

## **HOW TO BE LED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT SERIES**

### **SPECTACULAR LEADINGS**

I Cor. 12 is the listing of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. We are teaching on how to be led by the Holy Spirit and we have seen some differences between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the human spirit. Besides His voice, the Holy Spirit does what we call a manifestation. When the Holy Spirit manifests the gifts operates. One major function of the gifts is in order to bring a direction or leading to our lives either as a confirmation or showing us things to come.

*In the nine gifts listed here, lets read from verse 7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.**

Listed here are nine gifts divided into three categories. The first classification is what I call the revelation gifts that reveal something. The second classification is the power gifts that do something. The third classification is the vocal gifts that say something. Of these three classifications, we have the word of knowledge, the word of wisdom and the discerning of spirits classified under the first category the revelation gifts. Then we have the next three the gift of faith, the working of miracles and the gift of healings classified under the power gifts. And finally, we have the three vocal gifts, which are the gift of prophecy, the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues.

Notice that out of the three categories, two of them have to do with leadings. See the revelation gifts and the vocal gifts have been a major portion of the leadings that we see in the Word of God. Every time you see that God led His people, there was an operation of the revelation gifts or a gift of prophecy. That is the revelation of the vocal gifts. Therefore when we talk about being led by the Spirit we not only need to consider the voice of the Holy Spirit which we will continue to consider in this series. Later on in this series, we will show the difference between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the Lord Jesus. We will also see in this series the difference between the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of the Father God. And the voice of the Holy Spirit and the voice of an angel is also a different voice.

But the major leadings are all through the Holy Spirit. In other words, He is the prime instigator of all leadings, whether your leadings came by the inward witness of the human spirit which is the voice of your conscience, or by the voice or manifestation of the Holy Spirit or the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ or the voice of the Father or an angel coming to you and speaking to you or an angelic voice declaring it onto you. Whichever form of leading that comes, the prime instigator is the Holy Spirit. He is the one that speaks to our inward witness and gives us the sensations in our inward witness. He is the one who communicates to our human spirit and whereby our human spirit communicates to us.

But what we are considering is the leadings directly by the Holy Spirit. The rest can be classified as indirect leadings. That is the Holy Spirit working through the inward witness, the Holy Spirit working through the human spirit or the Holy Spirit opening your spiritual eyes and you have a vision of Jesus. Or the Holy Spirit forms a medium or telephone line with the Father God and you or the Lord Jesus and you. Or the Holy Spirit opens the spiritual realm so that you could hear the voice of an angel. The Holy Spirit instigates all these but they are all indirect. He is leading us but through all these other channels.

Don't ask me why He must use so many channels. He has these varieties of leadings. It makes life interesting and for some it makes life confusing. As you go through this series, you learned that there is the inward witness and then there is the human spirit. Then there is the voice of the Holy Spirit, the voice of the Lord Jesus, the voice of the Father God and finally the voice of an angel. But it makes life

interesting because we are having a relationship with God. So the Holy Spirit is involved in all the leadings, whether they are indirect or direct.

Now we are talking about direct leading where He Himself manifests in our lives. When the Holy Spirit shows forth Himself and have a direct leading you can either hear His voice,(which we covered in the last two messages and what His voice is like) or see the operation of the gifts the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. There are two classifications of the gifts of the Spirit that have to do with leadings in our lives. One is in the realm of revelations and the other is in the realm of prophecy or the vocal gifts. We are going to see how the leading of the Spirit comes to people through the gifts of revelation.

Lets look at Acts 9:10 *Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias and to him the Lord said in a vision.* Here we see the Lord being mentioned and I realize that some people say the word *Lord* refers to the Holy Spirit. I think not - I believe it's the Lord Jesus Himself. Of course, the Holy Spirit is involved in the vision. Lets read on, *"Ananias" And he said, "Here I am, Lord." So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sights. Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name. But the Lord said to him, "Go for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake.*

No. 1 you see in verse 10 Ananias had a vision. I am not sure whether it was a closed, an open, or an inner vision. There are three types of visions that we have touched on in the teaching series on Visions. Here he had a vision so we know that is discerning of spirits operating. Whatever type of vision he saw it was a gift of discerning of spirits operating. He discerned and saw the Lord Jesus.

Then as the Lord spoke to him in verse 11 *"Arise and go to the street called Straight and*

*inquire in the house of Judas of one called Saul of Tarsus for behold he is praying.*" The Lord gives through the Holy Spirit a word of knowledge. The Lord revealed the name of the street, the name of the owner of the house, the name of the person to be ministered to and what he is doing. So, the second gift of the spirit was operating at this time and that was the word of knowledge.

In verse 12 *And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.* Again, the word of knowledge reveals that Saul on the other side also had a vision of the Lord. The Lord reveals to Ananias what He had revealed to Saul. As Ananias responds in fear speaking about what he has heard he says in verse 18, "Lord I know this man, I know his reputation, he is a murderer, he is a persecutor, he is a bad man." Ananias brought forth natural knowledge. What Ananias spoke while having a vision was what he heard and knew in the natural. He has not heard the news that Saul was born again. He has not heard the news that Saul had already had a vision of the Lord. All he heard was bad news about this guy, which formerly was true. But that was not divine knowledge; that was human knowledge.

And the Lord in His mercy continued speaking in chapter 9:15 *But the Lord said to him, "Go for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."* Notice that is a word of wisdom. The word of wisdom is a revelation of things in the future. The Lord revealed to Ananias what will happen in Paul's future, it was prophetic. Remember that in the Old Testament when he talked about people prophesying it is not just a gift of prophecy operating but it sometimes operates with a word of wisdom and a word of knowledge. But here in Acts 9 Ananias was being led by the Holy Spirit to pray for Saul. Here is Ananias in the same city, same town. In his house, he was supposed to be led to Saul who was in another house at a street named Straight in a house of a man named Judas.

Just to bring him from this point to that point, the Lord used three gifts of the Spirit, discerning of spirits, the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom. Notice that all the three revelation gifts were operating in this particular leading. And it was because of all three operating Ananias was motivated to go. The moment he reached the house and Saul was there he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord has sent me."

The Holy Spirit led him.

We will bring forth a few incidences before we draw some conclusions and principles. Let look at another case of leading by the Holy Spirit Acts 16:6 Now here is Paul in his second missionary journey. *Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia they tried to go into Bithynia but the Spirit did not permit them.*

Notice that the word Holy Spirit is mentioned. The Holy Spirit forbade them; the Holy Spirit did not permit them. The details were not given to us but we know that the Holy Spirit was directly operating and preventing them from going into a wrong place.

*Verse 8 So passing by Mysia they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.*

We see here discerning of spirits operating. Not only that, there was also a hint of a word of wisdom involved. A man dressed in Macedonian garment was crying out in need. In a sense, God was revealing a word of knowledge of the need in Macedonia and at the same time there was a word of wisdom coming forth revealing that was where he was supposed to go. It revealed the future of what Paul was to do. In that one single verse, we see a very clear-cut operation of the discerning of spirits and a hint of the word of knowledge and the word of wisdom. And that operated together with the other two manifestations forbidding or prevention of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was sort of putting a stop somewhere along their way. We believe that was a spiritual warning to Paul and Silas. It was more than just the five inward witnesses because the Holy Spirit was mentioned. So, it's something very strong, something preventative.

Acts 21:4 *And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem. These people picked up some things in the Spirit but they gave the wrong interpretation. God did not tell Paul not to go. They picked up danger but God did not say don't go. The disciples concluded that it means don't go. That's their own conclusion. Sometimes you can have a right manifestation but wrong interpretation and you could interpret the very opposite of what God wants you to do.*

Verse 8 *On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him. Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. And as we stayed many days a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 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.*

The Spirit was leading Paul here into Jerusalem. On his way there, there was this prophet named Agabus whom you heard of in Acts 11 too. He comes without any greeting and just pulled Paul's belt off; good thing his pants did not come loose, and tied his hands and feet prophesying saying, "Thus says the Holy Spirit so shall this man who own this belt." Now that is an operation of a gift of prophecy. There was also revelation inside that word of prophecy. He revealed things to come. So the word of wisdom was also operating. Now God was also revealing through the five-fold ministry of a prophet. He sent a prophet who was in one of the five-fold ministries. This is an additional combination that the Holy Spirit gives.

Having seen the three cases in Acts 9, Acts 16 and Acts 21, we have to draw some conclusions first before we go further, that is, when the Holy Spirit leads you into an area, He would usually lead by a combination of factors. He takes everything that He possibly can do and He brings that leading to your life. Now every one of them has to harmonize together. So, lets list all of them in these three cases together.

He could combine His leading that is His voice with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Put

that as No. 1.

Or He could combine it with the five-fold ministries. In Acts 21 He sent a prophet. And the prophet operates the gifts.

Also, you notice that in Paul's life He also combine it with Paul's own human spirit the leadings he had received. After the incidence in Acts 21 in verse 12 everybody told Paul don't go. They were persuading with tears and Paul said don't do that because he was prepared to die for the Lord Jesus. In Acts 20:22-23 *And see, now, "I am bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that "the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me."* In other words, Paul had already heard from the Holy Spirit himself. So, he combines it with the voice of the Holy Spirit Himself leading.

All these are combination factors. We will look at these combinations of factors in greater details as we go in this series. But we need to see here that even in the function and the operation of the gifts, here are different degrees of leading and unless you combine all of them, your leadings cannot be clear. It takes much to form a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Let's see the combination in Acts 21. Notice that the Holy Spirit had revealed something to the disciples at Tyre. They sensed something in the spirit and they tried to give Paul a leading. But the leading was wrong. They told Paul not to go to Jerusalem but it was God's will for him to go to Jerusalem.

The reason we are teaching this series is because in counseling with people we see that 99.9 percent of the time the most important thing Christians ask for is the will of God and how to be led by the Spirit. That is why we go into such details.

Here notice that the disciples had a working of the Spirit or manifestation to them

and they didn't function correctly. They took that leading and saw it as the very opposite thing as to what God wants to do. The Holy Spirit is revealing things all the time and many people takes what He reveals to be the very opposite of what He wants to do. Instead of seeing it as something to prepare them, they see it as a no. Why does it happen? That's our question. It's because in the book of Acts 21 these disciples were not functioning at the level of these five-fold ministries. Even Agabus could not go to the point of saying, "This is it - go right in." After Agabus prophesied everybody was still thinking Paul should not go. Today sometimes God speaks to people God confirms it, God sends His ministers, God does everything, and we take the very opposite of what He wanted. It's so easy to say follow the pillar of cloud. It's so blur that they couldn't see it. Follow the pillar of fire they went into wildfire.

When we talk about Spirit leading, we have to cover His manifestation. Here are some rules that we have to go by. It is more important what the Holy Spirit manifest to you than what He manifests to another. It's more important what He is speaking to you when it's your own life that is concerned. There are plus and minus in this type of leading. That is why we spent so much time teaching on the inward witness since 95 percent of the leading is by the inward witness and the inward voice. Yet, the five percent is very power and very dramatic. The five percent is the voice of the Holy Spirit, visions, revelations, dreams etc. They are powerful in themselves. It's easy to be carried away by a tremendous manifestation and a tremendous vision that can be easily misinterpreted.

So, what are the safeguards that are involved? Safeguard No. 1 all the leadings of the Spirit are supernatural whether they be silent, inward witness, inward voice or a big open vision – they are all supernatural. Its supernatural does not have to be dramatic. If God whisper into your ear and tell you something, it's supernatural. Speaking in tongues is supernatural although it may be very common. But we have to differentiate between a spectacular and a not so spectacular. The spectacular has to do with dreams, visions, audible voice, prophetic ministry - these are all under the spectacular side. When the gifts operate its dramatic, its spectacular and there is an unction upon. But the other side is the anointing within which is undercurrent but its important in the leading of the Spirit of God.

Nine-five percent of the leadings in our life are on the quiet side, supernatural but not so spectacular. The remaining five percent is very spectacular. And we need to learn to deal with them because these are milestones along our spiritual walk. They are markers to keep our spiritual life interesting because God is a God of variety. He leads us in this spectacular way.

Rule No.1. When the spectacular leadings involve your life, whether it came through the gift of the Spirit, the voice of a prophet, the voice of an angel or an audible voice, if it involves your life rule No. 1 is you have the prerogative to interpret it and not somebody else. Let says a brother saw a vision. He gives forth a vision and that vision is about me. His responsibility is to deliver it and not to interpret it. If the Lord gives him some interpretation like Acts 9, Ananias was given some interpretations, and then he can deliver. We have to learn the art of delivering *thus says the Lord*. A lot of people says *thus says the Lord*. At first it was *thus says the Lord* but halfway through it was no more *thus says the Lord*. It was *thus says themselves*. They continued where the Lord stopped. We need to learn the art of saying *thus says the Lord* so that when we say *thus says the Lord*, it is really *thus says the Lord*. Remember the Lord can speak half sentence and stop. He just gives up to that point. We need to learn to stop when He says stop, start when He says start.

Let says this brother has a spectacular vision regarding my life. In his own mind, he may have some interpretation. Of course, everybody has a human mind. So, whatever we received our mind loves to draw a conclusion. Lets say this brother has a spectacular vision about me. As he is delivering, he may have some of his own ideas roughly of what it means. But rule No. 1 of this spectacular leading is if it concerns my life, I have the last say and prerogative to interpret it and not somebody else. Sometimes you may not have any interpretation yet. Then keep it until the Lord gives it. The Lord normally will not give you a spectacular leading until He has spoken to you. All spectacular leadings tend to be confirmations of what you have already received in the inward witness. Even let's says if I had a spectacular leading and I give it to you. You have the last prerogative to interpret it. That's the law of God accepted by the Holy Spirit. No one can transcend the individual free will. That's the first rule that goes. The prerogative belongs to whoever is involved.

Let take the example in Acts 21. Here comes this Agabus guy. He takes Paul's belt, ties his hand and says, "Thus says the Lord." All the matured people around him told Paul not to go. Literally everyone, I don't know what Agabus was doing at that time. Paul had the last say. But if it was a weaker person than Paul, he may have stopped going to Jerusalem. That is why when we touch on spectacular leading we need to bring out the rulebook first. You may have a spectacular vision of some family member but remember you are not to interpret but only to deliver. The rulebook is that the prerogative of the interpretation rests on the recipient. If you have been long with me in this type of things, you would notice if you sit down with me and talk about the things of God and about what the Lord is saying. When we reach a certain point I will stop, I would say, "This is what I am saying and advising, not the Lord." I will differentiate between what I am advising from my own human spirit and discern it as much as I know from the thus says the Lord. We need to do that all the time. That person must be given the prerogative and the authority to make their own decision regarding the final interpretation of the spectacular leading.

The second rule is that normally spectacular leadings should never have been given until a person has sensed something from the Lord. From my walk with the Lord, the Lord does not give a spectacular leading until He had spoken to a person. For example, I may have a spectacular leading and prophecy with *thus says the Lord* to give to James. If it is from the Lord I obey and I give it to him. Before coming to me and giving me the spectacular leading, the Lord would already have given something to him, whether the spectacular leading comes through the gifts operating, the ministry operating or any other manner. The Lord uses spectacular leading as a sort of last resort or finale. The finale is the climax and strongest part of a song. So wouldn't it be funny if I start with a finale and end it with the introduction? Wouldn't it be funny if we turn the service upside down? When you come in, we start praying for everybody. Then we give the message. Then we give the announcement. Then at the end of the service we say, "Welcome everybody." That's something wrong. You don't write a letter saying, "Dear so and so, In conclusion,..." What conclusion? You didn't even give the facts yet. You don't give the conclusion before you give the arguments. So, things had to be set right. The spectacular leading revolves around the finale, the finishing touches.

Therefore based on rule No. 2 persons who claim to give a spectacular leading

when there was no prior instructions from the Lord had better check themselves because that person receiving that spectacular leading has no confirmation inside. The spectacular leading was supposed to be confirmation to something that they may have perceived from the Lord but there was no confirmation. Something is wrong. There are two possibilities: either it's not from God or its from God and you gave it in a wrong time. God has spoken to me something regarding some people's life and I held it for one year before I felt it was ready to be given. So rule No.2 as you operate in the spectacular realm and as you move into that spectacular realm, whether the Lord works it through ourselves or through somebody else the spectacular will not come unless the Lord has worked in the other guidance system, namely through the inward witness. In other words, the Lord will do His best to reveal to a person through his inward witness first. Then only He comes with all these spectacular manifestations.

Notice here in Acts 9 when Ananias had a spectacular visitation. What the Lord told him He had already spoken to Saul, He says, "Saul is waiting for you." He had already seen a man by the name of Mr. Ananias coming and putting his hand on him. See the spectacular was only given after God has spoken to Paul.

Then in Acts 16 by the time they had that vision what have they done? They have already followed as much as they can their inward witness. They had done their best. They had tried to go to Mysia, no, go to Bithynia, no, go to Troas yes. And that was when the vision came. The Macedonian clothed in Macedonian garment said, "Come over and help us." That is finishing touches to that leading.

Do you notice that in Acts 20 Paul already said that in Acts 21, Acts 22 that the Holy Spirit has been speaking to him all the time of what he is going to face in Jerusalem? He knows it. He says, "I go bound in the spirit." By the time, he went there he just needs the finishing touches, that's all. Why are the finishing touches important? They are to encourage us. Wouldn't it be encouraging when the Lord has spoken something to you and the Lord shows it to somebody else as a confirmation?

In the last meeting that we had about the church building project, we concluded with a dome shape building. Nobody had any other shapes. Then we brought in the architect. This architect had this new design that he had received from the Lord and it could be incorporated into our plans. The new design has not been seen by anybody except by those few who were directly involved. Just the next week or so one brother came to me with a hand written dream. He saw a vision of our new premises. He walked inside, went upstairs and walked around. Then he noticed this ceiling. And he described the ceiling as wavy shape lines. This brother didn't know anything about the vision of the architect. There is no way he would have known about what transpired. Our plans were flexible and we adapted what that brother saw in his dream. That is confirmation of the design.

Isn't it exciting when God confirms? That is the purpose of confirmation - it adds more boosters into you. It spurs you on. So spectacular leadings are powerful. They are part of His great confirmation. But they never come until you have moved into something. Acts 16 and Acts 21 are the same.

What are the principles that we must draw? Many people cry, weep, groan, grumble, complain, protest, fast, do everything they can and tried to get God to give them vision, revelation or something spectacular. If I am saying something that is in your life let me honestly say this: every Christian who is born again has a hunger for the spectacular. Every one of us literally would love a vision from the Lord. We love an open vision. I remember when I was a young Christians how many times I cried to God. Each time I fasted those forty days one of my items is Lord I want to have vision. It is the cream on the top of your food. It's the flavoring on the top of it. It puts the flavor in. How would you like to eat your noodles without the sauce? It's the sauce that brings out the whole flavor the taste. You remove the flavoring and you literally have a dreary food. You remove the spectacular and you have a very dull Christian life. God puts the topping on our ice cream to make life interesting for us. But there are principles that we can move into which is this. The spectacular will never come as I mentioned in rule No. 2 unless you are sensitive to the other systems of guidance. Many Christians desire the spectacular but the spectacular will come when you have done your best to obey the written Word. You have done the best you know how to obey God through your witness through your inward voice. When you have done the best then the best comes. When you have not done the best that you know how God will not show up.

Which is why literally every project of God and everything that God does He requires that we do our best first before He does His part. Every miracle in the bible literally has a part that is played by men and a part that is played by God. When Jesus wanted to turn the water into wine, He told the stewards to fill the water pots. That is for them to do. They do the best that they know how. The rest is for Him to turn the water into wine. When the axe-head was lost, Elisha took the stick and cast it into the water. Why didn't he just say, "Axe-head float?" No, he took the stick, he did his part and God does His part. Why didn't Jesus just produce manna for the five thousand? Why did He ask for the five loaves and two fish? Because He wants us to do the best we know how. If every one of you is doing anything for God, you should be doing that work to the best of your ability. When you reached the limits that's when the miraculous starts operating. You reach the limits of your ability by following your inward witness and your inward voice to the best you know how.

Lets suppose that you are sent to be a missionary to a place, all you have heard is the word "go", and you heard the name of the place. You know you should go there now. So, you find out what are the transportations - boat, train and airplane. Your job is to find that out. Why doesn't God pick you up by His hand and take you there? If God calls you to go to Mongolia and be a missionary there, you got to find out where is Mongolia and how to go there. So, that's your part. You do your best and start moving in that direction. In other words, when God speaks you got to do your best to move into that direction. When you set yourself in that direction the other leadings come. You have placed yourself in a position to receive the spectacular leadings. Usually when you have done the best you can the spectacular will show up. You may suddenly have a vision. Very few people are receiving the spectacular leadings. Let me emphasize that the spectacular is supposed to be a part and parcel of our life even today. But very few are receiving it is because we have not followed to the best what we are doing. I have seen some spectacular things. They never come until I reached the end of the best. When God speaks to me to do something, I start doing my best. When God calls me to go to Singapore and minister there. I would do my best to do what I can to organize to move into that area. As I began to move into that direction, I began to see the miracles taking place. If I don't move and reach the end of what I can do God does not move.

