our mind we see the connection when you led by the Spirit you demonstrate the power of being sons of God. That is one interpretation but there is another one that we don't want you to miss. That's what we are talking about. Somehow the leading of the Spirit is connected to your sonship theologically and the connection because we have always seen that we are led by the Spirit therefore we become the sons of God. But it didn't say that. It didn't say because you are led by the Spirit you have become the son of God. That's how everybody interprets it. Or because you are led by the Spirit therefore you have become manifestation of the son of God. He didn't say it. As he said as many as are led by the Spirit, these not have become but these are the sons of God. We could put it in another way. These are the sons of God as many as are led by the Spirit. There is a connection between the leading of the Spirit and sonship. And for the correct interpretation look at the verse that follows.

Verse 15, "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

Have you noticed in verse 15, how the Spirit of God is on your inside and the Spirit of God is the Spirit of sonship or the Spirit of adoption. The word of adoption is actually sonship. When the Spirit of sonship is working and leading you, you are tapping on your sonship; you are tapping on the nature of your new creation that God has transformed you.

Now bringing this thought to Romans 8:14, we could paraphrase it as, For as many allow themselves to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and guided by the Holy Spirit, and led by the Holy Spirit and work by the Holy Spirit, they are the ones who tap and grow into their new natures of sons and daughters of God.

Lets look at some New Testament examples. In the book of Ephesians 1:17-18 "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;** that you may know what is the hope of His calling," that hope of calling is already given. But now you know what is it. What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints? Now where is His inheritance? Where is His riches? In the saints. Not in heaven. In the saints. He has given it to us in Christ.

Turn over to Colossians 1:26-27 “The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.”

Did you see the same thing? The riches of His glory, which is Christ in you. Every solution to your problem lies in your spirit man governed by the Holy Spirit. Now understand why is it that way. Before you were born, God knows every situation you were to go through. Before the situation occur God doesn't wait until the situation occur then gives you the ability. Before it ever comes God supply your need. Now if you understand this verse in Col. 1:27 in that way, we will look at Phil. 4:19 in a different way now.

Phil. 4:19 “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Now the question I ask you is, “Where is the riches of His glory?” Col. 1:27 tells you the riches are revealed to the saints. What is being revealed? The mystery, which has been hidden from ages and from generation. Who is this mystery that was hidden? Why, it is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ in you is the riches of His glory. Scripture interprets scripture. The riches of His glory is in you.

The more you grow in the revelation of Jesus Christ, the more riches of His glory is manifested in your spirit man. Potentially, all of us have the riches of His glory in us when we receive Jesus Christ into our hearts. But in reality, it is only when we feed on the Word and grow in the understanding of the mystery of Christ and receive more divine revelation of Jesus Christ in our spirit that these riches of His glory are brought to surface in our spirit man. It is just like an uneducated servant who has received the entire estate of her master when he died, according to the will the master has written. The estate worth millions is hers, but if she still remains ignorant about her legal rights of acquiring the estate, she would still go on in her poverty. But if she takes the pains to study and educate herself on her legal rights, she will be able to acquire and enjoy the wealth and the riches left for her by her master.

Now you understand Phil. 4:19 differently. Since His riches in glory is Jesus Christ Himself, therefore we can expand this verse as follows: And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory, who is Jesus Christ Himself in you, by Christ Jesus.

Now we have always said God supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus and we put on our telescope and binoculars and look for the supply. Here comes Gabriel, Michael, where are you. Sometimes you focus your telescope on your mailbox. Come on, Mr. Postman. Wait a minute; His supply is on your inside. This is a powerful law we have learned. If you have it in the spirit you will have it in the natural. If you don't realize you have it in the spirit the natural can not manifest. Understand this: the spiritual is greater than the natural. If you have it in the spiritual, the natural have to obey. The problem why the manifestation doesn't come is we don't have it in the spiritual. We let it pass. We don't hold it fast with our spiritual hands. So the next time you say God supply your needs, don't look elsewhere. Look at the riches of His glory found in your spirit man. Ephesians chapter one says, He has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. It's not future tense. It's not even present tense. It's past tense. Even in the context Phil. 4:13 Paul tells you the

kind of revelation he has. He said, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me, not from outside but from inside. And he is talking about his needs. He has abundance of Christ's riches in him. He can abound when there is lack in every situation. He said he could do it through Christ, who is on his inside.

Every mountain is no mountain; you can do it. Every situation and difficulty is not a problem. You can do it through Christ who strengthens you from your inside. My God supply all my needs according to His riches in glory in our spirit on our inside. That's why the transformation is important. You get into the law of the state of being. Spirit filled. You hear the melody and your spirit man who has all the wisdom of God. Who has all the riches of God? Who has all the strength of God? Who has all the fullness of God? Who has all the grace of God? It rises from your inside and then it's easy. Every decision you make is now a decision of your spirit man and it is always in line with the will of God.

When you reach that stage, visions and revelations are only bonuses for you. Little confirmation that you don't seek. Prophecies are little confirmations you don't seek. They are just bonus confirmation for you. God will still work through visions and revelations, dreams, visions, angelic beings, prophecy and all the other forms of guidance. But what I am telling you, if you reach a stage when you walk with God and you know what God's will is, you just do it. If God gives you a dream or vision, thank Him but if He doesn't it makes no difference. You are still walking with God. It's a different state of being that you are walking in. You have the blessing of being Spirit filled. You are being turned into a different person. Your spirit man rises and whatever the occasion demand, you just do it, and God will be with you. You can see why it's so powerful. When you are so transformed and your spirit man has risen up, whatever problem comes up, it's now your spirit man who now makes the decision. It's your spirit man who guides you. No wonder God says, for the Old Testament is only a temporary phenomena but for us is a permanent phenomena. God says to Saul whatever the occasion demands do it and it is My will. When your spirit man is raised, whatever situation occurs, you could make a decision and that is the will of God because your spirit man is doing all the thinking not your natural man. That is the law of the state of being. Get into the state of being and guidance will be easy.

2. THREE KEYS TO THE WILL OF GOD

We are on the guidance of God. It's such a blessing to know the Word of God. To be taught the Word of God and to be able to walk in the will of God. The purpose of this series is in order to help each one of us even more closely to the will of God in our lives. I believe that there is no greater call than to do God's perfect will. Forget about fortune. Forget about fame. Forget about all the things of this life because all these things God can easily add them on to you. The most important goal that we have and we must have in our lives is to do God's perfect will. I was speaking to one of the graduates of the bible school and he was about to go back to his home country. He had been here for sometime. He asked me several questions and I left one last word with him. I said the most important thing that you ever seek in your life it's not fortune, it's not fame, it's not the thing of this world but it's God's perfect will. I pray that word stays in his life.

In order to do God's perfect will, we need to hear God. Hearing is something, which we grow into. It's not necessary something that comes instantly. John 10:27 did not say, "My lambs will hear My voice," but it says "My sheep hear My voice." From the time we were born again we are little lambs in God. It takes us time to grow to be a sheep to discern and hear God's voice. It didn't say My lambs hear My voice, He says My sheep hear My voice. What do the lambs do then? The lambs follow the sheep until they learn to hear the voice of God. I have only three little points to share this morning for guidance from God.

We will read first from Joshua 1:8, Joshua had taken over leadership from Moses. It is not easy to fill in Moses' shoes. Joshua was a servant to Moses for forty years. Now that Moses had died and gone home to be with God. Joshua has to fill in his shoes. I would gather those were huge shoes. It's not easy to move into a position where Moses had acquired over forty years. God was encouraging him and the word 'be strong and of good courage' is repeated many times to Joshua. God spoke these words to him through Moses before Moses died. Spoken by the people to Joshua. Not only does he have to fit in those shoes, he has one of the most important things to do, which Moses did not succeed. He has to lead the people into the Promised Land. In verse 8, God gave him a personal promise.

Joshua 1:8 "This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

He is giving him a revelation on how to obtain guidance from Him. How to walk in the will of God for his life and do what God called him to do. The first point that I would like to share on, I have titled it "Hard working hands and feet." God spoke these words to him. I like to point to verse 3, "Every place that sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses." Every place where your sole tread upon will be yours. We could look at it positively and negatively. Looking at it negatively means that any place that you are too lazy to step on is not yours. If you were to just stand in one corner and put your feet there in that corner and wait for Me to give you that Promised Land, I am not going to give that Promise Land. If you are going to be a lazy bum then you will not have the Promised Land. If you are going to step on only one square foot of land, that's all that is going to be and it's not even big

enough to build your toilet let alone to put your bed on it. God says every place where your foot steps upon will be yours. It seems that the discovery of God's will in our life and the possession and manifestation of God's will in our life require effort on our part. Not forgetting verse 8 whatever you do will prosper provided you have done certain homework about the book of the Law, about meditating the Word of God. Then whatever you do will prosper. But again we see the emphasis there is a doing. Without he going and doing there is no revelation that God will bring forth.

Along the way, as he fought the battle, there were things that he needed to call upon God. Like how he cried unto God and commanded the sun and the moon to be still. How he depended on God and God worked in their lives. Conquering the Promised Land was not just walking into it. We know what it entails. They had to take their sword in the hands and the shield in the other. They go out and fight in order to possess the land. That is the picture of Christian possessing the promises in Jesus Christ. Yet how many Christians who are waiting for God's will to be done in their lives are just sitting somewhere around. It's alright to pray in your prayer closet, we need to continue doing that. It's alright to meditate on God's Word; we need to continue doing that. Please continue strongly in that. But if all we do is sit around and wait in a corner we will not possess the land. We need to do something about it. There is a doing.

Lets turn also to Psalms 1:3 "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper."

1. Hardworking Hands and Feet

Your prosperity and the will of God accomplished in your life depend on your doing and your going besides your being. Now first point in discovering God's will in our life is what I called hard working hands and feet. It can be rephrased in this manner for our understanding. Unless you do with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and all that you know how to do, there will be no other thing coming forth. I repeat again in case you missed it. Unless we work hard with our heart, mind, soul and strength and put all our energy to do our best, in all that we know how to do, you will not discover the other parts of God's will. There are a lot of people who are not doing their best. They are not doing their best to please God. They are not doing their best, giving their best effort to do all that they know how to do. Now it's fine if you don't know what to do and how to do. But when you know how to do and what to do and you don't give God your best, put all your strength and energy into it, put all your heart into it, put all your mind into it, put all your physical energy into it, put all your resources and finances into it, put all your time into it, knowing that that is what God wants you to do, there will be no more revelation that comes. And you can sit around for another fifty years and nothing will happen.

Have you noticed that the people who move into doing God's will in this earth, throughout history, besides the life of Jesus Christ, and even in the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, have you realized that there is something about their lives? Whatever they do, they do with all their hearts. There is no half measure. Let me tell you why point one is important. There are too many Christians who do things with half measure. I have walked with God for twenty years in the ministry. Before I was in the ministry, **I was born again in 1974**. I went into ministry in 1976. I have been

twenty-two years in the Lord. Twenty of those years have been in the ministry. I have found one thing about God. If you don't do with all your heart, energy and resources what you know it's God's will nothing else happen. If God calls you into the ministry and God tells you for example go and build a bible school. If you are not willing to sell your car and your house and put all your money to do that, don't expect a miracle from God. I didn't say that you have to do it but you must be willing to do. And if God calls you into the business world, a chosen generation and God reveals to you and says, "This is what I call you to do, to bring the finances of the world into the kingdom of God. This is what I have revealed to you. This is the business that you must go in." You only act in half measure because you play safe. The word play safe is another word for lack of faith and you give Him a half measure.

Let me explain, God does not take half measures. When you do something for God, He expects you to be willing to put your whole life into it. God does not want your money. He wants your life because He knows if He has your life He will use all your resources. There are far too many Christians who are not finding God's will. They ask God, "Why is it that there are so many of Your people are not discovering the fullness of Your will?" God replies, "They don't love Me with all their heart, mind, soul and strength. If I were to ask them to do something they give me only half a measure. I tell them something to do and they give only one percent of their commitment. The most they would go is only 10% of their commitment. They are not willing to touch on all of their resources to do what I called them to do." If they keep doing that, even for the next hundred years, they would still not see the glorious church. Let me encourage you. If you want to accelerate then move into the fullness of that which God's wants to do. Then do it with all your heart. And within five years you will reach what takes place fifty years. Not only will you have the blessings of that but also the most important thing is you have done God's perfect will. The others are still struggling to discover His will. God expects us to flow into the fullness of that.

Joshua may not know a lot of things yet to do. He may not know what other things he has to do but he will take it one step at a time. God will not reveal His will entirely. He reveals His will a little bit at a time. We see in part and we know in part. We do not have the capacity to see everything at one time. God prefers to reveal it that way so that we exercise trust and faith in Him. One of the first laws is the law of hard working hands and feet. With your hands and your feet symbolically, you do all that you know how to do and God will show up. If you don't do it with all your heart, God will not show up. I have seen so many miracles of God. I have seen it when you do something and you use it to the last one cent and God comes through. But if you don't use it to the last one cent, God doesn't come through. Thank God. He does.

Think about the people in the bible. You can name anyone. Abraham walked with God but not in the full measure. God says in Genesis 12, 'Abraham, get out of your kindred and of this land and go into the land which I have called you.' And he went out but he did something that God never asked him to do. He took his nephew Lot along. Because of Abraham's partial obedience, God couldn't reveal anything else. God could only bless him to the extend that God could because God is a God of love. He blesses us to the maximum possible with the commitment we have.

Have you ever wondered why Abraham took his nephew along? There are multiple theories why Abraham took Lot with him. One of the most possible cases that we could argue from is he took Lot either as an emotional or physical security; as a just-

in-case-something-fouled-up. Now you can not say it was Lot who followed Abraham. The bible says Abraham took Lot. I could argue from context too. See Abraham was someone who doesn't say goodbye easily to those whom he loves or to those whom he has established a relationship.

In Genesis 12:4, "So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. Verse 5, "Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son."

He took, the Hebrew word means he took his wife and he took Lot. Why did he take him? I could research Abraham's emotional make up and prove to you from the book of Acts 7 as compared to Genesis 11 and show forth that by the time God called him in Genesis 12:1, it was a second time God called him because the first time that God called him was in Acts 7 and was recorded by Stephen. Acts 7:2 "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia.' See the word there 'before' and he says that, "Before he dwelt in Haran." Now in Genesis 11:31 "And Terah took his son Abram", according to Joshua chapter 24, Terah was an idol worshipper and "Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there."

The bible says in Acts 7:2 before verse 31, before he dwelt in Haran. But Abraham is someone whom God has dealt with too. He's just like us. He's a great man of faith eventually as he walked with God. Some of you who are walking with God, you make mistakes, you have done things in your life, please don't worry about it. Just keep going. **The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Though he falls yet he shall not be cast down.** Just pick yourself up and go on. There are many times Abraham has fallen and failed. He picked himself up and go on. Eventually he became a mighty man of faith. Before he dwelt in Haran God spoke to him. But Abraham could not give up his father easily. He could not give up all those things around him easily. That's the revelation of the character and the emotion of Abraham. Only when his father died, did God spoke to him again because God looks at him and says it's no use speaking to him now. Terah is too much an influence and too great a voice to him. So God could be on one side and God says, 'Abraham come and follow Me. This is God speaking.' And Terah would be on the other side and says, 'Abraham come to me, I am Terah your father.' The bible says in Joshua 24 that Terah was an idol worshipper. Here is Abraham; he is caught in between. He hears two voices:

the voice of God and the voice of his father. God knew, God has called in Acts 7:2 before he dwelt in Haran but Abraham did not hear God's voice. Maybe he heard and he shut it down. Maybe he heard and he put it down. But the voice of Terah, the terror was too loud. What did you do? Talk about the will of God? It could be our life that we are talking about. Maybe you had your Terah in your life. Maybe the Terah in your life need to die before you discover God's will. I pray God it will not be so. Do you know why? You don't want to be seventy-five years old when you do God's will. Abraham had to wait till his father died. That does not mean some of you are praying for someone to die. Pray for them to be converted. Terah was an idol worshipper who did not know God, who did not respect God. Some of you do not know your bible that well. Better read that verse two otherwise you think is this real. It's as real as the bible

you hold in your hand, which if you didn't know this truth you probably didn't read that part.

Joshua 24:2 "Joshua said to all the people, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Yours fathers, including Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the River in old times; and they served other gods.'"

Maybe there is a Terah in your life that prevent you from discovering God's will in your life. It may be in a form of a person. It may be in the form of an organization. It may be in the form of an emotional grudges that you got in the early days of your life. You know what God does? He kept calling Abraham, Abraham did not hear. And on the other side he said to Terah, "Yes daddy." And what does God do? God says I will forget about him until Terah died. Maybe that's God's will in our lives. We haven't discovered God's will. We haven't heard God's voice because there are other voices that are crowding out the voice of God. I bring all those things to show how that even when Terah died, Abraham heard God's call the second time. The moment Terah's funeral was over, God said, 'Abraham.' Now there is only one voice because the other voice is now silent. God said, "Get out; I have spoken to you for years and years and years ago. Get out of this place. I am calling you." And he heard God's voice. He packed all his goods and possessions and he took his wife's family, and you know sometimes some of us have an emotional grudge, something that's sentimental to you. It could be a person. It could be a thing. And he takes Lot along. He has only one problem. Lot was not as dedicated to God as he. My friends, if you ever form a team of business colleague, **if you ever form a team of ministry, make sure they have the same dedication. If you have people of different level of dedication you will realize it will affect your operation. Somewhere along the line, they start quarreling because their commitment is different.**

That shows something about Abraham. He wanted to do God's will like many Christians. Like many Christians by the mercy of God a lot of hindrances like Terah has been removed but it's more their own personal decision now that they are not committing their heart, mind, soul and strength and energy and all their resources to God. Along the way because of their lack of commitment, in a sense God did speak but most of the time is silence from heaven. Sometimes they are wondering why God is so silent. Why God does not reveal. Why God does not speak.

Let me explain something. There has been many times in my life, when I have put my all for God, and I have felt many times that Abraham offering Isaac. I have nothing left to offer Him. I have given and given and offered until I have nothing left. I said, 'God I only have my life.' I shared the other time, in the offering time I said, it is an attitude that every time we come to God we should have something in our hands for Him. We come to God to worship Him. In the Old Testament we worship God we have to bring something. Now we all are thankful that Jesus replaced all those sacrifices. Lets not forget that when we come to God, lets have something to bring to Him because you love Him. It can be represented by anything. Some of us don't have much because we are in need. Let me tell you what you have, you can always find something to bring to God. If you don't have finances, you are really down to your last two mites like the widow; you gave your last two mites away. You have nothing more to give. The next Sunday you have nothing more to give. Do you know what you can give? Give your time. There is no such thing that any human being has nothing to give to God. We should learn to have that attitude.

There are many times I have given and given and I said, Lord, there is nothing more I can do. Here is the good news. It is during those times that the voice of God is so clear. It is like you got direct line with heaven and God completely disallowed the devil from even tempting or inflicting. You know there are other times you are given a choice because of a test you are going through. I found that when you are Abraham putting your Isaac on the altar, the voice of God is so clear. It's like a direct line with God. You could be down to your last ounce of energy and I have always heard God's voice so clear and says, 'Son, this is what you must do next.' And it's always something that He tells you to do. And it keeps you going and then along comes the breakthrough.

Let me challenge you. Law number one, if you want to hear God, you want to do God's will, you must put all your hands and feet. Put all your energy to do what you know that God already told you to do. Now some of us are not confident enough. God has repeated three times to you, five times to you, give you five prophecies, three confirmations and two scriptures and you still say, O God please confirm one more time. By His grace He did. But there comes a time when God say, 'Are you listening or are you not listening?' Sometime it's more of our willingness to obey than God's willingness to speak. Unless we have passed stage one, hard working hands and feet, you have done all you know. When I know that God speaks something, don't come and stop me, because I want to do it even if it causes my blood. When I know that something is God's will, that's it, I will burn my bridges and go. Maybe other people have a different personality, but that's me and that's the reason God called me into the call that God has for me. He adapts my personality to that.

It's important whether you are called into the ministry like me or you are called into any other area. If you want to succeed in your life, if you want to do what God calls you to do, if you want to go like Paul says, you have to be very hardworking. You know Paul was someone who worked hard. Why did Paul reach such heights of usefulness to God? You read Galatians, Paul says he excels above his contemporaries. He was someone who does not know how to serve God in half measures. If he serves the devil, he serves the devil with all his heart, which is bad of course.

But if he serves God, he serves God with all his heart. He doesn't know half measure.

Maybe I should turn to that verse in Gal. 1:14, when he was a Jew, he was the best Jew. When he was a Pharisee, he was the best Pharisee. When he was the persecutor, he was the best persecutor. Which is of course the sad part. But when he was a Christian, he was the best Christian. When he was a preacher, he wants to be the best. No half measure with him. He says in verse 14 of Galatians chapter one, "And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers." When he was a Pharisee he was a real Pharisee. That is why in one lifetime, he could touch the whole world. The whole known world in his time knew the ministry of the apostle Paul. If you want to live a life of mediocrity, go ahead you will have a mediocre reward in heaven. But you want to burn your life out for God. Not burnt out because of stress but burn for God like a bright flame. Burning even to the last drop of energy until Jesus comes and you will receive the reward from God.

Discover God's will in your life. Hard working hands and feet. You see why Paul succeeded. Name anybody else in the bible. I can tell you that the main fact is when

God reveals a little bit they go all their way to the best. There are so many revelations. Lets say God reveals one decigram of His voice and word and you obey God 100%. Then God reveals two decigram and you obey 100%. What about another person? God reveals one decigram and you do everything in half measures; half this, half that. Do you know that God will never reveal the second decigram? He will never. That explains why many Christians are not getting guidance from God. They haven't even obeyed to what they know with all their heart. Law no. 1 was not operating. Their hands and their feet are not working for God to do what they know in their heart is God's will.

2. The Stirring in Our Hearts and Minds

Second law: the stirring in our hearts. Your hard working hands and feet is no. 1. No. 2 is the stirring in our hearts and in our hearts and mind. When we touch on stage one or law no. 1, many people have a problem because they say, "How do I know whether I am serving God in the flesh or in the spirit?" Most Christians in their heart really want to make sure that they serve God in the spirit and not in the flesh. We know how we can end up doing God's will in the flesh. We used man's method. We used man's wisdom to do God's work when God wants us to use spiritual methods. God wants us to use spiritual means to do His spiritual work. He does not want us to use our carnal energy, so we have to resolve that question, which is resolved by stage two here.

Let me explain the difference. The difference lies in the stirring up in our hearts and in our minds. The difference between serving God in the flesh is that you are doing something that the energy was not given from the inside. That was not stirring. The difference is on the internal mechanism, the internal energy. If there is no energizing from the inside of you, then that is serving God in the flesh. The difference is whether God told you to do it. When we do something that God never tell us to do that's in the flesh. We have to learn to hear God. Here is the balance. On one side, you are very hard working. Whatever God tells you to do, you do it with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. But you need the other side in order to check yourself that if God does not tell you anything, you will not even lift one finger to do anything. You will not even lift one finger to do anything unless you make sure that is really God. That must temper our character. We must make sure that it is God. We must make sure that it's God energizing us.

The difference between whether something is in the flesh or in the spirit is whether it's energized by God or energized by your own zeal. The difference is whether you have it on your inside. When you have it on your inside its different. When you have it on your outside its different. Do you know from the outside it both look the same. That's the interesting point because what determines it is on the inside not from the outside. A person with zeal looks the same as a person with zeal doing God's will. But those with the most discerning can tell the difference because of the presence of God. The peace and the love of God is present when you are walking with God. See God is love. When you are walking in God with great zeal the love is still there. But when you are walking with zeal without God's will love is absent. You lose love. You don't operate by love. The difference is not on the outside. To anyone on the outside it looks the same but it's on the inside. What's going on makes a great difference.

Let me tell you a secret that there are times I have been with God in prayer, the stirring is so great that I can not stand it. I got to do something. If you understand

what I am talking about, there is a stirring on the inside to do God's will. And if you really spend time with God and the more you spend time with God the stirring is greater. You could not do anything but to obey. Let me point to some scriptures here.

Galatians 2, first is the law of hard work. Second is the law of stirring of our hearts and minds. Galatians 2:8-9 "For he who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised."

Notice in Galatians 2:8 it says he worked effectively in. There's something stirring in them on the inside. It's the preacher in them who wants to go out. It's the mission in them that want. Something was stirring Paul to go out on his missionary journey. It came into his heart. It came into his mind. There was a stirring from within. When you have that stirring you obey with all your heart, mind and soul. See when we serve God, it still takes fleshly energy. I am talking in a very brutal and blunt sense. It still takes energy. It takes energy to pray to God four hours a day. It takes energy to sit down and do all those planning God gives. It takes energy but the difference is your energy is energized by another power. When you are serving God you still sweat. You still have blood, sweat and tears. The other guy over there also has blood, sweat and tears. Don't tell me that serving God does not consume your energy. Of course God recharges you. It takes your time. It takes your energy but there is a difference. You are empowered from within.

Paul in the book of Ephesians 3:7 "Of which I became a minister according to the gift of grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power." That is on the inside. The energizing of God is from the inside. The key difference is the stirring. You have a stirring from God.

I Cor.15, we say its by grace. Yes, it's by grace. How does the grace operate? The grace stirs you. The grace energizes you. You feel like you have been charged ten millions volts and you just want to come out to do something. I Cor. 15:10 "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain." Do you notice that he still has to do something? God gives you the grace to do His will but if you don't allow the grace on your inside to come out, the will of God will still not be accomplished.

Paul is the type of person who when he knows God's grace and God's will, he does it with all his heart and mind and soul and strength. In the next phrase, he says in verse 10, "But I labored more abundantly that they all." Who are they all? Look at the verse before that and they all refer to the other apostles. I am not making it up. Look in the bible. Verse 9, "I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain. But I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Paul labored more abundantly than all the other apostles put together.

Some of us may sit around and say, well, Paul was called to be an apostle. That's why he was the way he is. Just called to be apostle to the Gentiles, that's why he was more famous and more well-known. I am sure there were other people called to be apostles,

sent out to the Gentiles in various places and they received the grace of God too. Paul received the grace of God too. Then what makes the difference? He was more hardworking than the other apostles. Tom, Dick and Harry could be called to be prophets. They all received the same graces but what makes the difference is the extra hard work and diligence. Don't come and tell me that it's because one received a ten-fold anointing and another one received one fold and the other receive 1/10 fold.

When Jesus appeared to me in 1986, He taught me that the anointing could be increased. You can not change your call but you can increase your anointing. It's pure laziness in us that refuse that anointing. It's nothing to do with God's call. We recognized you can not do something God never called you to but after God called you to do, whatever He called you to do, it's up to how hardworking you are to tap on the maximum anointing you can. The anointing can increase in your life.

The call is already determined before you were born but the anointing can be increased. We have the bible scriptures. Let me ask you this question. When Elisha had two times the anointing of Elijah, is it because God called him to be so? Or because he desired it? He desired it. His call can not change but his anointing can be increased. It's how hardworking they are. You could be called to the business world, you could be called to be a financier and sit around in your laurels. If you know your call, it depends on how hardworking you are in working the grace of God out in your life that determines how much you receive from God.

Remember King David, when he fell into sin, committed adultery with Bathsheba and God spoke to him. God said, I could hear the cry of the father. He was in a sense said to David, "David, I love you so much. I took you when you were nothing. I have done all these things for you. Given everything to you. Why do you have to do all these things? Why did you make My enemies mock Me because you are My chosen one." David was a billionaire by that time yet God said, "David, if all I have given you is not enough, if all the riches I have given to you are not enough, you could have asked Me for more." Is it God who set a limit or is it us? The grace of God draws the boundaries of your work and call. But how hardworking you are determines the extent of the anointing and the grace that you received. The anointing can be increased. Grace can be increased. It's in the bible story in the book of II Samuel. God said to David, "David! If all that I have given you up to now is too little, you could have asked Me for more and I will give to you. Only, O David, please don't sin. Whatever you do, don't sin. If what I have given to you, you consider it only a miserable pinch of salt, ask Me for more. I would have given you more." God said that to him.

II Samuel 12:7-8 "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. I gave to you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more."

He says, 'David if you are prepared to work hard for Me, you can tap much more but please don't sin.' There is a stirring that God placed. When we refer to I Cor. 15:10 "By the grace of God I am what I am." Do you know everybody stops there? But don't forget the other part of the verse. "And His grace towards me was not in vain." That means God could give you the grace and because you are a lazy bum, it was in vain. Strong words. He implies that it could be in vain. I wonder whether God has

given His grace to our lives in vain. Because we did not do the other part that Paul did. He says His grace towards me was not in vain.

But I labored more abundantly than they all. He didn't say God labored. He didn't say the Spirit in him labored. Although we know the Spirit is in him. I tell you, when you labor with all your heart, mind and soul, when you Spirit is laboring you can't tell the difference because your whole being is consumed by God. All you know is you want to do God's will with all your heart, all your mind and all your soul and with all your strength. He says I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I but the grace of God which was with me. He recognized it was the stirring of God in his life that gave him the energy. O I thank God for this stirring. I have experienced the stirring of God. When God stirs me, when God put His stirring in my life, I feel I could do the work of ten people. Some people say how could you do so many things. It's the stirring of God. You are just energized to do all those things.

Get the stirring of God on your inside. Make sure you discern what God stirs you to do. When God reveals His will to you, He will put the grace of God to perform His will. Don't let the grace be in vain. Let the grace move in you and touch you. But do not be stirred from without. You know some people do something just because they are stirred from without. They either do it for fame or fortune. They do it for money. They do it for attention. They do it for popularity. They do it from with out. All these things will pass away. But when you do it from within, you don't care what the devil may do. You don't care what man may do. You don't care for anything but you are only concerned for the will of God. In stage two, I am talking about doing something for God from within. Say it's from within. Say it again; it's from within.

There are far too many people do it from with out. You know why some pastors are discouraged? You know why some ministers are discouraged? You know why some people are discouraged? Because they are doing it from without. When the without does not encourage them enough, when the without does not produce some results, when the without does not bring all those things then they expect people to bring to their lives, they get discouraged. Let me tell you if you do something from within, you don't care. You don't care even if the world doesn't care. You don't care even when no one cares. You don't care even when nobody cares. All you want to do is that you want to burn your life for God. Your life will move heaven and earth because your life is doing God's will. You don't care even when people don't care because you know you are moved from within. You know where you are going. There are a lot of people who don't know where they are going. You know where you are going and you know what you are doing.

Second point was what I call the stirring of the heart and of the mind. It will put more energy in your life then you could ever dream. Some people are surprised that all the things can be done within 24 hours. I am surprised myself. I found that in five minutes time God could give you ideas and things to do that could have taken five years. When the stirring comes, it stirs your heart and mind. You just know what to do. You just know exactly what to do. It's just all in split second time. The best part of it is that those who work in the flesh they get knocked out. Those who work from the spirit from within, the spirit who live from your inside strengthen your mortal body and at the end of the day you are as fresh as ever. In fact I found it the opposite. When you have done all those things for God and **sometimes you got so much anointing on your life you don't know what to do with it. In fact I have to go for a walk to**

release all the extra energy. There were too much energy flowing. I have to go for a walk to release all the energy. He gives extra. He does not just give you enough and you use it right to the end and you are knocked out. No, He gives you extra. More than enough. It just flows out from your system.

In fact the more you do things for God, sometimes the anointing is so great, some of you who have experienced it, you got the anointing of God, it comes with the anointing so much in you that you can't sleep. You can't sleep not because you are worried. You can't sleep not because the cares for this world and the future on you. You can't sleep because of the presence of God. All you want to do is just praise God and worship God. You say God if this continue on this way we will all be – and go home to heaven. Sometimes the anointing is so great that you had to go out and work out the anointing. When it's all released out of you, finally you can sleep.

3. Open Ears and Open Hearts

Point no.1 hardworking hands and feet. Point no.2 stirring of hearts and minds. Point no. 3 open ears and open hearts. Sometimes some people work hard for God with their ears closed. They are sometimes like some animals that are able to move their ears and close their ears. Some dogs do that. When the dogs are concentrating on something, their ears pick up and then when they are doing some other things their ears fall back. Some people have their ears folded back when they are working hard for God. We must have open ears and open eyes so that while you are doing whatever God tells you to do, do it with all your heart. When there is stirring on your inside, yet at the same time you are so sensitive to God in the midst of the household activities, your ears are so sharp that if God whisper you could hear Him. Why is that necessary? Because God continue to speak when you fulfill the two laws. Put your heart into it and the Lord will stir forth. God continue to speak in the midst of your activities. I have found this to be so. God speaks to me all the time. Now I do spend time with God. I do spend time in the prayer closet. I find that in the prayer closet God gives me the plan. I have found that on the street God gives me the methods and He refines the various methods. I know what I am supposed to do from the prayer closet. But as I am out on the street or out in the land of Canaan fighting, God began to give me more details. Strategy. One thing I know, if I don't go out into the street, go out into the land of Canaan to fight against the giants I know I will never receive the details. But God does reveal His details.

Turn to the book of II Samuel 5:17 “Now when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. And David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. The Philistines also went and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. So David inquired of the Lord, saying, ‘Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will you deliver them into my hand?’ And the Lord said to David, ‘Go up for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand.’ So David went to Baal Perazim, and David defeated them there; and he said, ‘The Lord had broken through my enemies before me, like a breakthrough of water.’”

Now when God spoke something to David, do you know it was blood, sweat and tears as he fought?

It takes energy to accomplish God's will. It takes dedication. He had to fight. He had to kill people in order to perform God's will. We don't do that of course but I am just trying to show how physical it was when you do God's will. Today in the New Testament let me tell you that it's very physical when you are doing God's will and bring it into manifestation the thing that God tell you to do.

“And then they left their images there, and David and his men carried them away.” And then when the Philistines came again, David inquired of the Lord and He said, ‘You shall not go up; circle around behind them,’ now David did not get stuck in the method. He did not get stuck in something. But it was something different. He heard from God. He knew what God wants him to do. And even as he is out in battle and he was about to fight, he didn't take things for granted. In every incident he knew how to walk with God. God was right beside him and he is listening to God all the time. As he went out and this time God changed the whole strategy and he flowed along. When God say listen for the sound above the mulberry trees. As God spoke to David maybe in his prayer closet, he still didn't hear the sound but when he went out into the battlefield, he has to quicken his ears, listen carefully and wait. He has done all that he knew how. And when he heard the sound, then he went out probably the sound was the sound of angels being released, marching forth and when he went forth with the angels, he routs a great victory for God.

So third point is important. We have to have ears and eyes open even in the battlefield. You got to know what you are doing even if you are out there, doing battle fighting away, possessing the land. Your ears and eyes are opened to God where anytime He changes His instruction you are still in communication with Him.

The bible tells us the story of how Samuel was sent to anoint David. It tells us in chapter 16, Samuel was told by God, go and anoint one of the sons of Jesse. The only problem was Jesse has eight sons. But God did not speak to him until he went to the house of Jesse. And that's what we are trying to get into each one of us.

God will not speak to you again until you are in the midst of doing what God told you to do. Then as Samuel greeted the house of Jesse, and he asks, “Have you any sons? I like to see all of them.” Naturally it always starts from the eldest. And so Samuel was sitting down looking at all the sons. Jesse was there and Jesse called the first one Eliab to come forth. Eliab walked by. I am not sure whether there was any music but it was like a model or procession. When Samuel saw Eliab, in his heart he says this must be the one. God says, “That is not the one. You look at the outward side. I look at the inward side.” So Samuel said, “Next!” The next came - nothing. Now we look as if it's so easy. Let me tell you it was very physical. When you go to a home, you have the normal entertainment, the normal welcome, the normal hospitality. You will be sitting down and you will be bringing these people out. One by one and of course there may not have music at that time. Finally comes the last one. What would you do? If you are Samuel you get concerned. He looked around and there are no more sons. Did he miss God? What happened? Then maybe Samuel turned around and looked at Mrs. Jesse to see whether she is pregnant. Maybe the son is still in her mother's womb. But no, Mrs. Jesse was not pregnant. Now Samuel gets concerned. He was down there in the battlefield. He was there doing what God wants him to do before he can hear God.

Talk about the will of God, we are on a series 'Guidance from God', you don't get guidance until you obey with all your heart. Until you are stirred by God and you obey the stirring of God. You are out there obeying God then you get your guidance. A lot of people are not out there obeying God and they are not having any guidance. Because they are not even faithful to what God called them to do. Not even taking one step. Not even moving their toenail. O God where are You? Why aren't You speaking? O God! Are You displeased? They can only hear the ministering angels says, 'Yes! God is displeased with you.'

We need to learn on how to wait on God. But you know what waiting on God means. **Waiting on God is not seeking God's guidance. Waiting on God is a private love life you have with God.** I am not there to get something from God when I wait on God. I am there to just love Him and let Him love me. But when God gives guidance, God just gives His guidance and that's it. Sometimes in my prayers, sometimes along the way, I keep obeying Him. See getting guidance from God is a secondary thing. It is just like an automatic thing that you establish with God. But what you have established is a love life, relationship with God. You still need to spend time with God to just be with Him. I love to be just to be with God and just worship Him. Sing praises to Him. That is very important but I am talking about guidance from God this morning.

Samuel is out there obeying God and then he turned around and said to Jesse, "Do you have anymore sons?" What a question? He got seven but that is not enough. Jesse said, "Yes. In fact I have one more." Samuel was excited. "Where is he?" he asked. "Bring him here." And he had to wait a while because they had to call David from the field. The moment David showed up, God spoke, "This is he." We are talking about guidance from God. God would not have spoken those words if Samuel had not obeyed. Now isn't it funny that God never revealed to him which son. He had to have a fashion parade. God wants him to obey to the best of his ability.

The same little Joshua; Joshua is fighting out in the battlefield. Did God tell him to stop the sun? No, he was fighting and he knew that he needed the time. He said, "God give me more time." God stopped the sun and stopped the moon. He stopped the sun and moon for twenty-three hours. He went fighting on and on. The bible tells us that there were hailstones that came. Do you know that hailstone will not come in the Jordan of fighting? But as they went out fighting and fighting and as they were fighting hailstones came and knocked out the enemies. Isn't it fun to work with God? The bible says, you read in the book of Joshua, there are more people who died from the hailstones than they are from the sword. That's fun doing God's work. The interesting part is that if you don't go out and fight, the hailstones are not going to help you. The hailstones are all waiting. When you go out, you will find that God comes.

As we close, let me encourage you. If you are in the ministry, you haven't obeyed God to your best ability; you won't see your breakthrough yet. Unless you are prepared to work hard for God and prepared to go to the open doors that God gives you. As you start your ministry, you are not going to see your ministry establish even in the next fifty years if you do not work hard. It takes hard work. For those in the business world, if God tells you to do something and you don't do it with all your heart, you are not going to see more guidance from God. But the good news is God

wants you to be the head and not the tail provided we know how to obtain guidance from God and know how to obey God.

These three points I summarize for you: No.1, hardworking hands and feet. No.2, stirring of the heart and mind. No.3, open ears and open heart.

God will guide you and getting guidance from God, in fact, is the least problem. Although it's the main struggle of many Christians but to me it's just the least thing. If the majority of your life you spend just loving God then guidance is so easy. For me is just like you develop a relationship with God. God is so real to you. When He speaks to you, you will know. When He whispers to you, you will know. When He moves, you will know. It's so easy. You could hear God anytime, day and night. Twenty-four hour and just be doing God's perfect will.

3. TRUSTING IN THE LORD

Lets turn to the book of Proverbs chapter 3 verse 5 and 6, which possibly some of you use as your prayer. We want to look at these two verses especially as we consider how God continue to lead our lives and bring us to the position that He wants us to be. Many of you may have even memorized these scriptures. In fact these were among the first scriptures that I really loved when I was born again.

It says here **Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.** In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths. What a promise that the Lord has for us here. It tells us that if we trust Him and that if we choose not to lean on our understanding and that thirdly **if we acknowledge Him, He will direct our paths.**

As we receive guidance from God many of you would realize that the Lord does speak in dreams and visions. But there are a whole lot of other decisions that we have to make that the Lord expects us to hear from our human spirit rather than from the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit speaks many times it comes in visions or dreams or through the voice of the Holy Spirit or through prophecy or through many other mediums, which the Holy Spirit has.

But many of life's decisions of this physical life depend on our inward witness, which is not really a voice. The conscience is the voice of our human spirit. **But the inward witness is not a voice. It is only if I can put it this way it is a spiritual feeling of comfort or discomfort.** It is a feeling of uneasiness or of peace. The inward witness is only that sense that we have on our inward being of rightness or wrongness of situation. It is more like a traffic light, red light, green light, and yellow light. Those traffic lights don't speak. They are not audible but you could see them and you need to recognize what the lights mean. If we do not know what they mean we can not interpret those signals.

In the same way there are spiritual feelings within us. We need to understand what they mean in order to interpret the signals. At the same time there are also the inward voice. **The inward voice feels like almost your own self-speaking. It's the voice of your human spirit speaking to you.**

Now why is guidance from God important? Possibly nearly about 90 percent of your life's decisions depend on these two, the inward witness and the conscience. No doubt you can be spirit filled, tongue talking, bible carrying, Christians but 90 percent of life's decisions depend on these little things here.

When you are buying a house, you ask, "Why doesn't God guide me through prophecy? If you depend on supernatural guidance like visions, dreams, prophecies for your daily occurrences you can go wrong. Supernatural guidance has more to do with spiritual ministry. For your day-to-day affairs like getting the job that you need, doing all those things that you want, you would have to depend a lot on your inward witness than on your inward voice of your human spirit. I do not say that God could not speak in those areas. Even when He speaks or give you a vision of a particular job that you would have you will need your inward witness and your inward voice to discern and interpret.

All supernatural guidance needs interpretation. It is what I call the gap. The gap between the spirit world where the Holy Spirit resides and your mind, which makes the natural decision, is filled up by your human spirit. And it's subject to the interpretation of the human spirit and that's where a lot of people have missed God in guidance. They have taken one prophecy out of context and that's it. They misinterpret a vision and that's it. They misinterpret a dream and that's it. Sometimes people have a dream of a disaster happening. Or they dream about something happening to a particular person. And they think it's for that same person. They interpret it wrongly. And they think something is wrong with that guy; they disassociate with that person and that's it.

All supernatural guidance needs interpretation. That is why in 99 percent of our lives including supernatural leadings we need the human spirit to guide us. What is the one percent? The one percent is where the angels arrange the circumstances together and not much decision-making is needed; you just go with the flow.

That is where we need to understand our heart. In Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and then he adds a second phrase and do not rely on your own insight. It seems that our understanding and our hearts can be opposing each other - they should not. But many times that conflict between our minds and spirits can happen since our minds are in the process of renewal while our spirits are born perfect in God.

There are several Hebrew words for the word trust but there are three main ones that we will focus on. There is a Hebrew word *batah*, which means to confide or to have confidence in. The word trust found in Proverbs 3:5 is the word *batah*.

Then there is another one that is the word *chasal* and it is the other word that means to take refuge. When you *chasal* trust in God you are making God as your Rock and your Refuge. Maybe there are difficult circumstances and you have no one to turn to so you turn to God and put your trust in God. That word *chasal* means to take God as your refuge. You become a refugee in God. The word refugee does not have a very nice connotation for some people. In our times there are refugees of war. Remember that David at one time was a refugee before he became king. So no matter what your circumstances God can be your *chasal*.

Then there is another one not so commonly used is the word *yachal*. That is the one used by Job when he says though He slay me yet will I trust Him. That word is saying that if God kills him he will still trust Him. Theologically that is not true because God doesn't destroy or kill His own people. It's a statement from a human perspective. And that word trust means to wait in hope.

What we are looking at in Proverbs 3:5 and 6 is the word *batah* which means to confide in Him. But many times we have taken that to be *chasal* or *yachal*. When you say, "I got a problem but God is my trust," you mean, "God is my *chasal*. He is my refuge." But that's not what that word means. That word means more than that. And so many times when people seek guidance from God, they have taken every good idea and every impression to be from God. That's not good. There are many good ideas out there but they may not be from God.

And in that view I like to make two little sentences regarding leaning on our own understanding. No. 1 it may not be of God. Not everything that seems good is from God. Even the most spiritual people make mistakes like that. That's why sometimes when people receive guidance they impose it on others. Remember there are lines of authority that we all come under. We have no right to impose on somebody's life and say, "I got this dream about you. You got to listen onto me." You got no right because that person is accountable to God not to you. We need to respect one another.

If you have the word of the Lord for one another give it and that's your responsibility. That person may interpret it differently and how you yourself interpret it may not be the way that God wants you to. We can give prophecy and not understand that prophecy. We can be used by God to deliver a word from the Lord. And in the process of time your own mind figures out what you think that word mean for that person. But that person knows by hearing the word what the Lord really wants not you. They are accountable for their own life. We need to respect the free will and free choice life that God gives to every person.

These are not people who don't know how to hear God. I am not talking about young Christians alone who don't practice Proverbs 3:5-6. I am talking about leaders. I am talking about spiritual people. It's important for us to remember when we receive guidance from God, we keep Proverbs 3:5-6 in mind. That no matter how much God has spoken to you in any way the Word of God still comes first. We must not lean on our own understanding but we must learn how to trust God with our hearts.

God used Joshua. He was one who knows how to hear God and get miracles. Joshua chapter 3 he heard from God how to cross the Jordan. And they crossed the Jordan and miraculously saw the hand of God. He had an open vision. He saw the manifestation of God in some way and God spoke to him. Later on in chapter five he saw an angel. It was not an ordinary angel. It was a warring angel. By all means we will say that he was a very spiritual man. Even apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers have to learn to hear God. That is why you can be the most fantastic prophet, preacher or whatever and still miss God on your personal life. You can hear God and hit the power line and see the miracles of God, see the parting of the Jordan and yet you can still miss God somewhere along the line. Being a prophet is no guarantee.

We in the ministry when it comes for making decisions for our own life we can not depend on the office of a prophet, the office of an apostle to make a decision. In our own life we got to depend on our inward witness and the inward voice. And that separates out the experienced from the inexperienced ministry.

So here is Joshua and I just have to show all those chapters to show you how experienced he was in hearing God. He had a bit of hindrance when Achan sinned but then he renewed the covenant in Joshua 8 and they even have victory and success. It doesn't mean that when a person is successful everything else they do is right. That is the deception of the enemy. It doesn't mean that if you have 50 percent right the other 50 percent is automatically right. But yet a vast majority of Christians will say that if this prophet or man of God has been successful then everything else that he does must be right. I know that rightness produces success. But not all success is produced through your rightness. It may be produced in other forms.

Joshua 9:1-5 When all the kings who were beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland all along the coast of the Great Sea towards Lebanon, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, heard of this, they gathered together with one accord to fight Joshua and Israel. But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, they on their part acted with cunning, and went and made ready provisions, and took worn-out sacks upon their asses, and wineskins, worn-out and torn and mended, with worn-out, patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes; and all their provisions were dry and muddy.

They would have made good Hollywood actors. They came to Joshua and they all acted up very well. They looked as if they were from a far, far place. They lied to Joshua. Joshua asked them, "Where are you from? In verse nine They said to him, "From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard a report of Him, and all that He did in Egypt, and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelt in Ashteroth. And our elders and all the inhabitants of our country said to us, "Take provisions in our hand for the journey."

Look at verse 12 Here is our bread; it was still warm when we took it from our houses as our food for the journey, on the day we set forth to come to you, but now, behold, it is dry and moldy; these wineskins were new when we filled them, and behold, they are burst; and these garments and shoes of ours are worn out from the very long journey.

Then something happened that should not have happened in verse 14 - 15. So the men partook of their provisions, and did not ask direction from the Lord.

They didn't ask the Lord. Why didn't the Lord tell them? The Lord wants you to ask. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore to them. These are all leaders. They are not young Christians. They didn't ask the Lord. They didn't consult the Lord. They consulted one and another, which was fine but make sure you consult the Lord. And all the people were deceived. After they made the covenant they found that they were their neighbors.

What are they going to do now? Point one it may not be of God. It was a good idea to make covenant with people and be friendly. Now they did not immediately make the decision. They would naturally consult one another. In verse 15 the rulers of the congregation swore to them. And in verse 16 it says they had made a covenant with them. How could it happen? This is Joshua we are talking about. **This was the one who saw the Jordan parted. This was the one who heard God and commanded the priests to carry the ark. This was the one who saw the angel. This was the one who saw all the wars. He made a mistake. He forgot the principle of Proverbs 3:5-6.**

I encourage you no matter how successful you are check every idea with God. Some ideas may not be of God. I have found that when people become successful whether in the world or in the kingdom of God, they begin to assume that every idea is of God. They are so used to having success from God that they don't check the ideas. Now

here is the word “batah”. There is another form of it in a different way is “mibtah”. The root form of the word “mibtah” means to speak with. See the word confide means to share something. And many times we have taken the word trust in the Lord means I have trusted in the Lord. God is not speaking about “chasal”. He is not speaking about whether you have taken Him as a refuge in times of troubles. He is not talking about whether you put your hope in God. That’s what people mean when they say I put my trust in God. But He is asking you, “Have you have a word with Him yet? Have you spoken to the Lord about this?”

Many times when people have good ideas, no matter how good the ideas are, the first thing I ask them, “Have you asked the Lord?” The word “mibtah” means to confide in the Lord. And many times we have not asked the Lord. We asked every Tom, Dick and Harry we know but we have not asked the Lord. Maybe we did but He didn’t say anything. Hello there - does it sounds familiar to your life story? “I have consulted my father; he says O.K. My mother says O.K. All my loved ones say O.K. O God what do you say now?” And you wait for a while and all you get is silence from heaven. God if you don’t answer I am going to go in O.K. Lord my devotion time is up to 7.30 you got only 15 minutes to answer. And when God is silent you took it as a yes. It is dangerous. When God is silent what must you take it as? Take it as a no first. How does God reply to you? **Through your inward witness and through the inward voice.**

Remember the apostles and the elders, when they wrote the decree concerning observing Jewish laws in Acts 15:28 it says, It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us. They sensed it on their inside. As you sense what is right and you sense what is the right thing to do and you follow those steps, God will answer in some form. He sometimes answers by dreams, prophecy and other supernatural means. But many times the answer comes from the sensation of your inside.

If you haven’t asked the Lord about it, it means that you haven’t trusted the Lord. A good idea may not be of God. How can it not be of God?

Firstly, **sense knowledge can deceive.** You say all the circumstances point to that thing. Joshua and the people were deceived by sense knowledge. **They went by what their eyes saw** and the hands felt. They saw the moldy bread. They saw the garments. It was the same way Jacob deceived Isaac. Satan who is crafty can manipulate circumstantial evidence.

Secondly, **all the facts are not in yet.** They only told them what they wanted them to know. But they didn’t tell them what they ought to know. What we don’t know can sometimes be very important. They didn’t know that these people are from nearby. And they may not realize how deceptive these people are around them. **Remember it is not what you know that can hurt you; it is what you don’t know.** And all our lives we don’t know everything. Nobody knows everything. Therefore we have to trust in the Son of God Jesus who knows everything. There may be some facts that He is trying to get across to us that takes time to come to us.

Thirdly, **the good idea may not be for you to carry out.** It may certainly be of God but it may not be for you. That is why we must trust in the Lord and lean not on our own understanding.

Lets turn to II Samuel chapter 7:1-3 Now when the king dwelt in his house; and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about, the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart; for the Lord is with you."

David wants to trust or confide in the Lord with all his heart. He loves the Lord. He wanted to do something for God. And it is of God to build Him a house. It was in line with the Word to build Him a house. But it was not for him. Even if you passed the first test you got to pass the second one. It may be of God but it may not be for you. Of course if it is not of God you got to drop it. But even if you pass the test that is of God, it may not be for you. It may not be for you to do those things although they are good things. Which is the reason why we must recognize boundaries set by God.

If God has appointed somebody to go to Russia, how they do it and what they do there only they would know. I am not there to judge them. But if God has asked you to do something in your life, in your ministry, that is not within my jurisdiction and if you come and ask me for my judgment or my opinion I can give you the best spiritual counsel from my level. But then I will leave it to you to make your own decision. I recognize that each one is responsible for our own decision-making. I have to respect your call though there may be things I may not agree with; that I may do it differently. But how we do things depends not only on principles. How we do things depends also on our character and our personality.

There may be more than one way to do something. There may be more than one right way to solve a problem. There is always more than one solution. Don't get the first solution straightaway. If you are in the habit of jumping to the first solution, sometimes the first solution may be the good one. But if you "mibtah" or confide in God and have a secret meeting with God, sometimes the second one can be better. Sometimes the third one could be even better. "Mibtah" makes it better. Confide in God. It may be a good idea but it may not be for you. We need to respect how each individual solve problems using the same biblical principles though the outcome may be different. And I can not expect you to do things the way I do. If I am in charge of vacuuming this place, I may want to go from the corners to the center. But you may want to go from the center to the corner. Who am I to say that is wrong? The most important thing is to get the results. It's the result that counts. The fruit is the most important thing. There may be more than one way to your solution. And we need to "mibtah" with God until we see three, four, five solutions. And we got to pray, "God how would you want to do this? O God I am confiding in you."

David could have just gone and built the Temple. Do you realize that David could have just done it? He didn't even have to tell Nathan. He was the king; he had the money; he had the authority. But first he asked the prophet, "Nathan you are the prophet of God, what do you think?" You throw things at one another. That's what I like to do when I meet with men of God in the five-fold ministry and who are of the same level. I used to throw ideas out. Some people don't understand the realm of fellowship. Lets say you are living in the time of David and you are a prophet and David asks you, "What do you think of this? I want to build God a house." Then you go around saying that David is going to build a house for God. He didn't say he was going to. He is just throwing out ideas and feelers. There are some people who easily

mistake things like that. These are not the kind of people for you to throw out ideas and feelers when you fellowship with them. They will just distort what you say.

So David said, "Nathan you are prophet. I dwell in a nice place. I will build God a house." And Nathan felt good about it. Remember point three it may not be for you. It may be of God but it may not be for you. Remember God was not involved yet in the decision-making. Nathan said, "Go and do it." Nathan gives the approval. And that night God came to Nathan and basically said that it is not for David, but for his son Solomon to build the house of God. The idea was of God but it was not for him. One of the things that we learn is how to cut back on the good things.

Some things are good but too much of the good things can cause us to lose our balance. Too much of good things can make us extreme. Just because water is good it doesn't mean that you drink gallons and gallons of it. Good things are good but you must keep them in its proper balance.

Lets see what God said to David in II Sam. 7:12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My Name. God is saying it is not for you. Lets remember that this physical life is only a pattern and I treat it as a test. **This whole life is just a test to live for God. And our real reward comes in heaven. Every one of us has our walk with God and our call to fulfill.** If you try to fulfill somebody else's call you may be trying to rob them of their reward. All of us have rewards that are ready for us based on God's predestined call. If you are faithful to that you will be rewarded. If you try to do somebody else's work you are actually trying to steal their reward from God. It was Solomon's job to build Him a house.

But there are some other things that David revealed that God said to him when he was passing the responsibility to Solomon in regard to building God a house. Lets turn to the book of I Chron. 28:3 But God said to me, (this was not recorded in the other portion but recorded here, as usual the bible sometimes give details from another writer.) "You may not build a house for my name, for you are a warrior and have shed blood." Now was it wrong for David to shed blood and be a man of war? David himself tells us that it's God who trains his hands for war. And it's God who enabled him to fight the fight that he has to do in his lifetime. It was God who anointed him to fight all the wonderful battles and victories that he had when God called him into the kingdom. So was it wrong for him to be a man of war? Was it wrong for him to shed blood? It was not. David had an anointing to be king. He had an anointing to make war. He says its God who trains my hands for war. It's God who helps him to leap over the wall and run to the troop. So he was fighting with God's anointing.

We could turn to other passages to show that every time he fought a battle he asked God, "Lord shall I go for that? Lord shall I fight?" And God says, "Go ahead." David has his job to do. And he must do it with all his heart. So it was a good idea to build God a house. But it was not for David. In the kingdom of God sometimes when we begin to do something and we receive the power and the ability to do many things we must learn to stop ourselves from doing things that are good things that are in line with His will but may not be God's will for us to do. Learn how to say no. In our times today every church wants a bible school; every big church wants a T.V. program. But it may not be God's will.

Lets go into the secular world. There are a lot of businesses that can make money here. It may not be for you. Some people may be called to those areas. It may not be for you. So genuine ventures may be of God but that may not be for you. We are talking about trusting or confiding in the Lord with all your heart and **leaning not on your own understanding. Our understanding blocks us from trusting in God. Not every good thing is from God. And even many good ideas may not be for us.** One of the things that I have found is that many people don't ask God. They do not know how to "mibtah" with God; to confide in the Lord. There is one thing I always say, "Have you prayed about that? Have you asked God?" If the answer is "No," it doesn't matter how good it was, don't. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.

What do you mean by acknowledge Him? Read Proverbs 3:5-6 very carefully. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and the "mibtah" must be sincere and not half-heartedly. Sometimes when people consult you or ask you things they do it half-heartedly. Sometimes when you are in a position as a counselor and when people come for counsel, they don't really come for counsel. Half their heart is already made up. They only want to come to check what you said and that's all. Or to find a second agreement that agree with them. That's not trusting with all your heart. If we come to God with that attitude God will keep silent. If we made up our mind before the Father, He will have to let us go like the prodigal son. Remember the prodigal son came to his father. You know what the prodigal son had done. He has already made up his mind. He says, "Give me my part of my inheritance and I will go my way. I have my own ideas about my life." What did the prodigal son's father do? Nothing. He just gave in to his son's request. His son had already made up his mind. The bible says that the prodigal son came to himself. In the end he realize his error.

It's important for us to understand that this mind of ours must be submitted to our heart. Don't make up our mind and come to God. Come to God with an open mind and an open heart where God can say no to what you are bringing to Him. We can plan; we can have very good ideas; but without God it goes nowhere. Learning how to bring and submit our ideas to God is a capacity of patience that we need to have. It's a capacity of saying, "God if you are not in this I am not going into it." We must have the capacity of trusting in the Lord with all our heart. Come with an open mind in order to receive guidance from Him.

You see the condition is with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Verse 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him. What do we mean by acknowledge Him? It means three things. No. 1 give Him the respect and the right place. Respect is something that we learn in our relationship with one another. God says respect Him. Give Him the right place in hour heart. No. 2 acknowledge Him involves worshiping Him. No. 3 acknowledge Him involves talking about Him publicly. You will say, "I got to talk this over with Jesus. How will Jesus be glorified in this situation?" In other words we are not ashamed of Jesus. We don't put Him in a storeroom. We put Him in the boardroom. Acknowledge that Jesus must be in the boardroom where the decision is being made. You give Jesus the chairman seat. Let Him be a part of your decision-making. When that happens your blessings are He shall direct your path. He will take control of the circumstances. When you start in verse five your circumstances may not be in His control yet. And you can not lean on your own understanding. You can not depend on the circumstances. But when you do all those processes your circumstances

will be controlled by God. His angels are in line to bring every circumstance that is out of your reach into control.

Let me point to some incidences in Jesus' life where there is no way He could control the situation any more only God. When Jesus was on the cross there was a prophecy that says they will see Him whom they have pierced. It is a prophecy that must be fulfilled. Jesus had no control in a sense that He could have asked God to help Him anytime. He had no control in the physical sense that He had surrendered all to the Father. You could say that there were some prophecies Jesus purposely fulfilled. Fine He obeyed and He fulfilled. But there were some prophecies that were not in His control. Some other force controlled it. And the soldier could have a choice to pierce in His belly or pierce Him at the side or to knock off one of His legs. These are circumstances that God has to come in and place all His angels so that no devil can put the wrong thought on the soldier that was about to pierce Jesus at the side. What happens if he missed and pierced His hand instead? Sorry, prophecy not fulfilled. There are a lot of things that were out of the control of the people themselves. So they surrender to the Controller.

There were a lot of circumstances Paul's life that were not in his control. And I want to encourage you that God can be in control if you learn Proverbs 3:5-6. If you learn to share and confide in God; trust in Him. And remember the two points that were shared with you. It may not be of God. Point two it may not be for you. Let these points guide us so that we only walk in what is of God and what is really for you. When God says, "David this is not for you." David says, "Fine. God I will obey you but let me do all my best to help Solomon to do what is for him to do." He had a willingness to say, "O.K. that's fine since that's beyond my jurisdiction."

God spoke to Paul in the book of Acts as he was going to the temple and he was captured and taken a prisoner in Acts 23:11 The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified about Me at Jerusalem so you must bear witness also at Rome." Now God says you will be in Rome. But Paul was not in control of his life. He has surrendered his life to God. He was in control in the sense spiritually but he was not in control of his physical and legal sense because he was a captive prisoner. It looks like he was under the control of the Roman Governor. But when he surrendered and trusted in the Lord, he didn't understand how God's word to him was going to take place. In fact there was a delay of several years before he entered Rome. He was languishing in the prison for some years. In Acts 23:11 Jesus personally delivered to him the prophecy that he will be in Rome. As you read on in Acts 24:27 But when two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison. Now there were at least two to three years that he was in prison before he was sent to Rome. Paul must have been waiting in prison wondering when he will go to Rome. How can a prisoner have control of the circumstances?

You can through Proverbs 3:5-6. I want to encourage you no matter how out of control your situation is; no matter how you felt imprisoned by the circumstances around by other forces greater and physically more powerful than you, but if you trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; you acknowledge Him in all your ways; He will cause everything to be directed in your path. And you will go to the destination that He has assigned for you. Thank God that

He can control circumstances. God's power is released to arrange the circumstances. God takes control of our hearts, our lives and our circumstances.

And look at how many people God has worked with. He has to work with No. 1 the governor's heart. And it does say in the book of Proverbs the hearts of kings are in God's hand. So God placed it upon the governor's heart to make a decision for Paul to go to Rome. Then he had to arrange all the circumstances so that all the soldiers are involved to give protection to Paul. Remember how the people were trying to kill him. He has to protect him so that he could reach Rome safely. There were several assassinations attempt at Paul's life. But if God wants him to go to Rome the assignments will not succeed. So God has to work with the circumstances. Some of it through a little boy. Remember the Jews were plotting to kill Paul and Paul's sister's son overheard the conversation. God put the son in that situation to overhear the plot and the son has to run and tell the soldier. Then the soldiers arranged for extra protection for Paul. How does God direct our path? He places the right people in the right place all along the way or your path of life. So that all you have to do is remember He will direct your path. You just have to walk in the will of God. All your circumstances you just place to God. Take it one step at a time and you will flow in God's will.

Even when Paul was on his way in the journey there were circumstances beyond his control. I will summarize and close by illustrating with the journey of Paul in chapter 27:1 And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort, named Julius. So they were traveling in a ship and Paul had no legal authority, no physical authority but Paul was a prisoner more of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is finally on his way to Rome. And he is headed for Rome, which is a prophecy God gave him nearly two to three years ago.

Now that he is on his way in verse 9 and 10 Paul sensed something. See there were circumstances beyond his control. And Paul advised them saying I perceive that this journey will end with disaster and much loss not only of the cargo and the ship but also of our lives. So Paul knew that although they were supposed to go to Rome, he knew that they were not supposed to rush there. And he sensed that there was physical danger. None of the other people could sense that. None of the other people trusted the Lord. Everything looks nice but Paul sensed something in his spirit and it was troubling him. And Paul says there will be danger. We should not go through this whole voyage. But Paul was not in control. He was only a prisoner. But if you trust in the Lord and not lean on your own understanding; if you acknowledge Him He will direct your path.

Along the way danger comes.

For many nights there were so much danger that the people who were in the natural were frightened. But Paul waited on the Lord. Then finally verse 21 As they had been long without food, Paul then came forward among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and should not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. There was something that was lost. I believe that when you trust in the Lord you will not lose anything. The Lord is our Shepherd we shall not want. The Lord is not in the business of making you lose in order to trust Him more. Just as some people

who were praying the wrong way. They say, “O God take everything away from their lives until they have to trust in You.” No, that’s not the way to pray.

That’s the devil who steals, kills and destroy. If they had listened they wouldn’t even lose the cargo. The cargo doesn’t belong to Paul. But God is in the business of restoration not in the business of stealing. In verse 22 I now bid you to take heart; for there will be no loss of life among you, but only the ship. For this very night there stood by me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, and he said. ”Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and lo, God has granted you all those who sail with you. Paul trusted in God. He leaned not on his own understanding. He did not know how he is going to end up there. And here he tells the people don’t go but they still went. As he is a prisoner he had no choice. He got dragged along. But God was in control of the circumstances.

You will always come out on the top when you trust on the Lord and lean not on your own understanding. When you acknowledge Him He will direct your path. The good news is you come out on top. You may start at the bottom of the ladder but you will come out on top. You may start in the worse position but you will end up on top. Just like Joseph in prison. You may start at the bottom of the ladder. You will end up on top. I encourage you no matter how bad your circumstances are, no matter what kind of problems you are facing now; remember there is more than one solution. And no matter how low at the bottom of the rung of the ladder you are that if you trust in the Lord and understand the two main points that we focused that firstly, it may not be of God. Secondly, it may not be for you. Then you say, “What then is for me?” Listen to Him, confide in Him, walk very softly and surely with Him and you will discern the will of God.

4. SENSATIONS FROM THE INWARD WITNESS

This week we will share a little bit about the promptings of the Holy Spirit and how the promptings of the Holy Spirit provide us some sort of guidance. We are going to share from personal experience with God's Word here and there. The leading of the Holy Spirit can be quite subjective. And remember as we share that some of it can be subjective. How you sense the promptings and the guidance of God in your life can be quite subjective. There may be similarities but we need to give room for subjective reason. As we obey God and listen to God and do what God wants, we find that the inward witness becomes stronger. We have said that 95 percent of the time in decision making He leads from our inside in our spirit man. We need to know when it's right, when it's wrong. Most people only know the traffic light. When there is a **green light it says its O.K. Then there is the red light it's not O.K. There is an orange light that means be watchful, be aware.** We want expand on that in a more subjective manner to know how it feels like and what it is actually like to be led by the inward witness and how the promptings of God are like.

There are two major divisions, "A" and "B".

The **first major division is the sensation that is not verbal.** By non-verbal I mean it's not in English or any known language. It's a sensation that we have to recognize. It's a tangible sensation on our spirit man.

Under classification "B" would be what I call **the inward voice or the inner thought and how we differentiate that.** We will touch on "B" later in this teaching series. So remember we are looking more towards the sensations and not the path that has to do with your understanding. It's more the internal sensation and what it feels like to know what is right and to know what is wrong.

Under division "A" I like to sub-divide it again into two sub-sections. We first draw a line. And on one side of the line is what I call before the action takes place or before your decision is made. You have all the feelings and sensations up to the point when you make a decision. Then when you cross the line where your decision has been made and you have taken a course of action, direction is now focused based on your past decision whether it happened a few seconds, a few minutes, a few hours, a few days ago. So that is the line that we draw and the sensation before you cross the line and sensation after you cross the line.

How do you know whether the decision has been right or wrong? The inward sensation will still tell you. **If we go against the sensation over several days or weeks that sensation can disappear. You will experience a condition called a hardness of heart. You will no more be able to sense that area any more. It's the hardening that takes place.** It's just like when your foot is filled with all kinds of thickness because of different injuries. Your skin is no more sensitive. Or if you are playing the guitar and you are pressing the chords with the left hand, you will feel a thick layer of skin on the tips of the finger and. That is the price you pay for being a guitarist. If you don't play for some time that layer of skin peels off and it becomes sensitive again. But if you play everyday your skin will be so thick that it's not easy to sense any feeling on your fingertip. That's what happens when the sensitivity is resisted over a period of time. There is a hardness that comes.

In the bible there are more descriptions of what the sensation is like after you cross the line. It seems even that unless you draw near to the line, unless you bring yourself to the point of the line you may not even have any sensation. If you are looking at that line of decision from a far distance you may not have the sensation. For example if you are buying a house or a car, you are not sure whether that is a good decision or not. You have done your economic calculations, you have done your evaluation, you have done your research and you sought God's will. And God seems to approve of the whole thing but sensations are only clearer as you draw near the line when you are about to make the decision.

Let says you have settled for an apartment within a certain budget. Staying at home and not doing anything may not give you any sensation. You may need to take a step of faith to walk out and look around at all the available apartments. And if you stand in the very apartment that you are supposed to buy you would sense different sensations. And that feeling of whether it's right or wrong, it's not just a natural feeling. It's what Acts 15 will say it seems good. You could sense that overwhelming goodness when you are in the right place. Other times when you are in the wrong place you could sense it.

But if you are far away from that line of decision, all you do is just stay at home and pray waiting for a vision, waiting for a prophet of God to come and tell you what you should do, you may never move. If Paul had run his missionary journey that way, he would not have both the second and the third missionary journey. The first missionary journey was by a dramatic supernatural word from the Holy Spirit who said in Acts 13:2 As they were ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." But the second and third missionary journeys were not based on that type of leading anymore. Therefore Christians are foolish if they depend only on one type of leading. Every time God moves, you say, "I need to wait for a dramatic leading." You have put God in a box. You have limited God if you say you only want to be led this way. If Paul had waited to embark on his subsequent missionary journeys based on his experience of being called out for his first missionary journey, he would have no second and third missionary journey.

Paul experienced the peak of his ministry when he was in Ephesus in Acts 19. Yet all he had was an impression in Acts 18:21 [Paul] took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus. Hardly would he have known that when he came back to Ephesus in Acts 19 that there he would see the greatest revival and miracles taking place. So lets not put God in a box.

The primarily leading and confirmation of our life are based on our inward witness of the sense of rightness and wrongness in our heart and our mind. As we were saying if you stay a distance away from the line of decision you will never sense anything. You are too far away. There is no faith commitment. There is no effort on your part. Until there is an effort on your part as you draw near to the line and as you are standing on the line and as you cross over the line to decide or act you will not have any sensation. That's why a lot of people are sitting at home waiting for a vision and up to now they are still waiting. A lot of people are waiting for God's guidance and they are not doing anything.

The other extreme is that you do everything without sensing the inward witness. The other extreme is running into every thing by your own mind, by your own wisdom and you are rushing where angels fear to tread. That would be the other extreme of not being sensitive and just rushing into every good idea. Like last week we said not every good idea is a good idea. If the devil were to tempt you it wouldn't constitute a temptation if he gives you a bad idea. A temptation is when he gives you a second-class idea. The devil will not tempt you with the worse because if he gives you the worse you would know that it was from him. The devil will tempt you with a deceptively good idea and then it constitutes a temptation. So not all good ideas are necessarily from God.

1. The Inward Sensation of Being Smitten

We have sub-divided sensation into two parts. One is when you approach and one after you cross over.

In the book of I Samuel chapter 24, David was running away from king Saul. In the Old Testament they were not even born again yet they have sensitivity in their conscience. Our conscience needs to be awakened. In order to be sensitive to God the main criteria is to develop our conscience to know what is right and wrong in our heart. Saul was pursuing David with three thousand chosen men from Israel. As David ran away from king Saul, he had an opportunity to kill king Saul when Saul came into the cave that David was hiding in.

I Sam. 24:3 And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave. And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the Lord said to you, "Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you."

David wanted to do what is right and what is good. Saul was in the cave and there is no light in the cave. And David knows that he was there. Then David arose and stealthily cut off the skirt of Saul's robe. So while Saul was relieving himself David drew near. That's a line of division there. Saul represents where the line is. As David was drawing near to Saul he was not drawing near to kill him. His heart and his conscience will prevent him from killing him. But as he drew near he wanted to just cut a piece of Saul's robe. Why didn't his heart smite him as he draw near? He couldn't sense anything yet. Up to the point where he was standing right next to Saul David's heart still didn't smite him.

In verse 5 And afterward David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. The afterward could have been a few seconds or few hours probably lets give and take some minutes later. As he was holding Saul's robe and as he went back to where he was hiding, he waited until Saul left the cave. Afterwards David's heart troubled him. The word trouble is from the Hebrew word nakah, which means to smite or a slap. David's heart gave him a slap. It's the same Hebrew word that is used when it says the Lord smote all the people and killed them. It's the same root word that points to them fighting and smiting one another and in the Old King James Version killing one another.

David's heart gave him a punch. He has crossed the line and his heart was now smitten. It's almost like maybe you work in an office and there is office property. All you did was just take the office pen or pencil to your house and you took it knowing that it was paid with office money. Maybe your conscience is sensitive and you return it the next day. But you took it with the intention that it becomes yours. And as you take it and you put it in your pocket as you are heading home your heart smite you. It never came until you have it in your possession. The wrong move or the wrong decision gave your heart a real smacking. That's the first kind of sensation a kind of condemnation.

I know Rom. 8:1 says There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Here I am talking about the conscience hitting you. Maybe you have done something wrong and you told a lie to cover it up. Up to the moment before you told that lie there was some tension. But the moment you told that lie intentionally to deceive you crossed the line, and smack, your heart is smitten. You got a smack from your conscience. That's the first kind of sensation. It's almost like something in you jumping up at you. And it can be so disturbing it will never go off until you take it back and correct that lie you told. It's a special sensation all in itself.

If you look at it David could have killed Saul. David showed mercy. He called on Saul and showed to Saul, saying, "Saul this is a piece of your robe. I could have killed you." But he didn't. God prevented him. God was not happy that he cut off that robe.

Most people experience another type of experience I call the scratchiness. To experience this smacking you have to be sensitive to the Lord. You have to be sensitive to the anointing of God. The reason David senses it was because he was a man sensitive to the anointing of God. I would describe it that most people only experience a little pinch. But this is the extreme way. Look at verse 6 He said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put forth my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed." Now what was David sensitive to? The anointing of God. As he developed sensitivity to the anointing of God the moment he cut off the piece of Saul's robe, he felt like the anointing draining from him and his conscience slapping him. He must have repented to God straightaway. That was why he did not cross the second line to kill Saul. He crossed the first line to cut off a piece of Saul's robe, and his conscience smote him. He grieved, and he repented; therefore he could not bring himself to cross the second line to kill Saul.

Let me point to Psalms 51 where David failed God. That was the sin he committed with Bethsheba. Ps. 51:1-9 Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy steadfast love; according to thy abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and does that which is evil in thy sight, so that thou art justified in thy sentence and blameless in thy judgment. Behold, I was brought forth to iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which thou has broken rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.

Notice he sensed it like broken bones although none of his bones were broken.

Verse 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners will return to thee. Deliver me from blood guiltiness.

David says, "Take not thy Spirit from me." It was the same experience or same kind of sensation that he was having when he cut off a piece of Saul's robe. He had that sensitivity to the anointing of God leaving him when this time he fell into the sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. And now he feels that condemnation that is coming upon his life. And he wants to be free from it.

Notice one of the things that he lost in this area is the joy. He says, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation." Why are some Christians not happy? It is because they are not sensitive to the anointing of God and they are not walking in the anointing of God. For the kingdom of God is love, peace and joy. When you have the Holy Ghost it's undeniable that you will be filled with joy. In fact sometimes Christians get up without being filled with the Spirit, they go out they won't have joy. In order to sense it you got to have a high level of the Spirit and the anointing of God. And by level it doesn't mean that you have to be called to the apostle, prophet, pastor, evangelist or teacher. But it means just being filled with the Spirit.

And having that sensitivity when you cross the line it's like suddenly everything is stripped off. You feel that slap on your inside. That's what David felt like. That is when the anointing of God is strong and the sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and the anointing of God is drained out. Sometimes you could tell it. For some people they have crossed the line and they didn't even know it. It is because they are not sensitive to the anointing of God. But you could tell that they have lost their joy. If you have lost your joy my advice and counsel is to go back to the place where you lost it. And you will find that at that place where you lost it is a place where you have compromised some principles or commandments of God. You say, "But I didn't kill anyone. I didn't do anything. I didn't really break the Ten Commandments."

David didn't break the Ten Commandments in the book of I Sam. 24. He did later break the commandment "Thou shalt not commit adultery" by sleeping with Bathsheba but not in I Sam. 24. All he did was cut a piece of cloth. And his heart smote him. Go back to the place where you have cut that piece of garment from Saul's life. What does Saul represent to you and I? Saul represents people who are anointed by God to be in authority both in the kingdom of God and in the secular world. The book of Romans tells us to respect authority. For example, if you speak evil against your government and rulers of your country you have crossed the line of cutting Saul's robe. But this is an area where I find many people are not sensitive to. That is why personally I avoid fellowshiping with such people. They are not sensitive to the anointing of God. They are not careful with their tongue. See there are several things in our life that we have to learn. But one of the most important lessons we learn is submission and obedience. Have you realize that submission and obedience can not be learned as a lone ranger? Submission and obedience are learned as we relate to human beings. There is no other way you can learn submission and obedience. And every one will always have an excuse not to submit not to obey because of the imperfection of

the people above them. But supposing that you yourself are on the top you may not be as perfect. Many times people who rise to that position find that they can not do a better job and then they understand.

And that is why it's an important lesson to learn in this first level. It is a point where you cross the line of authority and anointing. When you have crossed that you have touched something that God has ordained. And immediately David says it was the anointing that I touched. When I touched that robe it was like cutting off something from Saul's life. Who was he to take off Saul's anointing? It was God who gave and let God be the one to close off his office in his life. I will say that not many people are sensitive to this first level because they are not sensitive to the anointing of God or to the authority of God, whether in the kingdom of God and in the secular world. You go out to any coffeehouse and you will find a lot of people criticizing the government. That is why I don't like to sit around with people like that. Many times they have no Christian conscience. They have conscience only for the Ten Commandments but in the areas of respecting the anointing and the authority they have no conscience. If you were to walk with God and walk in His perfect will you avoid things like that. That is the first area what I call a sense of smiting in your heart.

2. The Inward Sensation of Grief

The next area is found in Ephesians 4:30, **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. The word grieve is the word *lupeo*, which has a root word meaning sorrow. It has been translated as sadness. Again this is the experience that you will have only as you are draw near the line and cross the line. It's different from that slap. It is a sense of condemnation. Condemnation to many people is like sensing the anger of God against something that is done. But here it's sensing a genuine grief, a sadness and sorrow. Here is experiencing a sorrow. It is almost like the experience of sadness, except that there is something much deeper not in the physical realm but in the spiritual realm. It can even bring tears to your eyes. As you pray the tears come but it's from something inside not from something outside. And sometimes people are grieving the Holy Spirit without knowing it. Every time they come near to God and they pray sometimes they cry because they are grieving the Spirit and they don't know it. If we are touched by God's presence, that is different. When our spirits are praying and weeping for something we don't know, it may indicate that we have been grieving God.

I do know that when we go into intercession we can experience groaning in the Spirit. The reason we experience groaning is because we are taking upon ourselves the sorrow of people that have been grieving the Spirit. If the whole world is perfect there will be no such thing as groaning in the Spirit. In heaven there is no more groaning in the Spirit.

Rom. 8:22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now. It's the creation that is imperfect that has the groaning. Then Paul says in verse 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. If the whole world and every human being and every creature were to be doing God's will today when you go into intercession there will be no possibility of groaning. Groaning is what I call taking upon yourself some pain or sorrow of others. And someone going against God causes that sorrow and you are praying it through for

that person. A whole community can be going against God. A whole nation can be grieving God because of compromise. And you could feel the burden of the nation and you are praying and groaning. It's the same sensation of sorrow and grief. It's a grief that is in line with the stress.

So in the second sensation that takes place in the book of Ephesians chapter 4:29 Let no evil talk come out of your mouth, but only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Now the first sensation is caused through sensitiveness to the anointing and authority that God has placed in the church or in the world. The second one is related to our response to the Word of God that we know and to the Word of God that we are hearing. Now the first has to do with the anointing and authority that God has placed. The second sensation has to do with how you respond to the Word of God especially the word of the Holy Spirit. See the Holy Spirit is grieved every time you compromise God's Word. The grieving of the Holy Spirit has to do with all the Ten Commandments and all of God's Word.

People who are not sensitive to the Holy Spirit would sense the grief in an opposite form. All anger is based on grief. Angry people are hurt people. If you have a problem with anger in your life, it is because a lot of grief has been locked into your subconscious. Anger is the opposite reaction that is caused by grief. A grieved people become an angry people. When we are grieved we will act in two ways: either an explosion that is anger or implosion that is depression. But the root is the same. If ever you feel angry it's because you have been grieved. When we are grieved we must learn how to channel our grief correctly. In a one to one situation the best way when you have been grieved is go to the person who grieved you and say, "Look I am hurt. Lets stop this nonsense." Then the next thing is to pray to the Lord. But if you keep the grief, it will come out somewhere along the line. Energy needs to be released. Grief is a form of hurt and twisted energy that needs to be released somewhere along the line.

Now grieving the Holy Spirit relates to the Word of God. It relates to both the rhema and the logos in your life. Something that God has told you personally that nobody knows. That is God's personal word for you that you went against and you grieve the Holy Spirit. Or the written Word of God that you went against and you grieve the Holy Spirit. The only way not to grieve the Holy Spirit is walk uncompromisingly in God's Word. Anyone on this earth who walk against God's Word is right now grieving the Holy Spirit. No compromise for that. Many in the world are doing that. That is why there are so much intercessions and it is necessary to groan. We are taking the sorrow that has been caused by sinners and praying for them.

Let me point to the example of people who grieve the Holy Spirit but react in two different ways. In Acts 2 Peter was preaching a sermon in verse 37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" Now I want to point very clearly that these people have been going against God. Let me point to Peter's sermon and analyze that. In verse 36

Let the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified. They were pronounced guilty of the crucifixion of Jesus. They were cut in their hearts but they responded correctly.

Sensitivity to the Word of God makes us sensitive to the grieving of the Spirit. They were grieving the Holy Spirit without knowing it. When the Word of God came it cut them. They could react in two ways, anger or repentance. Here they repented and said, "What shall we do?"

Lets look at Acts 3 after the healing of the lame man. In Peter's sermon he makes it very personal to the Jews. He put the responsibility on all the Jews. See the whole Jewish nation had grieved God. Now through the preaching of the Word it was been made known to them what they were guilty of. In Acts 3:14 But you denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you. In verse 17, Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. They grieved the Spirit in ignorance. A lot of people are grieving the Holy Spirit ignorantly. Ignorance is no plea. We grieve the Holy Spirit every time we go against the Word of God, both the rhema word and the logos word. These people responded correctly and they repented. And the cut was removed when they repented; they were healed and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Let me point to a group who were grieving the Holy Spirit all the time. And they didn't realize it and they reacted differently. In Acts 7 we see the preaching of Stephen. In verse 51 he tells these people and these people were the Sanhedrin council, the high priest and all those people who were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. He told them right to the point from the Word of God. Verse 54 the same thing took place like in Acts 2. Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. The Word pierces but they reacted differently.

They reacted in anger. And they took stones and killed Stephen. You can kill a man but you can not kill what the man stand for. It will haunt you the rest of your life. You can remove somebody, you can run down somebody, you can destroy a person, but you can not destroy what that person stands for. It will haunt the rest of your life especially if that person stands for the Word of God. They killed Stephen but they can not kill their own conscience. The rest of their lives their conscience will trouble them. The only to escape is to kill themselves. But even then there is no escape because in eternal life their conscience will disturb them. Look there is no escape for grieving the Spirit. Only the blood of Jesus is available for us and a lot of people are grieving the Holy Spirit and making Him angry. But they don't sense it as they grieve the Spirit.

Such people who grieve the Holy Spirit, for no rhyme or reason, they get angry at the Charismatics, they get angry at the prophetic move and they get angry at the faith message. You know where the anger is coming? It is coming from grieving the Spirit. You go throughout the Christian world you find a lot of people getting angry at the move of God. Why should they get angry? Any normal reasonable person shouldn't get angry with Jesus for healing on a Sabbath day. The people are being helped. Any normal human being would not get angry with sick people who are being healed. Yet

there are people who do get angry. Their anger is an opposite reaction to the grief of the Spirit. They are grieving the Spirit and sensing it as anger.

It's important to know that when you cross the line and grieve the Spirit, you should experience it as sorrow. Pent up sorrow produces pent up anger. Those who are soft and sensitive to the Lord the grieving produces a deep sorrow that causes you to turn to God to travail to pray and cry to the Lord. When king David crossed the line and violated the Word of God by falling into the sin of adultery, for three days he didn't eat anything because he knew he had grieved God's heart. II Sam. 12:16 David therefore besought God for the child; and fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the ground. And the elders of his house stood beside him, to raise him from the ground; but he would not, nor did he eat food with them. On the seventh day the child died.

Those who are sensitive to God when you are grieving the Holy Spirit this is your experience: sorrow, loss of appetite and loss of sleep. When you have crossed the line and you are grieving the Spirit these are your sensations. When you made a wrong decision, a dumb decision that is not in line with the Word of God and you compromise the principles of the Holy Spirit, you will lose your sleep. You know why out there in the world people are suffering from insomnia? They keep moving out of God's will. At first they experience the anger then more and more they step further and further away from God. They get sickness, they get insomnia, then they survive by all kind of pills and drugs. People who suffer from insomnia need to get back to God. There is no other cure. That is grief related to the violating of God's Word in your life. When you cross the boundary that's when the grief starts.

3. The Inward Sensation of Quenching

Quenching is a different form. In I Thess 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit. The word quench is from the Greek word sbennumi, which means to extinguish a fire. It's like something that is coming up and you extinguished it. I would describe it as a loss of zeal. And it is not only a loss of zeal. When you lose your zeal you try to remove zeal from other people's lives. Quenching the Spirit is crossing the line again and it relates to the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. A lot of people don't differentiate between grieving and quenching. There are ways that we distinguish grieving from quenching. Grieving is when you are supposed to be doing something and you don't do it. You do something opposite or you do the wrong thing. Quenching is when you are supposed to do it and you don't do it at all. Grieving is when you do the wrong thing. Quenching is when you just stop it. You don't do it at all. You just push down the gifting of the Spirit. It's related to the gifting of the Holy Spirit in your life. Or maybe we do not allow the Holy Spirit to move the way He wants in a meeting. We quenched the Spirit.

In order to encourage people we need to give room for a little bit of liberty. If you are too tightly regimented and tightly controlled because you want perfection you end up with no action. You have to give room for a little mistake here and there to encourage participation. If you want perfection you won't get any action at all. For example you notice that in an altar call always it takes the first person to come up before everybody come up. People need encouragement to make the first move; when nobody has made a move it is not easy for the rest to follow.

And we must be careful not to quench the Holy Spirit or the gifting of God. How do we quench the Holy Spirit? For example if God is telling somebody to do something and you give your counsel not to do it, you have just quenched the Spirit. Nobody begins to operate the gift perfectly. Our heart could be perfect and right but our method may not be perfect. We have to give a little bit of room for mistakes otherwise you frighten people away.

For example you are training to be a speaker. If I said that you must speak perfectly and you must not make any error in theology, you may not want to speak any more. But if I give you room and say since this is your first time it's O.K, you will feel encouraged. We need to be people to encourage the Spirit in people's lives. Maybe God is telling them to do something and you start giving them all the negative advice, you have quenched the Holy Spirit. I am amazed at people's lack of sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

For example a young person wants to go into full time ministry. Just because this person is very young every counsel this would-be minister receives from others is based on head knowledge. When someone is studying a secular course and halfway through the course he or she receives a call from God, in the natural most people would advise him or her to complete the course first. But we must be sensitive to the working of God in people's lives. I am surprised that in one particular case a person gave counsel to the one receiving the call from God not to go into the ministry without even considering what that person is saying. This person came to me and I said to him, "Go straight in for I discern this calling is from God," and that person is succeeding now in the full time ministry. If he had listened to the negative advice, he may never have gone into the ministry God has for him.

In my own personal life God called me at the age of seventeen. I went to the seminary and I was among the youngest at eighteen plus. I was considered underage but the seminary officials made me a special case. Because I was the youngest I had a probation period of one year and I fulfilled it and then they let me continue. When I look back now I realize one thing. My mind and my spirit were developing at that time. If I had gone into the university straight away I would never get back to what God had in store for me. I know a lot of Christian parents whose children are called to the ministry but who do not allow their children to go to the ministry. The kingdom of God is the highest vocation. Some people may get upset when I share my heart about the important things of God. That's why God calls a preacher, to preach, to warn, to counsel.

One day when you stand before God on Judgment Day, none of your children's university degrees, even the best university degrees will stand for anything. Some of you may lose your children out there in the world especially if God has called them. Your children may bring you worldly and materialistic wealth; you would have all the money you want, you will have all the fame you want, but you are living in spiritual poverty. I would rather have spiritual prosperity and have a moderate lifestyle than all the luxuries in the world. Maybe some of your children could have the same kind of personality like mine. If they pursue the things of this world for five years you may never get them back into God. So Christian parents don't ever stand against your children going into the ministry. I know that you are considering things like food, clothing and shelter. I am a parent too. That's all we ever think about. When will you ever break free from the bonds of this physical world and realize that the spiritual

world is more important? If one of your parents produces a son like Sadhu Sundar Singh who may not even have a property to his name but who may be such a spiritual man of God walking up and down that change the world, I would think that the best legacy you could leave behind for the kingdom of God. Let's not quench the Holy Spirit of God.

At the same time I don't mean for the parents to push their children into the fulltime ministry when they are not called. No, we need all the people out there in the secular world. But people are called to different things. Those who are in the ministry also should not push your children into the ministry just because you are a minister. Let your children find their own calling and choice of life. We need a balance in that but what I am against is people who don't even pray. People who don't even seek God and they said, "No," without even considering whether it is from God or not. Then we may end up quenching the Spirit without knowing it.

So that is the area of quenching the Spirit. It relates to the gift of God in our life. If you have a gift of the Spirit already operating in your life and if you don't yield to the Spirit of God every time it manifest, God is only going to tolerate it for a certain time. You have a prophecy and you hold back, when you cross that certain time you quench the Spirit. If God has been telling you to go for mission in certain area and you put it aside, you will only have a certain period of time. When you cross that period of time, you have entered into the quenching of the Holy Spirit.

Now what does the quenching of the Spirit involve?

I Thessalonians 5:19-20 Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophecies. You develop an attitude. People who quench the Spirit, what are they like? They despise spiritual things. They despise spiritual methods. When they hear something that is of God and something that will work they say "ha". These are the people who are quenching the Spirit. It is a cynical attitude. It's an attitude that causes you to look down at the things of the Spirit. The feeling is the feeling of despising. An arrogant, cynical, critical spirit shows forth in a person who is quenching the Spirit. Whenever anything spiritual comes they say "ha". And they look down and despise. That's the people who have quenched the Spirit and don't know it and that's how they react. Every time we find ourselves saying "ha" to the move of God we have just quenched the Holy Spirit. When you look down at spiritual things; when you look down at the ministry; when you look down at spiritual ways, you have quenched the Holy Spirit. When you put natural ways above spiritual ways you are quenching the Holy Spirit. And that's where we have to understand where the line is drawn and not quench the Holy Spirit.

If you hang around with people who quench the Spirit you will lose your zeal in a few months. And God wants you to be either hot or cold. He wants you to be full of zeal. Why do a lot of people lose their fire? They hang around people who quench the Spirit. You want to do something they will tell you not to get too emotional. You hang around for some time you will be as dry as them. You quench your Spirit. What are the other signs for quenching the Spirit? Dryness, spiritually you become dry. All Christians have their wilderness. I don't believe in remaining in the wilderness; I believe in living by the rivers of living waters. Psalms 23 doesn't promise any desert. The Lord is my Shepherd He leads me besides the Sahara Desert. No, He leads me besides still waters, besides green pastures. There is no promise of any desert or

wilderness. Then why do Christians experience periods of dryness? It is because during those periods they have not move on into something that God is showing them. When you quench the Spirit you experience dryness. If you are sensitive to dryness there are two ways you can react to it. Like grieving in the Spirit you can react in two ways. You can react in anger or you could react in repentance. When you quench the Spirit you can react by becoming a cynic. You become cynical about anything. Or you can react by becoming more hungry and thirsty for God because you are experiencing dryness. And that dryness drives you to all the prayer meetings you can find in order to fill the spiritual thirst. That's the positive reaction. You realize your dryness. That is where we make sure we don't cross the line.

4. The Inward Sensation of Warmness

Let me speak of some positive side now. In the book of Luke chapter 24:32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the scriptures?" This is when they were with Jesus and they were talking with Jesus. It's the words did not our hearts burn within us. The Greek word is the word burning. The first three I mention being smote, grieving and quenching is on the wrong side. On the positive side when something is right and you move into the right place and the right thing, it's like a warm feeling that goes all over your being. A sense like an anointing flows through you. And some times when you move into the right place and do the right thing, and when you step into that it looks like that warm feeling all over your being. I sense it as a real burning. And I know this is of God. It's like some thing is drawing the fire out of me and I know that's God. That warmness is a sensitive feeling to His presence that God is present in what we are doing. You see they were with Jesus and they didn't know it was Jesus. But it was something in them that made them knew that God was speaking through this stranger. As we draw near the line and as you walk into that line you sense His presence.

How do you sense His presence? We don't always sense His presence by the anointing upon.

You could always sense His presence by the warming within. Your heart warms up towards Him. And every time you are doing something like buying a house or a car, or launching a new business or a ministry and you are stepping out in faith, can you sense that warming on your inside? When there is this warming on your inside you know this is God. I didn't say that all the circumstances would work perfectly because you still need faith but you know this is God and you just walk into that which is God. Moses pleaded with God that His presence should go with him. Like Moses, I would say as long as His presence goes with me and God's angels go with me and I could sense their presence, that's it, I would say, "Let's go." You don't consider anything else. You consider whether God is in it. And when God is in it, go. That is a real physical warming. A thermometer can not detect it but that's the sensation. When I had sensation like that I will go 100 percent for those things. All of us will have a measure of that. The positive side is what I call a warming of the heart. It's related to the presence of God.

5. The Inward Sensation of Sweetness

There is another sensation in Acts 15:28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us. That sensation of goodness has to do with fellowship and harmony. All these are

separate sensations. You sense the warming without sensing the goodness. Now there is a sensation of goodness. You know that it is good. As you analyze Acts 15 it was a decision that harmonizes. There was an initial argument and debate. But they tread on what they felt was a good thing. It was the right thing and a good thing. That's a different sensation altogether. Not the warming this is a sense of goodness, good feeling I can put it this way. It's a sense like it's a good feeling on your inside. You feel good when you feel the goodness of God. How does the goodness of God feel like to David? David says it is like honey in the rock.

Let me describe it a bit more so that I can be more subjective. It is like sweetness. The other is like a warming and this is like sweetness. You feel sweetness in your spirit. There is sweetness about things that are done. And that has to do with working with the body of Christ, working with relationship, working with people. It is related with fellowship and harmony with people. Some people sense a warming in their heart and they hurt everybody else. But there is sweetness about the things of God and you know this is the sweet way to do some things. And it's a different sensation. If you walk with this sweetness and this goodness of God it will guide you to walk in harmony with people.

A lot of people are right but they are wrong in their methods. For example you could have a big convention and you are an usher there. The people are not lining up properly. You shout like a military commander to them, "Get into line or else." You are right and they are wrong. But you are not sweet. See being right and being sweet is different thing. At the same time there is a false way of being sweet. Some people are wrong and they seal their mouths about it, never mind, just compromise. That is wrong. I am not talking about natural thing I am talking about spiritual sense of sweetness. When you flow along with that God will take care of the rest.

The moment they made a decision in Acts 15 they alienated some people. The bible tells us in Acts 15 that when the word was circulated throughout all the churches in verse 31 When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Those who were discouraged because there was no decision made become encouraged. Those who have been playing the wrong game doing the wrong thing of course they will be discouraged. And when you flow with God there is a sense of goodness about the whole matter. That's the sense of goodness that we have.

Last one as we close in Acts chapter 18:19 And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself went into the synagogue and argued with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined; but on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God will." As we explore the return to Ephesus in Acts 19:1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" That was the second time Paul came to Ephesus. And that was where he established the great work and the great church of Ephesus that became a mighty lighthouse in all the regions about.

How was Paul's sensation when he moved into all these things? Let's look at some of his personal statement in the book of II Cor. 11:27-28 In toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches.

You see the word my anxiety for all the churches. Now this is not worry. The New King James translated it as concerned. And that's the kind of sensation that is like a caring, a loving sensation. A loving feeling. We have the warming, we have the goodness, which is the sweetness, and then we have the concern, a sense of care, a sense of concern and a sense of love. And it comes basically based on love. In this world it is not possible to relate to a million people closely. But if every one of us who have our own circle of friends and relationship would be faithful to show the love of God to whatever circle of relationship that you have, the world would be a better place. And God in His divine economy has placed in each one of us in our heart a kind of concern not the type that worry you but a concern that comes and occupies you where you sense a loving tender care for one another. That is also a sensation of the Spirit. And that sensation can lead you to many areas like it led Paul into Ephesus.

There have been people who have been led by that way. In other words when we say go with the flow it means go where the things that concern you most and which flows smoothest along. And in every one of our hearts the Spirit will never lead you until you learn how to walk in love. Part of the leading of the Spirit is learning to yield to this love in our heart. When you yield to the concern and care in your life by reaching out to somebody who is hurt and who needs the love and you are the instrument whom God chose to anoint with the love to go and care for that person and you respond you will be rewarded. The Spirit of God is leading you into that. There is a sense of care, a sense of concern. Sometimes that concern can cause you to make an international call that costs you some money. Sometimes that concern can make you take a whole trip all the way to your hometown. Maybe the burden for somebody has been laid on your heart.

How does God lead us? Remember God can lead you in many methods. God can place in your life a concern. Suddenly for no apparent reason you are concerned about your parents. Every time you pray the concern comes. Not really a worry but a care and when you think about it you have a loving thought towards them. You seem to care about them very much. That may be the Holy Spirit working on your life to flow along with that concern and when you go there you find that you are needed there.

It can be the same for an organization. Maybe suddenly you got concerned for an organization. Maybe God is speaking to you to do something. Maybe a concern about another country or another town or another church somewhere. Maybe God is speaking to you to do some caring work. And we need to flow with God. Some times that concern comes before you cross the line and some times it happens as you crossed into the line. In other words you may shake hands and meet ten people. Out of the ten people you are drawn to care for one person that you meet. It suddenly occupies your time and your mind. It could be God speaking to you to do some thing. You may not have the warm feeling or you may not have the feeling of concern but some times they all flow together. But flow along with that flow of love. It's related to the love of God.

Next week we will cover sensations that come before you reach the line. The reason we are sharing this is to give you as practical as possible the sensations that some of us are receiving that our earlier series have not been enough for you to learn to be led by God.

5. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - PART ONE

This morning we want to look at some of the things that go on in our spirit man that provide a very complete guidance that God has for our lives. Thank God that He has given us a guidance system that will keep us and establish us in the will of God.

Turn to Galatians 5:16 onwards. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.

But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are plain:

immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; against such there is no law.

We have seldom looked at this passage and consider it to be part of God's guidance system. But obviously from what Paul wrote in verse 18 if you are led by the Spirit, he is in the context of talking about guidance and the leading of the Holy Spirit in our life to help us to fulfill God's perfect will.

Notice that last week we shared on certain sensations in God's inward guidance system. The last one we talked about was concern or a kind of caring, which is related to agape love. I do know that God speaks to us through a still small voice, through the human spirit, through the voice of the Holy Spirit, through prophecy, dreams and visions. But there are sensations that God has placed in our spirits since we were born again that enable us to sense rightness and wrongness of certain things in our lives. This sensation of right and wrong besides all the inward witness sensations revolve around the fruit of the Spirit. And it's the fruit of the Spirit that will be the major confirmation and guidance system as whether something is right or wrong.

Jesus did say in the Sermon on the Mount that by their fruit you shall know them. We could interpret it in two ways. That fruit implies the converts of one's ministry and the quality of the converts' lives. We could also look at fruit in the lives of those who minister themselves. I believe that it refers to both. Light produces light. It's God ordained pattern. In Genesis every animal produces after its kind. It's a spiritual law also that every thing produces after its kind. And we need to measure up to God's quality control. There must be a standard of God's quality control. And quality control is not based on power or the gifts of the Spirit because these are gifts or manifestations. But quality control is based on the fruit of the Spirit.

The church in Corinth has manifestations but they didn't have the fruit. Now we don't want to just have the fruit and have none of the gifts of manifestation. We need to have every thing. Sine we are talking about God's guidance we want to talk about how the fruit of the Spirit works in our lives and leads us. Don't consider the fruit of the Spirit to be just character like having the character of Jesus. But if you think about the word character very carefully, character is a state of being which influences every

decision you make. If a brother has an evil character, then that characteristic of evil bend in his mind or soul will influence every other decision - the plotting, the cruelty, and all the evil that he could think or dream of. But the good man whose character is good, the goodness of his character influences every decision that he makes in his life. Therefore even character is related to decision-making.

But there is some thing wonderful about the fruit of the Spirit. It is at the same time the fruit of our human spirit and the fruit of the Holy Spirit; it is God in us. It is Christ in us. The good news is also that the source of the fruit is not in us but is in the Holy Spirit in God. But the manifestation or the experience of the fruit is on our inside. There is a continual flow. Which means that the fruit of the Spirit can be considered as manifestation of Christ in us. And to confirm that in Gal. 5 he says in verse 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passion and desires. Remember this is the book of Galatians. Inside the book of Galatians is one scripture which is very powerful in Gal. 2:20 It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.

And as you read the book of Galatians Paul was trying to teach them how Christ lives in us. We know that verse Its no longer I that lived but Christ that lives in me. We know that theologically. But how does happen experientially? Paul speaks about those things in Galatians 5 and he hasn't changed his main subject. How does Christ lives in us? There is Christ in us. He is in all of us. He is omnipresence. He is in us living through us. If we make our own decision; if we make our own way and will by our own strength we will make mistakes. No matter how long you have been in Christ 30, 40, 50 years no matter how old or how young we are we all recognize one fact we want to know Christ in each other. And we want to see Christ in each other. And we want to allow Christ to live through us because every single one of us in ourselves minus Jesus is a horror. There is none righteous; there is none good in themselves. Minus Jesus we are all horrors. Thank God for Jesus.

So Christ lives in us. How does that take place and what is the experience of that? Paul is talking about the leading of the Spirit. How to be led by this Christ in us? Everything you do you could sense Christ in you responding. There is a living being that leads you in all your decision-making. The fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control summarizes that. All these fruit of the Spirit exactly nine of them can be divided into three groups.

I am going to link it up in a different way. We all know the gifts of the Spirit. They are word of wisdom, word of knowledge, discerning of spirit, which is a group by themselves called the revelation gifts. Then we have the gift of faith, the working of miracles, and the gift of healing, which are known as the power gifts. Then we have the gift of prophecy, the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues, which are known as vocal gifts.

We could have summarized in a visual way. That the first group called the revelation group may be represented by the eyes to see or reveal some thing. The hands that do some things may represent the power gifts. The mouth that says some things may represent the vocal gifts.

Now these groupings of the fruit of the Spirit are also a cluster by themselves. You always find love, joy and peace together. Every time you see peace, you see love, you see joy. They are always working in triplets.

And the other triplet is longsuffering, kindness and goodness. Whenever you see longsuffering you see kindness and you see goodness. Cross reference to the book of Exodus talking about God's character. When God revealed Himself to Moses He made a declaration of His own character. In chapter 34:6 The Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, now those are the two key characters, then you find, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth.

We see the triplet here: graciousness is tied to kindness, longsuffering and abounding in goodness. We find the triplet inside the character of God. You can not long suffer unless inherently you are good. You don't believe it go to some evil persons and disturb them, irritate them and see whether they long suffer. They will not, they will have the opposite, short suffering. They can't suffer long because inherently they are evil and they get irritated easily. Sometimes you read in the newspapers that a gangster shoots another person for staring at him. There has to be goodness in a person in order to withstand suffering and there has to be kindness. If there is no kindness in you, you will react harshly. If you are not gracious and kind you repay evil for evil. It's so easy to repay evil for evil. Somebody punch you, you punch back. It's so easy to do that if there is no goodness. So the three are together. That is long-suffering, kindness which actually means a kind of graciousness, and goodness. So they are in the second group.

The third group faithfulness, gentleness, which actually means meekness and then self-control. Faithfulness, gentleness and self-control are in a group by themselves. Faithfulness is different from faith although it's related from the same root word. Faithfulness talks about a steadiness in character and self-control is the same, meekness is the same. That whatever is done there is faithfulness, there is self-control and there is meekness or gentleness. All you have to do is find faithful people in the bible and you see this quality of self-control and meekness. Joshua was faithful to Moses. You find the quality of self-control and you find the quality of meekness in his life. Whenever someone has been faithful for a long time they develop meekness and they develop self-control.

Faithfulness is onto something else, you are faithful to a person, you are faithful to an organization and you are faithful to a call. You can't say that a person has been faithful if they have only been there for one month. See faithfulness has a time span. Self-control also has a time span. Some people have no control over food. The only time they fast is between breakfast and lunch; and between lunch and dinner. Self-control is definitely not measured in a few minutes. It has a time measurement. It is the same with meekness. The meek shall inherit the earth. It is not measured in a short period. It's measured in time. In the third group of triplets you find a common denominator there, time.

Paul is talking about walking in the Spirit. He introduces the subject in Gal 5:16 walk in the Spirit. Then he concludes it again in Gal 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. So he is teaching them to live in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit. He is teaching them how to keep their lives governed by the Spirit. Guidance from

God is walking in the Spirit. Time is a key denominator that ties the last three together.

How we are going to approach the subject is by taking one more Old Testament passage to compare and understand in much greater detail. Isa. 40:28-31 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary, His understanding is unsearchable, He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might He increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

There are four positions mentioned here. Waiting, mounting up their wings, running and walking. I like to classify the four positions into three sections. Because flying is definitely different from running and walking, I will put it as one position. Waiting which is more or less like a lack of movement is one cluster by itself. Walking and running indicates movement and I will put these two together. When it comes to movement there are two gears. Gear No. 1 is walking. Gear No. 2 is running. There are two gears for movement, there is one gear for flying, there is one gear for waiting. There are three clusters together.

I like to tie that to the fruit of the Spirit, which has three clusters and show forth how God leads us to the fruit of the Spirit. First of all, lets look at the book of Gal. 5:22 love, joy and peace. Love joy and peace is related to the heights, to flying to the area of God's presence in our lives.

Imagine looking at the center of the cross where the heart is. From the center of the cross there is only one arrow pointing upwards, there is one arrow pointing downwards, but there are two horizontal lines one to the right and one to the left. I would take the two horizontal lines to represent walking and running. The other vertical line upwards points to flying and the one that is downwards points to the feet which is standing, waiting. There is only one up and one down, but there are two sideways left and right.

We like to illustrate the guidance that we receive from God using the picture of the cross. Love, joy, and peace talk about our vertical relationship with God. Whenever God leads you and guides you and His presence comes into your life where you know that it is God you will always sense on your inside love, joy, and peace. They are the confirmation that heaven has approved of whatever you are thinking about. Some times you are thinking about the move or decision that you want to make - that's all and the love, joy and peace come into your heart. Or you are postulating to move into a certain direction and love, joy and peace come. They are the signs of heaven's approval. We know how much we always want the approval of God. Check in your spirit whether there is experience of love, joy and peace are abundantly showered forth. There are degrees of that love, joy and peace. The greater it is the greater the approval. It can only come as we pray and discern God's will over every matter.

Lets look at the book of Ephesians 3:16 talking about the working of God in our inner man. 16 That according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18

may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Notice it's the presence of God in us. Notice in verse 17 it's Christ in us. And then it's the presence of God in verse 19 in us. And the word love is mentioned, both in verse 17 and verse 19. Our spirit man is mentioned in verse 16 it's the working of God's love in our life. Love, joy and peace relates together. When you have love, joy and peace are there as well. I know some times people have peace but their joy is not overflowing. There are degrees of love, degrees of joy and degrees of peace. There is love so great that is beyond comprehension.

Have notice another factor here how he links up to the revelation gifts. The link is found in verse 17 and 18. When you are rooted and grounded in love you are able to comprehend with all the saints. So that links to revelation gifts. The first group of the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy and peace is linked up to the revelation gifts. Whenever love grow, joy grow, peace grows, and we know peace can increase according to II Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus the Lord. Love, joy, peace are all related to the presence of God working in our lives pouring forth His approval and you could sense peace in your heart. Peace has been a guidance system in our relationship with God.

The whole book of Philippians speaks about love, joy and peace as God's guidance system in the church. The moment Paul wrote the book of Philippians, his heart seems to be overflowing with joy. Anyone who studies the book of Philippians will notice that it's the book of joy. Paul speaks about his joy even while he was in prison. It tells us here in chapter 1:9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment. Notice that the abounding of love and the abounding of discernment are proportionally tied together. Again you have a tie between the first cluster of the fruit of the Spirit and the first cluster of the gift of the Spirit. The revelation gifts are tied up to what I call the flying fruit.

Since we tied it to the book of Isaiah 40 they have to do with your vertical relationship mounting up with wings like an eagle. Eagles can soar to different heights. Some times they can soar to great heights because the upward flow of hot air from the ground lifts them higher. Eagles glide more than fly. So mounting up the wings is to set your wings to position. You seldom see an eagle flapping its wings. It holds its wing steady. Some believers think that they are humming birds all the time trying to be led by the Spirit. That's not it. God gives the eagles to fly on the winds, which is caused by the hot rising air from the ground. That's why you seldom see an eagle at night. But in the daytime when the sun heats up the earth there is a current of air (that is invisible to human eyes) that rises up in little circular patterns upwards to the atmosphere. The eagles sense this rising air that and they go from one thermal flow to another. Then they will hook on to another thermal flow and it will carry them upwards. It's just like those experienced gliders. They learn to look to the wind in order to gain height.

Now it says mount with wings like eagle. All the eagle does is set its wings in the right position. It's almost like sailing a boat. It depends on what direction you want the boat to go and how fast you want the boat to go and you set the sail accordingly. If you set the sail in the full position where it carries the full velocity of the wind it will

go very fast. But if you slide it at an angle the boat may turn. Or you put less sail up there it catches less wind and it goes slower. That's like the mounting of the wings of an eagle. Set in position to the rising current. You can mount your wings all you want but if there is no thermal air you can't soar like an eagle. As we look at God's guidance system even in the operation of love, joy and peace there is a part that God plays and there is a part that we play.

Lets look at Philippians chapter one as Paul wrote in verse 8 For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. The word affection is the word splachna a deep affection of love, care and concern. It was a tangible feeling Paul had. Not in his emotions but in his spirit man. And that's a sensation of love that he is speaking about here.

As we move onwards in the book of Philippians by chapter four in verse 7 it says that And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. So there is a peace of God that guards, that garrisons, that sets your heart and mind. And that is the peace of God.

Then you have joy in verse 4. Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice. Paul here was in prison rejoicing in the Lord. Learn how to have joy in the things that God has asked you to do. Looking at an eagle there is first the place or the perch where the eagle launches itself. Eagles make their nest high up so that they can start on an air current. So that's the nest of the eagle. The eagle's nest is represented by love. It's our home and resting place in our spirit. The only resting place of your spirit is in heaven. You don't have to wait until you go home to be with the Lord to have that. Now you can be seated in heavenly places in Christ and experience all the love of Jesus, all the love of God, and it's a position like a nest. You nestle in God in His love.

Peace is like the mounting of the wings. It sets your heart and your mind. Notice what peace does, it guards your heart and your mind. So it operates together with love. It guards, protects, seals off against all other movements. Your wings are mounted; they shall mount up with wings like the eagle. Joy is like the thermal air that the eagles depend on. We learn to rejoice in the Lord. We learn joy unspeakable and joy comes. In the Old Testament prophecies, the night of sorrow is followed by the morning of joy. Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. The joy refers to the sensitivity to the air current that is there. Love is your nest, peace is your wings and joy is your air current as you fly off into the presence of God. And you discern God's will in your life.

There are different degrees of love. Whenever you make a decision in God you sense the love of God flowing and His stamp of approval on you. The more time you spend with God the stronger the measure of love that you sense. And you discern something that is of God, even though the circumstances may not look like it agrees with God's will in our life. There is a peace that mounts your wings and you do not turn to the left or to the right because you know where you are heading. Where everything around can be confusion yet the peace of God will keep you.

And don't lose your peace; your peace is like your wings. If it affects you it affects the angle of your flight. You may lose your flight. Keep your peace, keep your love and keep your joy. Joy comes as you begin to walk in love, you are moved by love,

you are walking in that peace and as you walk more and more deeper into the will of God your joy is greater and greater because you are walking into the right air current. I have never seen it happen nor have I ever read it before where an eagle is soaring on an air current and then it makes a mistake and try to lock onto another air current and he misses and there is no air current and he drops down. It has never happened but sometimes believers do that. Now the greater the thermal air current for you to fly on, the greater the joy you will experience. And when you are doing the right thing the joy increases. It started with love, it went into peace and it move into joy and you know this is it. A joy unspeakable and full of glory. The joy of the Lord is your strength. He will give you strength to do all that He wants you to do. So that's God guidance system in love, joy and peace in our lives.

Lets turn to the book of Acts 16. Do you remember the place where Paul first had his breakthrough in his second missionary journey? His first missionary journey was successful but not a real breakthrough yet. Some times you have a success but not real breakthrough. His breakthrough came when he met the Philippians. The Philippians were his main partners in the ministry throughout his entire life. He told the Philippians in Philippians chapter four that from the very first time he shared the gospel with them until now he is in prison as he wrote to the Philippians, the Philippians have always stood with him. They have always been with him. Phil 4:

15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only.

And there is some thing interesting that we can see implied by the word. That is Paul experienced joy that he never had anywhere else until he enters Philippi. See he tried to go in Acts 16 in verse 6 And they went through the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them. So passing by Mysia they went down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; a man of Macedonia was standing beseeching him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

It is not mentioned here directly but possibly what happened was that Paul as he began to take that boat to the capital of Macedonia, which is Philippi, he experienced that joy that he never had before. I mean he had joy but this is greater. And as he did the work there he had persecution. He was put in prison when he cast out a demon. We know from how they react and what they do that joy was in their life.

In verse 25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. No matter what happened Satan could try to put them in prison, persecute them, make life miserable for them but they never lost their song. When you never lose your song you are walking in God's will. That's the first set of God's guidance flying.

The second set in the book of Galatians 5:22 long suffering, kindness and goodness, three triplets by themselves. The second set of triplets is related to the second set of the gift of the Spirit, which is the power gifts. I would like to find verses that relate it before we continue next week. In the book of Romans 15:18-19 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me, again he

acknowledged that Christ in him working the things, to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Take note mighty signs and wonders.

Now look over at the book of II Corinthians chapter 12. And it tells you how the signs and wonders come about. II Cor.12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds. The word mighty means “dunamis” deeds or deeds of power. The word there is with perseverance. With great difficulty in many situations he persevered through and he saw the signs and wonders of God. I know that the gifts of God and the signs and wonders of God come because of His grace. But lets not neglect the fact that the book of Acts says God gave the Spirit to those who obey Him. God must see that persistence in our life before He grants signs and wonders to come. He must see us persistently doing some things faithfully because you love Him and you love the Word of God before different types of signs follow your life and ministry.

When a man of God starts a new work that affects thousands of people over many cities and countries, they forget all the hard work that was involved. And people see the final reward. I would encourage you that persistency and long suffering is not measured in a few minutes or a few months. Some of us are praying for prosperity in our lives or other areas of blessings in our lives. And you haven’t lived your life right with God one year in a row. And even if you had lived your life one year you say, “God I lived my life one year where is my blessing now?” But there is a persistence that comes into our life that says Lord even if this takes ten years I want to be faithful;

I want to long suffer, I want to persevere. Keep on doing it month after month year after year and the times of refreshing will come. But even when the times of refreshing does not come, you are not distracted, you know what you are supposed to do and you keep doing it. Paul says that signs and wonders come with great perseverance. So the second triplets are tied up to the second triplets of the gift of the Spirit.

6. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - PART TWO

Turn to the book of Galatians 5. Very seldom do we consider this chapter that teaches us on the leading of the Spirit. When we speak about how to be led by the Spirit the first verses that come to many Christians' minds is Romans chapter 8. But here in the book of Galatians 5 Paul actually is talking about the leadings of the Holy Spirit although it has never been seen in that light. We always know the fruit of the Spirit to be related to Christian character and Christ likeness but we never see it as guidance from God. We do know that God is perfecting a people who will so walk with Him that we would know God's will intuitively. We will be able to perceive God's will. And that actually is lined up to our character.

If you have your bible that divides the verses into little paragraphs this whole section and paragraph is under "Walking in the Spirit." Again we see that it has to do with the leading of the Spirit in our life and not just in Christian's character. Of course it has to do with Christian's character but Paul was trying to make a point here on how to operate our life on this earth and how to do the right thing at the right time.

Galatians 5:16 onwards, But I say walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.

Now that sounds like Romans 7 where Paul describes the desire to do God's will and the struggle within. Then Paul gives the solution to this struggle in Romans 8 about how to be led by the Spirit. Verse 18 But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. The law means commandments. Now all the laws of the Ten Commandments and all the other commandments, the rightness and the wrongness of doing some thing are an expression of the character of God. Those things that please God and those things that displease God are revealed in the old covenant as laws. And all through nearly four thousand years of Old Testament history all the people had were rules. Finally the New Testament came and Jesus looks beyond the rules. He brings us to the source of the rules, which is the character of God. He put that source of guidance on our inside. And when that source of guidance is on our inside we will automatically walk in those commandments. We will know the Ten Commandments from inside. We will know every other commandments and the rightness and the wrongness of whatever factors they are on our inside even though we have not been told those laws. That's what Paul means by being above the laws.

And to link it up Paul did say towards the end of the book of Romans that love fulfills the law. Love is related to the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit. If we walk in agape love and not just human love we will be walking in God's will.

Lets read on Gal. 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.

You could draw another statement from what Paul is saying. Many times when we talk about how to be led by the Spirit, in many people's minds they are thinking of, "If I have more anointing, if I have a greater measure of the Holy Spirit, if I have a greater impartation of the Spirit I would be able to be led in a greater measure." Consider this as fact: the above thinking is not exclusively correct. If we grow in love we would have just as great capacity to be led by the Spirit.

Growing in love is no easy task. A lot of Christians are crying out to God, "Lord I want to hear Your voice. I want to be led by You. I would like to understand dreams, visions, the voice of the Spirit, the voice of the human spirit, the voice of the conscience. I want to be so accurate that I won't miss it any time. I want to hit the mark every time You speak to me." As they pray, "God teach me to hear Your voice," God answers their prayers by first dealing with their lives about unforgiveness, about their bad relationship with people, about people they are not living rightly with, their unloving attitude to some people. They say, "God don't talk to me about that. I want to hear Your voice." And they still struggle to hear God's voice. God was answering their prayer by teaching them to love.

When we are able to grow in love our hearts are tender and have a greater capacity to hear Him. When God's love is flowing one hundred percent in our hearts to every person, the good, the bad, the ugly, you will be in the position to hear God. As we yield to God's dealing in our life and pass the test of love, suddenly you see the benefit of it - you will be able to hear God's voice so loud and so clearly. The one reason why many people can not hear God's voice is because they are not walking in love. Because loving is no easy task. It's easy to love some but it's not easy to love everybody with God's love. However thanks be to God that as we grow in our Christian life we learn to grow to love more and more people. And the test of our Christian growth is the test of love. This year you should have more love than last year. Next year you should have more love than this year. We should be growing in love until we become a hundred percent nurtured and nourished and saturated with love because God is love. When we become perfectly loving we become like God. That's God perfect call and predestination in our life to be conformed to His image.

Gal. 5:24-26 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the spirit, let us also walk by the spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another.

In the last session on guidance from God we talked about the nine fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We have divided the nine fruit of the Spirit into three categories, just like the gifts of the Holy Spirit can be divided into three categories. What are the gifts of the Spirit? You probably know them by heart - the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, the gift of faith, working of miracles, the gift of healing, prophecy, gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues. The nine gifts are divided into three groups. The first group is the revelation gifts to reveal something. The second group is the power gifts to do something. The last group is the vocal gifts because they say something. The eyes, hands, and mouth symbolize these groups respectively.

The fruit of the Spirit is divided into three categories. Love, joy, peace is in a category by themselves. The first three are related to the revelation gifts. I say that the triplet of

love, joy and peace is one group because they bring about the revelation of God's will. When you walk in love, which produces joy and peace, God is able to reveal His will to you. Being led by the Spirit means just doing God's will. Discovering God's will in our life and doing God's will. Before we can do God's will we need to know what His will is. We know some of His will from the written Word. But we need to discover is the personal will of God in our life. We need guidance from God on how to be led by the Spirit. And we need His guidance from the day-to-day little things of life. How do we know His will? If you walk in love, joy, peace the revelation of God's will, will come to your life. They are related to the revelations gifts in a different way.

In each category of the nine gifts of the Spirit there is always one stronger than the other two. The word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits, the strongest among the three is the word of wisdom. In the power gifts the gift of faith, the working of miracles, the gift of healing, the strongest among them is the gift of faith. In the vocal gifts the gift of prophecy, tongues and interpretation of tongues, the strongest among them is prophecy. It is because prophecy equals tongues plus interpretation. That's what I mean by stronger. It can produce the other two in type.

When we look at the fruit of the Spirit love, joy and peace, love is the predominant force that must come then you have joy and peace. If love is absent joy and peace will also be absent. And joy and peace can only be produced after love comes in. So that's the first category. I summarize that section by saying that when you walk in the first three fruit of the Spirit and allow love, joy and peace to operate in your life you will have the revelation of God's will.

The second category, which we can see here using the New King James translation, is the triplet of longsuffering, kindness and goodness. Longsuffering, kindness and goodness are one group by themselves. The first mentioned in this group is longsuffering and is the strongest of the three. To be longsuffering you would have to have kindness and goodness operating. And when you have goodness and kindness it's because longsuffering is present.

And this second category of longsuffering, kindness and goodness are related together to the second pair of the gifts of the Spirit. And the second pair of the gifts of the Spirit are the power gifts. The power gifts do something. Now these three fruit of the Spirit in the second category helps you to No. 2 perform God's will. The first has to do with the revelation of God's will. Unless God reveals His will you can't do His will. Now when God reveals His will that's only the first part. Doing His will is a different matter. There are a lot of people who know what God's will is in their life. But they stop halfway because it's difficult. They don't have longsuffering. Doing God's will or the performance of God's will, takes a different set of the fruit of the Spirit operating in our life. The performing of God's will, will take the next three gifts.

Let me give some bible illustration as I have done on the first three fruit of the Spirit. The first thing that we want to look at is the book of Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Notice the word He went about doing good. The second category, which is longsuffering, kindness and goodness has to do with the performance of God's will. Now all these are senses on our inside. Love is a spiritual sense of well-being; it is the same with joy and peace. And this sensation of longsuffering and kindness and goodness is a sense on our inside. And it says doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil. Do you notice how the fruit of the Spirit goodness and the power gift of healing work together?

When Jesus Christ was in the synagogue on a Sabbath day and there was a man who had a withered hand, the Pharisees and the Sadducees were looking at Him wondering whether Jesus would heal on a Sabbath day. When Jesus saw the sick, the suffering, the infirm, there is a sense of kindness and goodness welling up in Him. It is good to heal the sick. It's not a bad thing to heal the sick. And Jesus was flowing with the flow of goodness. Remember there is a flow of goodness. The bible says in Psalms 23 towards the end: Goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your life. And Jesus Christ sensed that it was good. How did He felt at that time? He felt good about healing the sick. Now the law is filled with do's and don'ts but the law didn't actually forbid doing good in that sense. It was the Pharisees who have come up with this type of legalism. When Jesus went ahead and healed the sick they were angry. But He did a good thing. The Jesus spoke about their hypocrisy. He asked that if one of them had a donkey and it stumbled and fell into a well on a Sabbath day wouldn't they pull out the donkey? How much more worth is a human being than a donkey. That's what He was illustrating.

Now in our lives we know that there is a sense of goodness. Some of us want to be led by the Spirit but we have to learn how to be led by love and how to be led by sense of goodness in our inside. That's how God develop us. In Kenneth Hagin's little account in his book "How to be led by the Spirit" and one of those on love, he talked about how one day God spoke to him and said to give some money to this person. And he obeyed; he learned to walk in love. He gave it and then that night when he was in a meeting God did great signs and wonders. And at the end of it God said, "Thank you for obeying Me. What I am doing now is a manifestation of what you have done earlier." In our natural mind we won't link up doing good with power. But it's linked up. There are a lot of things we don't link.

We have taught in a different series on how the sins of a nation or the righteousness of a nation can either pull a nation down or bring a nation up. Deuteronomy chapter 28 indicates that the sin condition or the righteous condition of the people affect world weather. He says that if they sin the heaven will be as brass and there will be famine. Although you explain it scientifically because it's an invisible connection, there is a connection between the righteousness or sin of the people in the nation and the weather of the nation. It's in the bible. There are a lot of things that our human mind doesn't relate, which is why we need the bible. Because the bible tells us more things than science can. The bible tells us that laws that science can not touch and can not uncover because science is built around the five senses.

There is a connection between doing good and the power gifts, which we don't relate. Some of us are praying, "O God I want more power." But in their lives they are selfish. God is dealing with their lives about being more kind to people, about being more generous to people. They have been stifling the Spirit in the area of goodness

and on the other hand they want more power. I tell you they will never get it. It is linked up the fruit of the Spirit and the power gift.

The second category long suffering, kindness and goodness are related to the power gifts. The power gifts demonstrate the power of the Spirit. And the second category and the fruit of the Spirit longsuffering, kindness and goodness are linked up to the performing of God's will. The first three love, joy, peace are related to the revelation of God's will. And here it is the performance of God's will.

Lets suppose you were a singer. You really want the anointing of God to flow when you sing in a church service. God gave you a good voice and musical abilities. But you are so introvert and inward looking and busy developing your gifts that you are not reaching out to people. You are hoping that when you sing the anointing of God would come. It won't come that way. But if in your life you begin to have a place in your heart maybe for the needy, widows and the ministry and things of God, in your heart you begin to be more extrovert and more generous. You begin to care for others more than yourself. Suddenly when you sing a song there is an anointing that was not there before. How did it take place in your own personal life?

When you develop longsuffering, kindness and goodness, the anointing of power will start happening. And when you sing people's hearts that were broken gets healed. When you sing the power gift starts operating. We have never linked them together but we need to because the Word links them up together.

In science we know that something produces another thing. What do we do? We get at the source. If you want light you look for electricity because we know electricity produces light. Or if some thing goes wrong with the light we check the connection. We go right back to the source. In the same way we need to link it up together. II Cor. 12:12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you in all patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works. When you see a man of God, you will see the power gifts operating. You can copy all their methods, you can copy all the theology but if you don't have the experience or if you don't have the trials and the sufferings that they have gone through, you will never experience their power ministry. A power ministry is developed by longsuffering. You never took the opportunity to show kindness like they may have done in their secret lives. You have never yielded to the flow of goodness in your life.

If you don't develop longsuffering, kindness and goodness in your life, your actions will come out differently. Instead of releasing power, it will release death. For every word we say and every action we do flows out of the substance of our lives. And some of the things that God built into us are quality stuff. The virtue of longsuffering can not be received through laying on of hand. There is no scripture for that. The gifts of the Spirit, the power gifts can be received through impartation and association but longsuffering is developed when the hard knocks of life are present. The man of God went through trials and tribulations willingly without giving up halfway. Paul says here the signs of an apostle were accomplished among them with all perseverance. Note the word perseverance. There can be no perseverance without longsuffering.

There can be no perseverance if you don't choose to be kind. Do you know that all of us have choices to be kind or to be cruel? We can do some thing cruelly or we can do some thing kindly. But those little choices that we make to be kind or to be cruel, to

have short suffering or longsuffering will affect the power gifts operating in our lives. So do not underestimate the power behind the fruit of the Spirit. Maybe it will help us to understand the leading of the Spirit if we see the opposite of it.

In Gal. 5 we know what the opposites are that we need to avoid in order to preserve the ability to hear from God and be led by the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:22 love, joy, peace are things that we move into to receive the revelation of God's will. When we move in love, joy will come and peace will come. When you walk in love and you choose to walk in love God continues to reveal His will. A lot of people are not choosing to walk in love. Now love is a choice we make. Every one of us has our circumstances where we find it hard to love at times. But when we choose to love against our own emotions, against our own flesh, our own emotions and our flesh will end lining up with God.

The opposite will be hate, sorrow and confusion. Never ever make a decision when there are feelings of hate, sorrow or confusion. I hope that helps you to eliminate a lot of wrong guidance. When the feelings are strong in those three areas my counsel is don't make a decision. Come to the prayer meeting and pray through first until love fills your heart. We all get hurt from time to time. Most of the time we are hurt innocently by others. When we feel hurt the best thing to do is pray until the love of God comes and touches your heart. When your heart is melted in love you once again are filled with joy. And that will take some time of prayer some times and even fasting and meditation on God's Word.

I know because I have cried million of tears just in the ministry. You get hurt all the time; you get things spoken against you all the time. I know what Kathryn Kuhlman meant when she said that everyday she hears some things that actually hurt her. The bigger your ministry grows the greater the opportunity to hear negative things spoken against you. Thank God that those are small percentages. You do hear a lot of good things too. But the fact is that by the law of mathematics the percentage is based on the proportion too. I mean five percent of ten dollars may not be much. But five percent of ten million dollars is a lot. The more your ministry grows the more slander and negative things you hear. Being born with human emotions let me tell you that even if you have one million people thanking you and being grateful for your life having just one nasty critic can still give you much pain and grief.

That's what Bro. Dhinakaran (an evangelist from India whose ministries and "Jesus Calls" crusades have won millions to the Lord) went through at a certain stage in his life when he was suffering some sickness and problem. He received a very nasty letter and it affected him for months. Then on day God spoke to him and said, "Look there are millions who love you but just that one little fellow who don't like you and said all kinds of mean things about you, you get hurt." Then he began to see that he should not be allowing his emotions to get the better of him. He came out of that and got back his health.

It's important for us to understand that all of us in whatever condition we are in we would be hurt by others from time to time. If you were just born again last week, please do not expect a rose garden without thorns. Between last Sunday and this Sunday you may have got hurt once, maybe twice. You cry, "Why Jesus? Where are You?" Remember on this planet earth there are between four to five billion people. Do you think all the four to five billion people love Jesus? No, there could be

probably millions who hate Jesus. Is Jesus feeling the hurt? Of course He would because He loved the world. Let me encourage you to see that love is a choice you make. So every time when you don't feel love, joy, peace in your heart, every time you feel feelings of hate and you feel feelings of sorrow, and you felt feeling of confusion don't make a decision. Hold on; wait and pray through. But far too many decisions are made on that and we get out of God's will. It's the grace of God that helps us back.

Now let us look the second category, which is longsuffering, kindness and goodness. Lets look at the opposites to appreciate the positive. "Shortsuffering" or the opposite of longsuffering means we can only suffer very little. You say, "Yes I can suffer for Jesus."

"How long?"

"Two minutes. I can stand it if people scold me. When they start scolding I will look at my watch. When it passes two minutes one second then I will explode like Chernobyl in their faces."

"You sound like king Nebuchadnezzar who had a bad temper too."

Cruelty is the opposite of kindness. If there is no such a word, then I will have to coin one to convey the badness, the feelings of inability to control, irritation, revengefulness, and the rest of the same evil feelings. Don't do such things. Hold yourself back and don't perform or do anything until you have prayed through and moved into longsuffering, kindness and goodness. We need those things to perform and do God's will. The first set of the nine fruit of the Spirit, love, joy and peace gives us the revelation of God's will. The second set of the fruit of the Spirit, longsuffering, kindness and goodness gives us the power to do God's will. It is as you move and perform God's will that you have a sense of goodness and kindness and longsuffering. I don't know how to describe it. Spiritual things are sometimes difficult to describe. Spiritually, there is that sense of taste of goodness when you do God's will. Some of us have tasted God. Even David said, "Taste and see that the Lord is good." "He tastes like honey in the rock." There is a taste of goodness. You feel so good. You could sense that welling up from that being in you.

And that's what the apostles and the elders in the book of Acts chapter 15 when they did God's will and made the right decision. In Acts 15 there was a doctrinal debate going on and in verse 6 The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. And after there had been much debate, Peter rose and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God who knows the heart bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit just as He did to us, and He made no distinction between us and them, but cleansed their heart by faith.

Verse 12 And all the assembly kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. And after that James stood up and gave a conclusion.

And the conclusion was expressed in verse 22 Then it seemed good (pleased) to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church. Now the word pleased is that what

feelings of being pleased have. The word please is the same when we teach little children to say, "Please." Some times we say, "Please," without knowing it. What was it supposed to do? It is supposed to help a person become more willing to do whatever you ask them to do. If someone comes to you and shout loudly, "Sit here!" or say softly, "Would you like to please sit here?" which one makes you feel nicer and happy to oblige? Surely the second one. You could always tell people to do some thing or you could request people to do some thing. And they would do it willingly or unwillingly. You could be a terror or you could be a Jesus. Behind "please" conveys a sense of well-being. The noun for the word please is pleasure. When something gives you pleasure it gives you a sense of well-being and goodness on your inside. You feel good about it. That is part of the guidance system of God.

When you are seeking the will of God, first you have a revelation of God's will. The eyes see it. Now for the performance of God's will the hands are going to do it. As your hands do it and you are walking in the revelation of God's will, you may be uncertain. You know how some times we have the revelation but we are still uncertain. And some times you still go the wrong direction. The moment you start going the wrong direction you start becoming irritable, "shortsuffering" and cruel. The opposite of longsuffering, kindness and goodness start happening. You are going in the wrong direction. The further you go in that wrong direction, the more the bad turns to evil. Some times people are convinced that they are doing God's will but you could see cruelty and evil coming forth that they don't see themselves.

Long ago in church history when the church of Jesus Christ began to lose the flow of the Spirit, they started the Inquisition. The church began to condemn people to be burnt or tortured to death. Yes Christianity has killed many people and martyred them. John Wycliff who translated the bible to English was burned not by some pagan barbarians and cannibals but by the church. I am stating a fact in history. Don't you think that's cruel? What has happened was the church has long left the will of God. They were already walking away from God's will and becoming more irritable. They can not be longsuffering and tolerant with people any more. They grew in their badness and then they became evil. The Inquisition put many people to death. It was cruelty performed by the church. The so-called holy Crusades were not really holy at all. Many people died in a state of revenge, vainglory, wickedness, evil and debauchery. Jesus Himself said he that live by the sword shall die by the sword and yet the church took up the sword. It's not some thing to be proud of. It's some thing to be ashamed of. We learn from history so that we won't make the same mistakes and repeat the dark and shameful side of history.

What took place in church history in a small tiny fraction of the ongoing cruelty seen in many Christian circles. Some times you hear a move of God taking place. In the early days of the Charismatic movement just twenty or thirty years ago, many Charismatics were put on trial. Many churches were splitting. And you know why they split? They blamed the Charismatics but many times it's the non-charismatic taking a cruel stand. How could Christians become so cruel? Because they left the path of the fruit of the Spirit long ago and they did it thinking they are doing God's will.

Now let me give you an example of that in the bible. His name was Saul. He said that he persecuted the Christians thinking he was doing God's will. He thought that he was pleasing God. He was killing people; separating families; putting them in prison, all

those wrong things. And the bible gives us his testimony in Acts 22:3-4 I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as you all are this day. I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. He says he did it thinking that he was serving God.

And Jesus said in the book of Matthew 5:11-12 Blessed are you, when men revile you, and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you. But then Jesus tells you something in verse 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

So what happens is that those who left the right way can become cruel like Saul before his conversion. I think it's very cruel to kill people and put them in prison. Paul did it thinking that he was doing God's will. It was not. He was "shortsuffering," he was irritable, cruel and he was doing bad and evil things. It is not mental conviction that is important alone although it's important to have mental conviction in the right way. But if our hearts don't have the fruit of the Spirit we are bound to be wrong.

But if you walk in longsuffering, kindness and goodness and you keep following that in your life, you will continue to walk in the truth. This time you are on the side of truth. You can never kill truth. You can kill a person who speaks the truth but you can not kill truth. It will come forth. And in time truth prevails. And the energy for doing the right thing comes from the fruit of the Spirit that suffers long and keep on doing it.

Billy Graham did one thing marvelously well. He went through what every person whose ministry goes international experiences: persecution from the brethren. He made a very important decision at the beginning of his ministry. He will not answer his critics and he will not run down his critics and he will not persecute them. And that preserved him all the rest of his life. There have been many different attacks against his life but he has never answered them. Many of the critics have died and gone, many are no more around. But Billy Graham continues to have a good name. Time is on your side when you stand for truth. The years will come and the years will go. Falsehood and lies do not last. They will pass away and the people who propagate them will also pass away. It's important to stand on what is right.

We have touched on six fruit of the Spirit. The first three love, joy, peace have to do with the revelation of God's will. The second category has to do with goodness. The concluding verse of Acts 15 verse 22 It pleased the apostles and elders of the whole church. Now what was it that pleased and the feelings and pleasure in them in verse 25 It has seemed good to us in assembly to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul.

Now when it said being assembled with one accord, some people think that one accord means yes men or silent consent. No, look at what one accord meant for them in verse 5. But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up, and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law. Verse 7 And after there had been much debate. Thank God for one accord. Some people think one accord means not to have disagreement. No, look at what they mean by one accord. One accord means that everyone walks in love; we can disagree, we can fast,

we can discuss doctrine and then at the end of it we conclude as we love one another. One accord does not mean that you don't tell me my fault; just say, "I love you, I love you." No, love means being able to tell a person that I think this is wrong in your life. I find it hard to put up with this sharp edge of yours and still be able to love one another. They did all those things, they fasted, they discussed, they argued, they shouted. Maybe that is not mentioned in the bible, but the word dispute implies it - they got angry, they got irritated, at the end of it they concluded in one accord. Thank God for the bible kind of one accord. Some of us think that one accord means we can't communicate on what we may not be agree. Anyway the bible says finally it seems good to us.

The good thing is that they were all teachable. When it is wrong it's wrong when it is right it's right. Everyone has a say. No one have his or her own way. There are some people who never had their own way. Those people who disagree about the Gentiles but they respected the decision made. When they toe the line that was the one accord.

Let me conclude by looking at the book of Psalms 23. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he is talking about the Lord leading us. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me besides still waters; that's peace coming up. He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me. Thou prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;

What is this goodness he is talking about? People assume that this goodness is goods, prosperity, good things that happen. It does definitely include them. But this goodness means that you live life to the fullness. Some people when they do some thing they don't really enjoy it.

I have a little book called "Strange things about animals". Inside that little book there was a section on monkeys. In that book it talks about the strange things that animals do. And it says that monkeys can paint. They paint only like a one-year-old child. They can not go beyond the human level. When the monkeys were given the canvas and paint and the colors, it seems that they actually think about what they are going to paint. In that little book it says when the monkeys were painting halfway and the canvas is pulled away, the monkeys get irritated. They want the canvas back. When you bring the canvas back the monkey would paint it where he had left off. He remembers where he left off. When the monkey has finished his painting, he refuses to keep the painting if he thinks it's finished. Even if you scold him and beat him, he will still refuse. He gets angry if you make him paint. Now here is a strange thing. When they began to reward the monkeys for the painting, the monkeys began to associate food with the painting. When the monkeys associate food with the painting the monkeys' paintings deteriorated. He would just quickly paint and get the reward because he is more interested in the food than in painting. Painting becomes a source of getting the food. And the book concluded with this little statement. It says, "This phenomenon is also found among human beings. When human beings began to associate with rewards in what they are doing the quality of their work deteriorates. They are more interested in the reward than in their work and the pleasure of their work."

For human beings it may be success or rewards that we are after and we forgot to enjoy the pleasure of doing the work. The joy is as much in the doing as in the receiving what you do. The joy is the sense of pleasure. Do you derive pleasure out of the little work that you are doing? One of the things I learn in life is to enjoy doing things. Part of the joy is getting the job done. And so many people have lost the pleasure of goodness. This is associated with Psalms 23 when it says sure goodness and mercy shall follow you. We associate goodness with the end result. What's the use of getting the end result without enjoying doing whatever you are doing? I believe that Psalm 23 also implies that when the Lord is our shepherd whatever is God's will in our life, we would learn how to derive enjoyment out of that. And the pleasure is as much in the doing. Which is why in heaven it's a wonderful place.

Today some people become professionals like engineers, artists because of what they can earn rather than the love of the profession. Imagine in heaven you don't have to work for your food. You could do nothing and still have every thing. And everything you do in heaven will be because you love to do it. You can do painting in heaven if you love to paint. Not because you have to paint to earn a living. You can be an engineer in heaven and build nice buildings in heaven because you love to do it, not because you got paid for doing that.

So in this life we need to learn that when we walk in love, joy and peace, and when we began to perform doing God's will, if you are really doing what God wants you to do, you will find the pleasure and the goodness oozing through you. And you enjoy as much the doing of it as the completion of it. That's the fruit of the Spirit. That is why people can suffer long.

In II Cor. 12:10 Paul says, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." At first Paul didn't have that attitude. At first he says, "O God I can't stand this thorn in the flesh." Finally God says, "My grace is sufficient for you." Then only could Paul say, "I take pleasure in infirmities."

Remember the apostles who were persecuted and whipped. They count it joy to suffer for Jesus. A lot of Christians are being robbed of the pleasure of doing God's will because they only see the end. They think they are like the little missionary who grinds his teeth and suffers through while the cannibals are cooking him in the big black pot. It's not that way. It's the pleasure. No wonder Christians have lost their eleventh commandment "Thou shall have fun while you are doing God's will."

7. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - PART THREE

We have been doing a series on guidance from God. We have seen how God guides us through the fruit of the Spirit. We are talking about things that God do within our lives that confirms and direct us. God never works apart from His nature. In the same way when we were born again God puts His nature in us. And no guidance from God can be against or contrary to the nature of God put into our lives. If we would sense and yield to the nature and the seed of God placed in our lives we will always be directed into the right path and do the right thing at the right time.

As we have said before Gal. 5 is talking about the leading of the Spirit although we always have used the fruit of the Spirit to just teach about the character of Jesus. But Paul didn't stop at the developing the character of Jesus in our lives through the nine fruit of the Spirit. He goes to illustrate how the nine fruit of the Spirit helps us to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit in our Christian walk.

Gal. 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for those are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are plain; immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another.

We have said before in verse 22 to 23 that the nine fruit of the Spirit can be divided into three categories just like the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. We have stated how love, joy and peace are related to the revelation gifts of the Holy Spirit because love, joy and peace put us in a position to receive revelation from God. If you don't walk in love, joy and peace God is not going to reveal His will in your life. We must walk in love, joy and peace and then He will reveal His will in our life.

The second group that we have which is longsuffering, kindness and goodness are a class by themselves. And they relate to the power gifts. Last week we related how Paul through perseverance that is longsuffering worked out the gifts and the signs of an apostle in his life. Quoting II Cor. 12 that the power gifting in our lives is found through perseverance which relates to longsuffering. And we have also related how in Acts 10:38 how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and He went about doing good. There you have goodness. And we have tied up how doing good has to do with the power gifts of the Holy Spirit. The power gifts of the Holy Spirit are gifts that do some thing. And for some thing to be done we need to have longsuffering, kindness and goodness. An act of the Holy Spirit is always in kindness. That is why when the Holy Spirit moves and kindness and goodness are not present it is not of God. We need to learn how that the second group of the fruit of the Spirit relates to the power gifts.

Now the revelation gifts reveal some thing: the power gifts do some thing; the vocal gifts say some thing. And the first grouping of the fruit of the Spirit love, joy and peace is the revelation of the will of God.

The second grouping is the performance of the will of God. When we perform God's will and don't sense a flow of goodness in your life definitely it's not of God's will. Some times you can have God's will revealed to you but if you don't do it correctly or if you don't sense it is a good thing or if you sense trouble, then you know that the performance of God's will is out of synchrony.

The last grouping is in the area of faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. And that last grouping relates to the vocal gifts because the test of our faithfulness, the test of our gentleness, the test of our self-control begins in the control of the tongue. If you can not control your tongue you can never control your actions. If you can not control your tongue you can never be meek and humble. If you can not control your tongue you can never demonstrate faithfulness. The last grouping is related to the vocal gifts.

Now third grouping, which relates to the vocal gifts in saying something, is what I call the proclamation of God's will. Why is proclamation important? It is important to know the way God reveals and carries out His will on this planet. God always say it and then He does it. The control of this planet earth revolves around the power of the spoken Word. That's how God has organized this world.

The first grouping of the fruit of the Spirit love, joy and peace relates to our relationship with God in the revelation of His will.

The second grouping of the fruit of the Spirit of longsuffering, kindness and goodness has to do with our relationship to the people around us as we perform God's will.

The third grouping of the fruit of the Spirit of faithfulness, gentleness and self-control relates to the circumstances around us as we proclaim His will. It. We all know that the will of God can not be determined by circumstances. The sons of God are not controlled by circumstances. They control the circumstances. The storms do not determine where they go or what they do because it is they who stop the storms. But little lambs in God who had not grown to be sheep yet sometimes are rocked to and fro by the circumstances of life. The people of this world are controlled by circumstances. But the people of God are not supposed to be controlled by circumstances. They are the ones that control the circumstances around them. That makes a great difference.

In order to achieve that we need to rise up to the level of authority that God wants us to. And you can check throughout the bible from Genesis to Revelation that God controls the circumstances. He doesn't allow circumstances to control Him. And the people of God control the circumstances. They are not controlled by the circumstances. When there is a drought those who are weak and do not know God perish in the drought. But those who know God like Elijah went through the famine unscathed. Those who knew God had provisions even in the wilderness. They are not controlled by the circumstances. They change and they control the circumstances. And the control of circumstances relates to the spoken Word.

Last week I ended with a little story of the chimpanzee. After the service a few people asked me about the book. It seems they were quite interested in the chimpanzee book. We are talking about when we do God's will we need to enjoy what God tells us to do and we should sense goodness flowing in us. The account that I gave is from a little paperback book entitled "Mother Nature's Greatest Hits, The top forty wonders of the animal world" published by World Wildlife Fund. And there is a section on artistic apes. Let me repeat about these apes and I was sharing about goodness. How do we know when to do some thing? It's when we sense the goodness that flow through and we perform it best and we do it well. The only animal that has been observed to create objects that can pass as artistic at least to the uninformed viewer are the apes. Captives chimpanzees not only enjoy applying paint to canvas but can become somewhat obsessed with that activity. They ponder long over the placement of brush strokes. They fly into rages if their materials are taken away from them before they feel that their work is finished. If a session is interrupted and the primate painter is given back his or her material at a later time, work will resume where it was left off until the painting is completed to the ape's satisfaction. Once the painting is finished the ape is happy about the way the piece looks he or she will refuse to apply any further brush stroke and can become very nasty if urged to do so. In other words he thinks it's finished.

One of the strangest similarities between ape and human creativity is the negative effect that rewards have on the production. Just as human artist some times lose their creative sparks when fame or fortune come their way, ape painters will become jaded if their efforts are consistently rewarded by gifts of fruit. Once the connection between painting and material benefits are made, all the fun seems to go out of the process. It's just like human beings. If you are doing something you really enjoy doing it, you do it well. But if you are doing that some thing to get some thing else you may just quickly finish it just to get the reward. And you don't really enjoy it.

I am talking about the higher quality of life that God gives to us that when we do some thing we should really enjoy it. When we are doing God's will we should really enjoy it whether it is digging ditches, preaching to ten thousands, praying for the sick, or doing a little needle work like Dorcas to help some poor people. If God really called us to do something and had guided us to do some thing we would enjoy it. There will be that goodness in you flowing. You would have the pleasure and the feel of goodness in the performance of His will.

Now in the third category called the proclaiming of God's will relates to faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. It relates to control over our circumstances. There is a difference when a person is faithful and then he speaks the word of faith. There is a difference between saying some thing and decreeing some thing. All is determined by whether we are faithful or faithless. When Jesus was with the apostles He was talking to them about He was going to be betrayed, crucified and then resurrected and that every one of them will scatter and flee. Then Peter spoke up and said in Luke 22:33 "Lord I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." Now that looks like a very brave statement. But he knows not what he said. A lot of time some of us learned the faith message and we speak to the mountain. The mountain echo back and nothing happened. They say to the mountain, "Remove from here to there." And the echo comes back, "Remove from here to there." And we got ourselves removed. They wonder why the circumstances don't change. It is conditioned upon the fact that

unless you are full of faith you can speak words of faith. And in many lives they are not full of faith. If you are an empty teapot, you can't pour out tea. We could take an empty teapot and no matter how much you try to pour there will be no tea coming out. You have to be full of it before you can give it out.

A lot of people are not full of faith and they are trying to give it out. We have to be meditating on God's Word. The Word of God has to be changed into the constituent of faith in our lives before they can come forth. The Word is just raw material. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word. We need to keep hearing the Word until faith arises and a revelation comes into our lives before we can speak the Word of God.

And so the first quality among the third category is being faithful. As we have said that the first of the least in the three groupings is always the major one. Like love, joy, peace, love is the major one. Long suffering, kindness and goodness, longsuffering is the major force. Faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, faithfulness is the key force. Faithfulness may be understood here as having words full of faith. How does someone become full of faith? Take the Word of God and start practicing it on small little areas. This is why if some of you have a minor problem of sickness or disease, a little cold or a little headache or flu, and if for these small, small things you still depend on any other things but not on God's Word, one day when a more serious sickness or problem strikes you, you won't have faith for it. The vast majority of people don't exercise faith over a cold. But when they are struck with cancer they start seeking for faith. They have not been exercising their faith muscles. And they expect their faith muscles to work when they are in need. That's not how things go in the bible. All the people who are full of faith were faithful. And it takes time to build up that faith into faithfulness. And then you become full of faith.

Lets look at some who are faithful and become full of faith. Acts 6:8 Here is the phrase that is an adjective that describes the noun Stephen. It says in verse 8 And Stephen, full of grace (faith as in this bible) and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Many people would like to be that. They would like to be full of faith. Obviously everything he did and everything that he said contained power. And he was full of faith. The question is how did he get that? The bible tells us in Acts 6 verse 3 the apostles had a need to look for people who would serve the widows. Not emptying the hospital beds yet, not preaching to hundred thousand of people yet, not healing, casting out devils, not making the lame to walk and the blind to see, but it says just to serve the poor little widows.

Verse 3 Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word."

But before the selection of the deacons the apostles laid down the conditions for their selection. They must be of good reputation, they must have the Holy Ghost in their lives and they must be full of wisdom. In other words the apostles wanted faithful and steady people, who were already serving faithfully before there were considered for the position of deacons. And they looked among them and they found in verse 5 And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. Now these seven people were already

faithful. They were serving without a title; without any official recognition. After their span of faithfulness God started working in their lives mightily. Among them recorded was Stephen a man full of faith.

Now the same apostle Paul said in the book of II Timothy chapter two verse 2. And what you have heard from me before many witness entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” Commit the things that I give to you faithful people. And these faithful people will be able to carry the same power of the spoken Word and teach other people. Now in our society we measure faithfulness based on the ability to serve under a cause or a person consistently without stopping until told to stop. If faith relates to the Word of God, faithfulness relates to a person, a principle or a cause. You are faithful to a person or an organization or a cause. When it comes to where the rubber hits the road faithfulness becomes loyalty to a person or an organization. There are far too many lone rangers riding about on their horses wearing masks, wearing a hat, carrying their gun, without their Tonto and trying to do something for God. But when it comes to be faithful they can not be found. All the men in the bible who became great people first learned to serve under other people. Think about Moses - he served under his father Jethro for forty years just as a cattle herdsman. Think about Joshua. He served under Moses for forty years.

Think about Elisha - he served for between eight to ten years under Elijah. Think about the disciples of Jesus. Three years they learned to serve the Lord. Think about Timothy who served Paul. Think about Paul and how he served with Barnabas. Unless we learn how to be faithful we will never be full of faith. The test of whether we have the ability to be faithful is your loyalty to a person or to a cause. Some times we excuse ourselves. Nobody is perfect, doesn't mean that you serve nobody. No organization is perfect, so what? Nothing is perfect except Jesus. If nobody in the world is perfect including yourself and no organization in the world is perfect, and you try to start your own organization do you think you will be perfect? Faithfulness was a requirement to serve under imperfect conditions, not perfect condition. And that's what begins to give a person authority to speak powerful words.

Think about Joshua a mere man anointed by God who could speak to the sun and said, “Sun stop where you are,” and to the moon, “Stay where you are,” and the heaven obeyed his voice. He was a man who learned to serve for forty years as a mere servant to Moses.

Elisha's words were powerful. At his word resurrection power flows. He received the double portion of Elijah's anointing and did twice the miracles and healings that Elijah did. But for eight to ten years he served pouring water over Elijah's hands for washing.

Let me explain greatness can only come by great faith. There is no way we can rise up in life without faith. Great achievement comes by great faith. Greatness comes by great servanthood. If you want to be great you learn to be a servant. It's important that when the circumstances come upon our lives and we have the opportunity to be servant then we start that way. There are many people who would like to change their circumstances. But there is a strange paradox. Let me illustrate the worse case scenario. Think about some one who has power over work and circumstances. If the sun is too hot, he could just command the sun to cool down and it would cool down. When he gets angry with somebody he says, “Let fire consume you.” Obviously we

don't want such an individual. He is too powerful, and abuses his power too easily. Before God gives such authority the reverse must take place in his life. In life there must be a reversal. The greater God is going to use you the greater you are going to be put through testing. The harder the steel is going to be, the greater the hammering the steel has to go through. I read one article on how they made those Japanese swords. Their swords must be sharp and strong and be of fine steel that at one blow it could cut off somebody's head. The greater the steel the greater the suffering the steel must go through. It is proportional in this life. There is some thing in this life that is like a spring. When you pull down one part the other part goes up. It's like an energy spring. The higher you want it to go this part must go lower. For you to be popular and be loved by people, you have to first go through the test of being unpopular. There is no escape that is part of the test of God in our life. The greater God wants to use you, the greater the suffering you must go through first. The suffering must come before the glory. It is God's pattern and method.

Therefore, before God gives you great faith to speak to circumstances God puts you through areas where you learn and you suffer under those circumstances. You learn to be faithful under every circumstance. Sometimes you learn to be faithful under certain circumstances. But you learn to be faithful under all circumstances and then later God gives you power over all circumstances. You learn to be faithful under some circumstances God gives you power over some circumstances. Then when a person had gone through the test then God puts the person up and begin to give the person authority with words. He goes about and sees the sun beating down his back but he has learned to be a servant. He doesn't simply stop the sun anyhow he wants any more although the power is there. Then he goes to a circumstance where he needs rain. He doesn't simply call the rain anyhow he wants because he has learned to be a servant. The authority becomes bridled and under control by God.

Jesus had the power to turn stones into bread. Why didn't He do it? It is not because He didn't have the power. If Jesus hasn't got the power and the whole thing was a show then the temptation was not real. A temptation is only real when you actually have the power to do it. But He has for thirty years learned to serve under earthly parents. If you think it is not easy to serve an organization or person think about Jesus perfect Son of God, son of man, serving as a carpenter and in the home of Joseph and Mary for thirty years. Being misunderstood by His parents who couldn't understand the level of His spirituality. Jesus was far ahead in His spirit and in His mind than any in His generation. But Jesus served faithfully. He never utters a word of complaint. And when the time came He had great power and authority. Faithfulness must come first before you are full of faith.

Before we have power over circumstances we must have the endurance under the circumstances. That is why a lot of people would like to take control over circumstances. But sometimes you hear their words they are like Peter speaking more from his head than from his heart. Saying things that he never would be able to carry out. It is very strange. The only people who have power over the storms are people who have persevered under the storms. And they need not stop the storm because they had the endurance to go through the storm. The only people who had the power to stop the storm are the people who endure the storm. And the people who would like to stop the storm are the people who don't have the power or the endurance to go through the storm.

So why does God do it that way? It is for us to learn great servanthood. When you have the power to endure the storm you don't simply go and stop every storm. You become under submission to God and you will do it only when He tells you to. Not for your own stomach or food turning stone into bread. Not for your own little vegetable garden. But you will do it because it is a part of God's will to help others. God doesn't give you the power to stop the lion's mouth until He gives you the endurance to go through the lion's den. God doesn't give you the power to stop the fire that was consuming you and burning you until He gives you the endurance to go through the fire. The three Jewish boys Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego said to Nebuchadnezzar even they should die, they would not bow to any idol. They were committed and faithful to God. They were faithful unto death. And when you have that kind of endurance, you would have the attitude, "If I have to die by fire, let me die." Then God saves you and stops the fire from consuming you. The only people who had power over fire are those who are able to go through the fire.

It's important when we look at the will of God in our lives and guidance from God, there are a lot of times we are asking God's guidance to bring us out of circumstances or trying to take authority over circumstances that we haven't learned the lessons yet. And we are asking God to take us out of the situation, out of those trials, when those trials were trying to build the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Let me explain again turn to Romans 5. There is no other way you can get character except by tribulation. He doesn't send you sickness and disease for the blood of Jesus has redeemed you from sicknesses and diseases. But you have circumstances to endure that build the fruit of the Spirit in your life. And when they are built in you that's when the authority is there. Think about storms; the storm is blowing the windows are shattering and those around you say, "Stop the storm." You learn to endure. Throughout the storm you worship God. You thank God for His love, His protection. And finally storm after storm come, trial after trial come, until in the end no trial can shake you any more. No storm could ruffle your hair any more. No criticism can hurt you any more. No wrong words could hurt you any more. You have become very strong. And that same strength that you earned and you learned and you harnessed through your trial is the same strength that God will use. When one day the need is there and somebody else is going through the storm and he said to you, "Brother pray for me." You had gone through the storm and learned the great strength under such trying storms and you began to pray. When you pray while the wind is howling and the windows are shattering the storm obeys you. Because that storm has learned who is the master. When the storm can not ruffle your hair the storm has learned who is the master. That's why faithfulness precedes full of faith. We get full of faith through first being faithful.

Let me read Jesus' words in the book of Matthew chapter 24:45 onwards Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time. It's the faithful servant the master makes. Then the other one in verse 48 the evil servant who is not faithful. In the end the faithful one gets rewarded. Let me encourage you Jesus is looking for faithfulness in our lives. Chapter 25:14 For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and made five talents more. So also,

he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled account with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward bringing five talents more, saying, "Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over little.

I will make you ruler over many things. Did you notice that the authority to rule comes from the authority to submit? He submitted first. He learns first. And that same energy that gives him power to submit is the same energy that gives him powers to rule.

I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master. And he also who had the two talents came forward saying, "Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little. (I will make you ruler over many things.) I will set you over much, enter into the joy of your master.

You find the three grouping there faithful, good and joy relates to love.

Verse 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, "Master, I knew you to be a hard man, (now what was his problem. His problem was because he couldn't be faithful to the master because of his conception of the master. Isn't it strange that out of three servants, two think He is a good master, one thinks He is a bad master. Sometimes you are in a good church; ninety nine percent think it's a good church one percent think it's a bad church. You can go to any church and you can find people who think that it is not the best church. You go to Benny Hinn's church in Orlando you find some people there who think that is not the kind of church it should be. Lets not fool ourselves. If people can not be loyal to any church they can never be loyal to any church. We learn loyalty with people and not as a hermit hiding on a mountain. Find a church that helps you. It may not be perfect but stick to it. Even if there are problems that come and go, even if there are misunderstandings that come and go, stick to that place because the only way you learn how to love and have the character of Jesus is by sticking together. If you keep running from place to place and every small little incident you are the problem and in the end it is you who loses out. It is you. Learn to be faithful in any thing that God ask you to do.) reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; (here is the key thing) so I was afraid, (afraid of what? Afraid of the master? No, let me tell you what he was afraid of: losing his talent. He doesn't dare to invest it. He had never learned to sow in his life.) and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours. He actually gave back to the master everything. He actually hasn't lost anything. But why was the master displeased? Here is the key if you remain the same it is failure. If in the Christian life you remain the same you are already a failure. We grow from glory to glory; faith to faith. And a lot of people like to be the same. If we stop we die, we failed. The Word must go on until the whole world is reached. We must press on until the gospel reached the nations of the world. We must never be satisfied with past success. We learn how to put it aside and press on for more until our last breath we must serve our Lord Jesus Christ and move on.

Verse 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from

him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. The one who had the most still get the most. And Jesus makes this statement here in verse 29 For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is the key to being full of faith.

The other two, gentleness and meekness are related. We see gentleness in Galatians chapter 6:1 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Do you notice that it is the spirit of gentleness that will help you speak the right words? As I say again the last three groupings of the fruit of the Spirit relate to the proclaiming of God's Word through circumstances. And it is when you are in self-control that you can speak the right word. It is when meekness and gentleness has come. And meekness is a quality of being able to endure and take all circumstances quietly and meekly. Jesus says, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." When you think about meekness you think about people who are scolded and just took it meekly. Meekness is a quality of endurance. Not necessary a quality of being overcoming. Yet the same quality of endurance is the same quality of overcoming.

As for self-control, in the book of Proverbs it says that he who can not rule over his own spirit or his own temper can not rule over a city. But he who rules over his own temper or spirit he can rule over a city. This is the same principle. Think again if you can't control your temper you can't control other people. If you can control your own temper then you can control other people. It is the same way when it comes back to self-control. And of course these two qualities are related back to faithfulness.

Faithfulness, meekness and gentleness and self-control are qualities of endurance. Jesus did say talk to those who overcome, but if you look at what He means in Revelation 2 and 3, they actually overcome by endurance. And having endured they are now given authority to rule. The authority or endurance and the authority of overcoming are the same. When you have endured you have overcome. When you have overcome you can speak words of authority and you will rule over circumstances in your life. And the will of God in your life will not be hindered by circumstances because no circumstances can now face up to your endurance. And you have such power and authority that some times when circumstances try to rise all you have to do is speak the word of faith and the storms are calmed, the mountains are moved, the valleys are smoothed up. Such is the power that God gives you to proclaim His will.

8. THE LAW OF LOVE

In this message we want to talk about the law of love as a conclusion to the whole series on Guidance From God. Turn to Galatians 5 where Paul speaks about the fruit of the Holy Spirit. It tells us in verse 18 that the fruit of the Holy Spirit is not just merely describing a Christian's character but Paul was talking about the leading of the Spirit. We have other series on how to be led by the Spirit but in this particular series we are talking more of the inward guidance, which affects 95 to 99 percent of all the decisions we ever made in our lives.

It says in verse 18 But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. And he goes on to talk about all the fruit of the Spirit in verse 22 and 23. Then in verse 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Not forgetting the last part of verse 23 it says against such there is no law. It means that the law of love, which is contained in the fruit of the Spirit is so powerful and so high that it completely subjugates every other law. Whether it be prophecy, tongue, supernatural guidance, dreams, visions, the office of a prophet or any other guidance system we have the law of love as the highest law.

We understand natural law and human law, legal law or legal principles. In all laws there is always a higher law and a lower law. And that law that is highest affects the law that is lowest. Even in the legal system we have a court system where you go to a lower court and then to the next one and finally to the Supreme Court. There are what I call levels. And a lower court can make a judgment and a rule. But the highest court can overturn it. And when the highest court overturn the judgment of the lower court, it doesn't matter whether the judge in the lower court agree or disagree because whosoever is in the Supreme Court makes a final judgment and there is no further appeal.

In natural laws there are also levels. There are scientific laws that can control lower laws.

We know the law of gravity. Then the laws of propulsion can break or supersede the law of gravity. We know there is friction that prevents us from going fast. But through the inventions of man we are able to travel faster than what a normal human being can do on their two legs. It is because we are using natural law to supersede the lower law.

When we think about spiritual laws, we need to understand that what we have in the natural world and what human can conceive in the legal system can never be better than what God has conceived and created. The natural is a pattern that follows the spiritual. The spiritual rules the natural and not the natural rules the spiritual. Therefore whatever we have in the natural first came from the spiritual. And how is it that when we look at spiritual laws some times we don't understand that there are classified into degrees? For example the law that says that the wages of sin is death is overcome by a higher law of mercy where a just man and a sinless man who is also a Son of God died for our sins and paid the price and He rose from the dead. The lower law of sin and death doesn't apply any more to Christians who receive Jesus into their hearts because the higher law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus now supersedes the law of sin and death. Even though we have sinned and we had sinned before we know Him the higher law now eradicate that sin. Similarly there are many lower laws and higher laws in different areas in the spiritual world.

As we look at guidance from God we know that there are many areas of supernatural guidance. All guidance from God is supernatural but some guidance is more spectacular than others. Having a dream, a vision or a visitation from an angel is very spectacular. Have you realized that many times people put guidance from angels or a vision from Jesus higher than the law of love and the prompting in their hearts to do what is loving and unloving? To me they have put the lower court above the Supreme Court. The bible says that the very nature of God is love. Before there are visions, before there are revelation everything is birthed out from love.

As a conclusion to this series I want to bring to you the fact that the law of love and walking in love and being guided by the spirit of love is higher than the guidance you can get from an angel, higher than the guidance you can get from an apostle, higher than a guidance you can get by an open vision or a dream. It is the final witness test of our guidance system. The law of love which Paul says against such there is no law. There is no other law that can conflict the law of love.

1. The Law of Love Rules Over Religious Convictions

Let me point to the book of Romans chapter 13:8 Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. Love is above the Ten Commandments. When you walk in love you keep the Ten Commandments; you fulfill and you supersede them. That's a powerful revelation in Galatians 5:23 Paul says against such there is no law. It could look like it contradicts but it doesn't. What it does is it supersedes, it fulfills the law to its fullness of its requirement and it supersedes that. Against such there is no law. Paul says here owe no man anything except to love one another for he who love another has fulfilled the law and he quote all the different commandments.

Verse 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Lets talk about the law of love in supernatural guidance. There are a lot of decisions that we have to make in our life. And I want to emphasize the fact that we can walk with God as Charismatics and some times some end up as charismaniacs, who don't know the balance of the Spirit and the Word. We need to understand there is a Supreme Court to our guidance system and that is the law of love. As Charismatics we receive visions, dreams, prophecies, visitation from God, but the visitation from God and the spectacular guidance system is subject to the law of love in guiding us.

I will show some bible examples how when we received supernatural guidance you still need the Supreme Court of the law of love to guide us. It has the final say. You can be right in your vision and wrong in your interpretation because of the law of love. Romans 14 there is a problem that Paul was trying to solve. He hasn't actually met the Romans but for some reasons by revelation he is writing the answers to their problems that they are encountering. Whenever you have to make a decision you wrestle with the leading of the Spirit. And we make decisions all the time. The leading of the Spirit doesn't belong just to the five fold ministers, apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastors and teachers.

(If you are called to be apostle, prophet and evangelist you would be an ape (A.P.E.). If you are called to be a teacher first then yours could be T.E.A: teacher, evangelist, apostle. Then you will be inviting people for tea all the time. Perhaps if you are an evangelist first you would be E.A.T. evangelist, apostle and teacher, eating all the

time. The other way when you have it as apostle first, apostle teacher, evangelist, A.T.E. you ate so you don't eat any more. It's very dangerous when you are a prophet first, prophet, evangelist and teacher, you are P.E.T. But don't take this seriously – I am not speaking by revelation.)

Rom.14:1 As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. Let make a very simple statement. All problems, misunderstandings and strife between believers have to do with their internal struggle of perceiving what is right and what is wrong. Every believer senses right and wrong to different degrees. If every one of us sees right and wrong in actually the same way there will never be any problem. In general there are some things that we all agree that is right and wrong. For example, the Ten Commandments are indisputable. But there are many areas of Christian life that we can disagree on what is right and wrong. In case you are wondering whether this is scriptural read the book of Hebrews chapter 5 where it talks about spiritual growth being tied up to the ability to discern between right and wrong. So the more we grow the more we have the ability to discern between right and wrong better than a baby Christian. And that is a statement that tells us that as we grow we have different degrees of capacity to detect more and more accurately what is right and what is wrong in a lot of tiniest details of life. And as long as there are baby Christians and adults Christians, matured Christians, immature Christians there will continue to be problems because we all discern what is right and wrong to different degrees in different ways. We need to have an understanding of the crux of the issue.

As we understand that every one has a conscience and a sense of right and wrong it brings us to the second area. We must be able to give each one a freedom of choice to decide what is right and wrong in their own lives and to live in the light that they have received and respect one another choices. It is when we begin to impose what we feel in ourselves upon another person then the problem comes. If I discern what is right and wrong and I impose my opinion on your life, it would make you miserable. If you discern what is right and wrong and impose your opinion on my life too, I too may become miserable. I am talking about right and wrong above the Ten Commandments. If you are convinced that it is right to rob a bank we got to pray for you. I am talking about things beyond the Ten Commandments. We are talking about little decisions that we make. Is it right to choose this job or not to choose this job? Is it right to continue here or to stop here? All these are subjective. And if you ask for counsel you may have eleven different counsels from ten different counselors.

Now here in Romans 14 Paul is talking about situation where people are of different levels. Such a situation will always be present all the time. It says in verse 2 One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. So everyone has his or her own guidance system. So here is a problem. He talks about a situation where some people are convinced that they can eat all things. And there is another situation where some believe that they can only eat vegetables and it is a sin to eat animals. What happens if a person is convinced that way? How do they get the guidance from God?

What happens if somebody thinks that on the Sabbath day Christians should not do anything? Sometimes some Christians think that Sunday is the Sabbath day. Sunday is not the Sabbath day. Sunday is the first day of the week that we gather together to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What about Christians who are convinced

that you should not do anything at all on whichever day they are convinced is the Sabbath?

We have to learn how to get guidance from God and stand on what we are convinced of. We have to be convinced of what is right and wrong and do it. We are answerable to God for our own life. One thing I know when you suffer you suffer alone. The very people who teach you and bring you to that suffering may not stand with you. Of course your real friends will always be there for you whether you are in wealth or in poverty. But the people who give you some fat advice will not be around when their advice doesn't work.

Personally when I advise some people and they follow my advice and if something goes wrong I feel responsible and I will help them through. That is my principle. But for some other people they give out advice and say this advice is given without any prejudice and without any obligation or commitment on our part. I believe if I counsel some body and they follow my advice I am responsible. Some people believe you could sit in the board, give advice and say I have no obligation and no responsibility for that. If you follow what I tell you to do and you get into trouble I am not responsible. If you feel your advice is good enough for others it should be good enough for you. I am just bringing some practical example of how when we make decisions it is important to stand by it. And when we advise others we are responsible for that. We must back them to the hilt.

Of course if somebody don't follow the advice I would say I am not responsible. Some times when I see something happening I say, "Look this is my advice. If you choose to follow I will back you up. If you don't choose to follow I have no responsibility because I have already spoken my heart and mind." So when you come to a crossroad and you say that the Lord guided you to go this way but I discerned that it is not guidance from God but the other way should be taken, what do I do? I absolve myself. But long ago my personality was such that I would just quietly go away without speaking a word to you. Now God has changed me. Now what I would do is I would speak my heart and mind and give people the freedom to choose.

Some are convinced that everyday you can do some thing for the Lord. Some are convinced that you should hold one day above other days. Paul says in Romans 14:6 He who observes the day, observe it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. Look there is contrary guidance. So what's the conclusion? He says let love prevail. Love gives room for people. Remember what we mentioned earlier: the crux of the issue is that all Christian problem and disagreement are over a guidance system. When a church split up what's happening? The people within the church disagree whether to go this direction or that direction. And they can't resolve the issue. Why do people walk different ways after a long time? It is because they come to a disagreement. And it is important for us to resolve all these.

Some of you may be sitting there saying that this sort of things will never happen to me. Every one of us would have some particular point in our life find something to disagree with another Christian. If you don't get a hold of this principle we may be misguided. So Paul says love prevails. In verse 7 None of us live to himself, and none of us dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. And he basically advises in verse 19 Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for

mutual upbuilding. In other words let us pursue love. For love edifies and builds up. So we see the law of love.

When we read Romans 14 we say that it may happen to them but not to us. Let me tell you this, the people in the bible here who believed in eating vegetables were not only eating vegetables for health reasons. They were doing it because of religious reason. And religious reasons are the hardest reasons to reason out. For example I don't eat unclean food in a sense. I don't eat crabs, pork and prawn, though once in a while there may be a prawn in my fried noodles. I just swallow it. I don't eat unclean food because of health reason. If somebody disagrees I don't get emotional about it because it is a natural reason. But if I don't eat pork because of religious reason it's harder to reason with me because I am convinced it has to do with my holiness and it becomes an emotional thing. It's very hard to reason with such people. The hardest people to reason with are people who are religiously convinced that what they do are part of their religion. Even in Christianity there are different levels of religiosity.

In those days the laws of health and science have not been discovered as it is in our time. The people were eating vegetables because they were religiously convinced that this is the right way that God wants them to follow. It's the only way to please God. Even non-Christians like mediums and psychics are religiously convinced that if they eat meat their powers are reduced. It is a religious reason and not a natural health reason. And it's very hard to convince this kind of people.

And the people who believe in keeping one day to the Lord are convinced that is the only way you please the Lord. And they consider it a sin if you don't follow them. I am pointing to a fact that there was a problem here among the Roman Christians that Paul was writing to and that it is not a simple problem as you put it. It's a problem of religious conviction. Paul is saying religion or no religion the law of love supersedes them all. Remember what we said earlier, against such there is no law. Love fulfills the law. What are you trying to do if you are convinced that eating vegetables is the only right way to please God? To you that is the spiritual law. On the other extreme there are some who are convinced that to please God you may eat any thing, including scorpions, centipedes etc. In Singapore there is a restaurant that serve you fried scorpions. Whatever reasons there are to make them religiously convinced it is still a law to them.

And the bible says against love there is no law. The bible says that love fulfills the law. That means in a situation where right and wrong is not clear, you look for the right way of love. Even in Christians' relationship with non-Christians you can be religiously convinced until you become fanatical towards them instead of being a friendly person to them. I mean you could go to some one who is a non-Christian and say, "You know that if you don't get your life right with God you are going to hell. It's no more my responsibility I have told you so." Some Christians are convinced that all that they are doing is right. Doctrinally they are right. But you know what is missing – love. Do you think that we would accept Jesus if Jesus had come to the world and said, "You are horrible creatures; I have to die for your sins," none of us would be born again. People do not come to God because of doctrine alone. Few have accepted Jesus Christ because of pure doctrine alone. We came because there was love behind that teaching, behind the doctrine. We are convicted because of love. Now doctrine is important. But doctrine without love kills. And many of us here heard the gospel because we have Christian friends whom we like.

In fact if not for my friends who were chess players, I may not have heard the gospel and accepted the Lord. We were all state players and we used to meet to play chess every week. And one by one they began to disappear on a Sunday, which is a free day. And I ask them the next day what happened. They said they went to church. Because they were my friends they invited me to church. I went to church not because I was convinced of the gospel, I haven't even heard the gospel, I haven't even seen a bible, I went to church because of my friends. I trusted my buddies in a natural way. And when I went there somebody there came to me and said, "I have something to share with you if you have time." I said, "Fine I have time since I am here." And we sat down in one corner and he shared with me the four spiritual laws. For the first time I saw the doctrine of Christ. Now he didn't roughly pull me aside and said in a aloud voice, "I have something serious to tell you. Sit up and listen." He spoke to me in a gentle voice and he said, "Look I have something to share with you. Can I share with you? I said, "Fine." And he shared with me the four spiritual laws and I saw that it makes sense. Now I didn't accepted Christ straight away. But later on I did. It was because of my friends that I had a chance to hear the gospel. You would have never be able to drag me into the doors of the church if you saw me in the street and witnessed to me. I wouldn't be interested if you were not somebody I knew or trusted.

And it is a true that people attend church and become part of the church because they have friends in the church. If people attend churches because they have the power of the Holy Spirit, you know what the church will be like – a hospital. People only come and get healed and they go. If people only attend church because of the teaching, this can be some of the reason you like the church. You know what it will be like – a restaurant, you go eat some spiritual food and then go off. Church is a place where we should find friends. Of course I am sad with the fact that Christians don't know how to make real friends. But church is a place where we find true friendship. You may first start attending a church because of healing and because of teaching. Or maybe you attend church to look for a wife. What happens if you found a wife, stop attending church? No. Whatever our reason for attending church those should not be the only reasons that keep us there. In the end we must press beyond that to find that church is a place where we develop genuine friendship with people who love us and we love them. It's not an easy task as a pastor to try to get people to love one another, but all the rest of my life I will keep encouraging that. We want to build a church not around the gifts of the Holy Spirit, not around just the Word of God, not just around a manifestation of God. All those things we should have but where people learn to love and care for one another.

That's why it's important when we look at the guidance from God that we received and as we fellowship with one another love should be our primary aim. When we come to making decisions on little things let love be the final goal. The law of love precedes and supersedes all our little religious convictions on little things. The law of love must prevail.

We are not asking you to give up religious convictions that are good for you. Some ladies are convinced that ladies should wear veils in church. I can not remove that religious conviction because that person is convinced that what they do is pleasing God. And for me to make a rule that when anyone steps in church wearing a veil to take the veil from them, I may make them feel sinful. We know that is not a sin but I may make them feel that they have displeased God. But the only rule I make is this if

you are religiously convinced to wear a veil to church, then wear it. But don't make somebody else wear it. We all have our own religious convictions.

Some people believe that when they come to church that they have to dress their best. When somebody else comes with a pair of slippers or in something informal, they say, "Don't you know how to please God? What do you do when you want to meet the managing director or the emperor? Do you dress in slippers?" You make that person feel condemned. To you it's a religious conviction, a personal expression of wanting to please God. Church should be a place where we give room for religious convictions. Let us be gracious. So what is the rule in church? My rule is wear what is reasonable. What is beyond reason is not allowed, like donning swimwear to church.

Religious convictions are the hardest to deal with. In order to deal with that in the church without running down people we give room to people as long as it doesn't break the laws of decency. We need to give room for some religious convictions. If some people come up to the sanctuary and dance in the Spirit and to you they seem to dance like little ducks and you tell them, "If you want to dance in the Spirit please go for three months ballet training, then come and dance in the Spirit," then you are not allowing for religious convictions. A pastor who understands religious liberty will come and say, "It is alright if you dance like a duck but don't knock over chairs and people." In this church dancing in the Spirit is fine as long as you are dressed properly. If your dance movement in the Spirit is like a Russian dance, I will say, "If you flow in that kind of dance please don't wear skirts." We need to give some rooms for religious convictions. In our walk with God there are times when religious convictions are necessary to our spiritual growth that others may not understand. Try to hear the pastor's point of view. Even a lady who is convinced about wearing a veil in church it can be a part of her religious walk with God that you must give room for. And Paul says point one in religious convictions let the law of love rule and reign.

2. The Law of Love Rules Over Doctrinal Contention

Secondly in Acts chapter 15 in doctrinal issue in verse 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. Then when they came they make a little decision after much dispute, arguments and discussions. They passed a judgment and they made a decision. I want to point to the fact that the decision was made based on three areas, the Word of God, the word of testimony and the Holy Spirit. Now these are all laws. And these laws are subject to the law of love because if you look at the final decision it edifies the people.

In verse 12 And all the assembly kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. That's the word of the testimony.

Verse 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things. This is the agreement of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 29 That you abstain from things offered to idols and from blood, from things strangled and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourself from these, you will do well. Farewell. This is the Word of God.

Now the word farewell is a Greek word that says to wish you the best that edify you. In other words we are seeking the best road that will be the best loving road to help your life. In the same way we may argue over doctrinal issues, we may fight and we may get emotionally worked up but in the end it is a law of love that keeps us going. For love edifies. It is not easy to be together and loving when you differ seriously.

John Wesley and George Whitefield disagree on predestination. But they work together because they loved each other and they loved the Lord. John Wesley speaks well of George Whitefield in his journals. People can disagree on doctrine and they become unloving. How do you know they become unloving? They run down those who don't agree with them. You can believe in what you believe but don't run people down. We can have doctrinal discussion in an atmosphere of love. And love will allow differentiation of understanding over things that have nothing to do with salvation. I mean salvation is based on our faith in Jesus. How you believe in your doctrine of Christology should not affect your love for one another because you are part of the family of God.

3. The Law of Love Rules in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Thirdly in the book of I Cor. 13 love is the guiding factor in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I Cor. 12:31 But earnestly desire the best gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. Then in chapter 13 he talks about love in verse 4 onwards, Love is patient and kind, love is not jealous etc. Paul is trying to tell them that if you can receive guidance by the gifts of the Spirit and there is no love there the guidance can be wrong. In our earlier messages we talked about the groupings of the gifts and fruit of Holy Spirit. Remember love, joy and peace is one group that has to do with the revelation of the will of God. If you don't walk in love although you have the gifts operating you can not really see the will of God clearly. You only see part of the will because of the gifts. Love is important when the gifts operate. Paul says that even if you have prophecy in chapter 13:2 and you don't have love, you are nothing. In other words if you are a prophet or you have a ministry of prophecy or you have the gift of dreams, or you have the gift of visions, and if you don't have love you have no right to guide other people or to guide your own life.

But in the Charismatic circles visions and dreams seems to take a higher place than love. People would do the most unloving thing and say, "Thus says the Lord." I am not saying what you received is not from God. Paul never says that the gifts were not from God. He says such gifts operated without love were not edifying. They do not help anybody, not even helping the one who operates the gifts.

Turn to the book of Acts 21 let me show the gifts of the Spirit operating. Verse 9 and 10 Now this man [Philip the evangelist] had four virgin daughters who prophesied. (Now definitely that is the ministry of prophecy. They have a very strong gift of prophecy. They spoke to Paul.) And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. (Agabus was one of the most recognized prophets in the New Testament church. He came with a group of other prophets. He even had a school of prophets with him. So we can say that he is a well-established ministry.)

Verse 11, When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

Now after he prophesied in verse 12 everybody told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. This is to show you that the office of a prophet or the ministry of a prophet or visions or dreams can not guide us outside of love. When you are within a circle of love and you are walking in love all those things are powerful. But if you only have these things without love they don't count as guidance from God.

You know what Paul did? He completely discounted these words spoken through the gift of prophecy. He said look he still have to go. Everybody was convinced that Paul was not doing the right thing. They tried to persuade Paul not to go because of that prophecy. But Paul says they are breaking his heart. Now that becomes wrong. Look at verse 13 What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart. If you break somebody's heart it can not be the leading of the Spirit any more. And so what is the love way? There is a prophet saying these things. What is the most loving way? Let Paul move according to his conviction. Let him feel the right way to edify. I am sure they must have prayed for him. These are not the only group of people who told Paul not to go. Earlier when they landed at Tyre, they found some disciples who also told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Acts 21:4 And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go.

Now through the Spirit means that these disciples through the gifts of the Holy Spirit told Paul not to go to Jerusalem. They had the gifts of the Holy Spirit functioning. But love is different. Love considers the other person. Love considers the feelings and the limitations of the person. Love is not one-sided; love is not demanding; love never say, "You be what I want you to be." When people demand that I say, "Look I can't; you must also understand my situation. I can't do what you demand me to do. I don't demand you do what I want. I give you the free choice." So we all must have that love for one another. Love doesn't demand of one another. Love respects the wishes of each other. When love becomes demand it's no more love.

When we walk in love the guidance of God can come clearer. The gifting of the Holy Spirit becomes a confirmation in our walk with God. Sometimes people may have a prophecy that certain things should be done or should not be done. Then they come to the persons concerned and say, "I think what you are doing is wrong." Their prophecy may be correct but if they are without of love then their ministry is out of order. Sometimes people leave their family or place in a ministry and I ask them why do they leave. They say, "God told me, God warned me in a dream." I said, "Fine, but you must have love and responsibility. What you are doing is not walking in love."

I hear of preachers from other countries and they come here and minister. I asked one of them, "Are you married?"

"Yes."

"Do you have a family?"

"Yes."

"Where is your family now?"

"O I left them years ago."

“How can it be?”

“God told me to preach the gospel.”

I said, “No. If you leave your wife and your children behind, who is taking of them now?”

You mean your wife has to work and feed the children and you are here preaching the gospel. That is not the leading of the Spirit. That is walking without love.”

He can be the most anointed preacher in the world but it makes no difference. I think he is misguided. It is important for us to understand that the guidance of the Spirit and the gifting operates only under love. Even if God really spoke to that man and told him to go and preach, if he had any love and if he really had to travel often that much from his family, you know what he should do first? He should first of all seek the best way in which his family is very well taken care of. And if his wife doesn't quite agree he should work out some means of understanding with the wife. God could speak to them but they are wrong with the speed of their obedience. Some times we are too slow and some times we are too fast. And the way he is doing he is completely neglecting his wife and his children. It is wrong. You can not say, “Thus says the Lord,” and everyday you go out witnessing. You are no more working to earn money to pay your rent, pay for the food, your children don't have a father to see them everyday. That is not love and neither is it truly of the Spirit of God. It is possibly fifty percent Spirit and fifty percent of the flesh.

When we are guided by God the highest law is the law of love. And love seeks the best of a person. Don't quote vision, dreams, thus says the Lord, religious convictions to contradict the law of love. For example if God says you must quickly leave a certain place and join a certain group and you come to them and say, “God told me to join you” even the manner of your joining them has to have some order. When God told you to join or help a particular group, you don't go to them as a big boss and say, “God told me to join and I expect to operate in the things of God.” No, you have to learn how to flow with the people. You have to submit and flow with the leadership that is there first. And you got to learn to work with those people. You got to learn that the people are there who are already doing different things. And you got to seek the most loving way to contribute your gift. So people who come and say, “I am a big boss here,” they are not led by the Spirit. That is not the loving way to do things.

Sometimes I sit in committees that organize inter-churches crusades and events. Sometimes it is very funny. There are pastors on this committee with experience to organize massive events and sometimes the most outspoken person is the pastor of a little fifteen-member church who tells everybody else what to do. The more established pastors would have the ability to tell from experience what is workable and what is not but they are keeping quiet. But the inexperienced pastor whose ministry is not established yet wants to tell everybody what to do. If he has years of experience he would know that it is not as easily done as he would think.

There was a young preacher who became quite famous when his name appeared in the Charisma magazine. One day this preacher was invited to John Osteen's church to preach. As he preached he started scolding the people. John Osteen at that time had seven thousand members in his church. This young preacher is quite famous. He

believed that he is prophet and apostle. John Osteen stepped up to the pulpit and said, "Young man sit down. This is my church and I won't allow you to beat the sheep over their head." And he sat down and John Osteen took over and began to preach. It's important to understand that we can have an office of a prophet, apostle, evangelist, pastor or teacher but we will lose that office without love.

Sometimes as a pastor I have spiritual authority. I could do things in a strong dominating way. I don't use my office to push people around. Sometimes with other pastors and we fellowship I don't use my standing to push people around. If I do that it becomes wrong. I don't walk in love. Or maybe talk about the secular world. You could be a great CEO in the business world. You could be a billionaire with many companies and you are attending church here. Remember this when you come to church you don't push people around. You may have a hundred servants in your house and one thousand employees in your job but when you come to church, you don't come and push the usher. You can be in any position in any place but you don't push people around.

Whether you are in the ministry or in the secular world there is something that God must do with our life. And as a pastor I am not afraid of preaching through whether it concerns a ministry or a business world. Even if my businessmen friends were sitting in the congregation, they need to be told in a loving way. In fact if they were to listen they would become better people. Who knows all their life they have been pushing people with money and position and power. But they have become arrogant and domineering characters. If you really love them you need to tell them that they are becoming more and more ugly as a person. And God wants them to be beautiful and they need to change. They do not have the law of love operating in their lives. The gifts of the Spirit, positions, or titles all these things are not given to you to push people around. The law of love edifies others and counts other better than yourself.

Now that applies to everything. Lets say you are a gifted musician. You don't come and tell people what to do. You could be the most gifted pianist. It's ungodly and ugly if you come and order people around, do this, do that. It will not edify. Its better if you come along them and you began to show them. One of the things I like about our music pastor is that although he is one of the most talented people I have ever known he is also very humble. He doesn't come around and push people. When he is with other musicians who are coming up, when they make mistakes he doesn't run them down. Whatever our talents, whatever our gifts, whatever God has given us, these are not things that should be used outside of love. They must be operated through love. And it's through love that we can guide people and help people. And it's in love that we can get guidance from God. Because when we die to everything outside and inside you will only have one goal in your life, to please God and to love people.

Let me read from Philippians 2:1 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affliction and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfishness or conceit.

Let me tell you in church, in spiritual kingdom its still possible to sometimes to have selfish ambition and conceit.

But in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only of his own interest, but also to the interest of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled himself and become obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

And finally love is not an option. Love is not a suggestion. Love is a commandment. We are commanded to love. Jesus says if you love me keep my word and He says this is my commandment that I give to you to love one another. It is not for you to choose whether you want to forgive or not. You are commanded to forgive. Its not for you and I to choose whether you want to be loving or not. We are commanded to be loving. Many people are not breaking the Ten Commandments. But many people are breaking the commandment of love.

As we conclude let me ask this question. Are you breaking the commandment of love? It is as serious as breaking the Ten Commandments. When you break any one of the commandments you break only one commandment. When you break the commandment of love you are breaking all the Ten Commandments together since all the Ten Commandments are in the spirit of love. The greatest commandment that we break is not committing adultery, not stealing. The greatest commandment that we break is the commandment to love. And if we break the commandment to love we have to repent. We have to acknowledge that we have fallen away in love and get ourselves right with God. And if you break the commandment of love you can pray your heart out God will not hear you. If you break the commandment of love you can cry and fast God will not hear you because you broke the commandment. If you break the commandment of God you can ask and pray and ask for a miracle from God you can ask for healing you can ask for prosperity God will not hear you. We need to keep Jesus' commandment of love in our hearts.