

A person wearing a dark hoodie is seen from behind, looking out over a vast, flat landscape under a hazy sky. The person is standing on a rocky or uneven terrain. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

How to be led by God

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Job 37:2-5 “Hear attentively the noise of his voice, and the sound that goeth out of his mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his lightning unto the ends of the earth. After it a voice roareth: he thundereth with the voice of his excellency; and he will not stay them when his voice is heard. God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend.”

As Believers, we all want to be led and directed by God; however, I admit that this is often much easier said than done! With so much opposing theology, winds of doctrine and of the myriad voices speaking in our ears what are we to do and how are we to know that the direction we’re taking is truly the direction that God would have move in? The Scripture gives us several ways to know the Voice of the Lord, and herein I present but a few basic principles in which we can know beyond knowing that we’re truly hearing from God:

1- Prayer: Above all else, our direction from God must be borne in prayer; there can be no shortcuts in this aspect.

Paul the Apostle exhorts the Thessalonian Church to “Pray without ceasing.” (1 Thess 5:17). To pray without ceasing means much much more than bowing our heads for a formal time of seeking the Lord; prayer without ceasing implies a constant communion with the Lord from our waking moment to our lying down. Prayer is where we receive our direction for the day, and it’s where the Lord most ministers to us.

Thomas Watson said, concerning prayer, “A godly man is a praying man. As soon as grace is poured in, prayer is poured out. Prayer is the soul’s traffic with Heaven; God comes down to us by His Spirit, and we go up to Him by prayer.”

J. H. Jowett said concerning prayer, ““I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach.” Oswald Smith said concerning prayer, ““Oh, how few find time for prayer! There is time for everything else, time to sleep and time to eat, time to read the newspaper and the novel, time to visit friends, time for everything else under the sun, but-no time for prayer, the most important of all things, the one great essential!”

Above all others, Jesus gave us a wonderful parable on prayer:

“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:1-8)

We must, as it were, “trouble God” and pray always, not fainting in this spiritual discipline.

One meeting with God is of more infinite value than ten thousand meetings with man and yet how little praying we do!

Prayer:

- * Draws us near to God
- * Draws God near to us
- * Brings us into the Presence of God
- * Gives us the avenue in which to receive forgiveness and cleaning from sin
- * Gives us the avenue in which to petition God for our needs and for the needs of others

Jesus said in John 10:27, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

Interestingly, in Isaiah 10:27 we read, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.”

In John 10:27 we read of the Sheep knowing the Voice of Jesus our Shepherd; in Isaiah 10:27 we read of the Anointing of God to set one free.

We then read in Acts 10:38 “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”

Do you see it?

In the stead of prayer we hear the Voice of the Shepherd and it is the Shepherd who is Anointed to set us free!

Oh that we would pray and seek the face of God!

2- Fasting: In fasting will we find a nearness to God that surpasses all of our fleshly desires.

Fasting, by far a difficult spiritual discipline for the majority of us, is one the most most untapped blessings of God to man today. In fasting we deny our flesh and rather focus on God’s Power in us to overcome our own fleshly desires, even for food.

Fasting says, “Lord, I’m going to deny even my belly in order to come into a closeness with You that I would otherwise not experience if it were not for Your Grace calling and enabling me to enter into this time of fasting.”

William Bramwell said that, “there is too much sleep, too much meat and drink, too little fasting and self-denial, too much taking part in the world ... and too little self-examination and prayer.”

John Piper in Hunger for God says, “‘We hunger for You, O God, to come in power.’ It’s a cry with our body, not just our soul: ‘I really mean it, Lord! This much I hunger for You. I want the manifestation of You Yourself more than I want food.’”

Beloved, fasting is not simply the abstinence of food; it's an avenue which brings a humbling into our hearts as we read in Psalm 35:13 "But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom."

In humility God will speak to us and fasting brings us into the Humility of Christ.

3- Scriptural Meditation: Reading Scripture is one thing, but seeking God for a "word from the Word" is quite another altogether.

The Word of God is our daily bread, and by it we live. "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11)

"And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." (Luke 4:4)

To neglect to meditate the Word of God and hide deep in our hearts is sin as we read "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalm 119:11)

The Lord takes so seriously the hiding of His Word in our hearts that He calls it sin to neglect Him in this area; only by the Word of God in our hearts can we know God, Beloved. Many today have devotional times of reading a chapter a day or such things, yet I submit that such is not enough.

While it's commendable that we read a chapter or more a day it's much more profitable to dissect passages of Scripture in context, looking for key principles in which to apply to our own lives and situations.

Reading is not enough; false prophets and the unconverted read the Bible; we must do more than simply read it... we must become one with it.

Ask God in prayer to give you a "word from the Word" and allow the Spirit of God to speak to you in the passage you're at; in this will your reading become meditating on His Word.

4- Obedience: Obedience to the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit is paramount in our hearing from God and being led and directed by Him.

Many of us want to hear from God through His Word or from His Spirit or through circumstances, yet we find it difficult to obey Him when He does speak.

Brethren, obedience is a key element in hearing the Voice of God.

If we're harboring known and willful sin in our hearts we mustn't expect to hear from God or be led by Him in the sense that "all is well".

Obedience to the clear teaching of Scripture must be our absolute focus as we walk with God.

I'm not speaking here of perfection but of an honest heart before God that says, "Yes, Lord, I'm going to obey You no matter what the cost."

If we find ourselves failing in certain areas then we go over to points 1 and 2 (Prayer and Fasting) to seek the Lord for His Delivering Power.

We must not expect to hear and be led of God in His mighty Blessings if we're unwilling to obey Him in our hearts.

Our desire must be one of loving obedience to the One who has saved us and washed us in His own Blood; if our desire is not to obey we must deny such desires and choose to obey regardless of how we feel.

1 Samuel 15:22 "And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

If we're to hear the Voice of the Lord we must resolve now to obey Him the first time He speaks to us; otherwise we'll no longer hear His Voice and be led of Him until we repent and obey the first word from the Word.

5- The Filling of the Holy Spirit: We must maintain a continual and consistent Filling of the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesians 5:18-25 we read "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

We can glean several truths from this passage of Scripture... and whether one is married or not, the principles apply, namely that the Filling of the Holy Spirit leads one into godly humble submission to others and causes a giving of oneself to the same degree as Christ gave Himself for His Bride, the Church of God.

If we're to hear the Voice of God and be led by God, we must maintain the Filling of the Holy Spirit. We must realize and acknowledge that true humility, thanksgiving, godly submission and a giving of oneself as Christ gave Himself for the Church is borne of the Holy Spirit; this is why it's absolutely essential that we're Filled with the Holy Spirit on a daily basis.

The first words from our mouths when we wake up should be, "Lord, cleanse me from sin in the Blood of Jesus and Fill me afresh with Your Holy Spirit."

Conclusion:

The Lord greatly desires to speak into our hearts and has provided the means for this, namely that we:

- 1- Pray without ceasing
- 2- Deny our flesh by Fasting
- 3- Hide God's Word in our hearts
- 4- Lovingly obey the Word of God
- 5- Be Filled with the holy Spirit daily

This is certainly not an exhaustive list, but a basic summary on how to be led and directed of God and how to hear and know His Voice.

Are you ready to hear His Voice? Are you ready to put these 5 Biblical Principles into consistent practice?

If so, be ready to be challenged by God's leading and directing in your life; this is going to be a very joyous journey for those who will take up the mandate to stop at nothing to be led of God!

Amen!