

GUIDANCE FROM GOD SERIES

**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 cannot 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, let's 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 let's 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.

(To be continued in the next message)