

He Will Lead

by Richard E. Bieber

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being led by the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers and the obstacles that prevent us from following His guidance.

Scripture: John 14:26, Acts 1:4, Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:25, Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Hebrews 3:7, James 4:5, 1 John 2:27

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Guidance"

Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches about the promise of the Holy Spirit to guide believers into truth and empower them to be witnesses for Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes to teach, guide, and empower every man and woman who lives as a disciple of Christ, not just limited to the apostles or a specific age. The key is to listen, learn, and follow where the Spirit leads, without looking back or being distracted by other voices or desires. The Spirit guides believers through challenges and impossible situations, requiring trust, unity with fellow believers, and obedience to His leading.

Transcript

"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said..... He will guide you into all truth." The promise to the apostles was very simple. While their time of walking with Jesus in flesh and blood was drawing to a close, they were about to receive a new Teacher who would take them on into things which were presently beyond their understanding. This Teacher would come, - because of the death Jesus was about to die, - because of the blood he was about to shed.

After the resurrection Jesus gave them a few more hints. "Don't leave Jerusalem... Stay here until the Holy Spirit comes to you ... John baptized with water but you are about to be baptized in the Holy Spirit ... Then you will be my witnesses here in Jerusalem and on to the uttermost parts of the earth." There are those who seem to think these promises were meant only for the twelve, or perhaps for that particular age. But as long as the work Jesus has given to his disciples remains unfinished the promise of the Holy Spirit to teach, to guide, to empower, applies to every man and woman who gives themselves over to living the life of a disciple.

The Holy Spirit is promised, and the Holy Spirit comes to do exactly what Jesus says he will do: To guide the believer into the truth they need to know, and into the place of power where they need to be, in order to be Jesus' witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. The Spirit doesn't come to give you goose

bumps. He doesn't come to give you heart palpitations. He doesn't come to give you some exotic experience to brag about in front of your Christian friends. He comes to guide you in mind and body into all truth.

The problem is not, "Will the Holy Spirit come to me?" He will come. He will come to you in ways you've never experienced in all your life no matter how many wonderful things you've already received from him, or no matter how many disappointments you have known. The problem is: Will you listen when he teaches? Will you follow where he leads? There are many of us who are sitting around waiting for the Holy Spirit to "come" when he had already come in a thousand ways and done everything he could to get us to listen and learn and follow.

Picture yourself awakened in the middle of the night by series of thundering explosions. You jump out of bed and run to the window and see smoke and flames enveloping your street and raging for miles in the distance. There are no sirens, no fire trucks, no ambulances, no police cars. The destruction is so universal the whole city is in a state of shock. You hear a voice behind you saying, "Come, follow me quickly!" You turn and look into the face of one who could be a stranger who came along by chance, or he could be an angel.

You slip on some clothes and some shoes and follow the stranger out the back door and along the alley. A few doors away you notice a man who looks identical to your guide trying to persuade one of your neighbors to leave her yard. But your neighbor keeps looking back at her house. "All my things! How can I leave! My life's work is in that house, how can I leave!" And you hear the guide giving her a final warning. "Woman, how can I guide you if you're forever looking back?" This is why many of us are failing to be led by the Spirit of God.

Not because the Spirit never came, but because we're forever looking back. - When a man looks at a woman in lust, he's looking back. - When a woman falls into self-pity, she's looking back. - When you look at another person's circumstances with covetousness, you're looking back. - When we measure everything by the happiest year of our life, we're looking back. - And when we're looking back, the Spirit cannot lead. You follow your guide up the alley, out onto a main street which is now a confusion of screams and burning rubble.

At an intersection you recognize an old friend being literally dragged by a guide like your own. His face is bewildered. One second he's looking up at a third floor window listening to a woman who shouts, "Don't be a fool and follow him! Come up here with me! I'll keep you safe!" The next second he's glancing at some cronies in the doorway of a bar. "What's your hurry, Man? Come in and have a drink first, you'll need it!" Across the street a well-dressed gentleman is waving a fist full of money at him.

"It's all yours Son if you'll drive me to the bridge!" As you pass, you see his guide finally let go of him. "I can't guide you if you listen to all voices. And I can't wait until you make up your mind." This is why many of us are not led by the Spirit. We tell ourselves we're open-minded. Well, we're so open minded we don't have any mind left. We're listening to every voice that comes along and so we're paralyzed by confusion. The only part of us that moves any more is our head which swivels back and forth between the voices that call to us.

Your guide leads you into a park where the smoke clears and the air is fresh. "Safe at last!" you, say to him. "Not yet, friend, we have a long way to go." "Could I just lie down for a few moments and rest?" "Not here ... not here, hurry!" You notice a whole crowd of people spread out on the grass fast asleep. Some

guides are moving among them trying to wake them up with no result. In the light of the red sky you can see that the sleepers have the most peaceful smiles on their faces.

As you pass nearby you can even hear some of them in their sleep saying, "Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! Safe at last!" Within minutes that whole park will be ripped by an explosion that will blow them to shreds. But nothing seems to avail to wake them up. Another reason why many of us are not led by the Spirit: We follow him so far and then we settle down to sleep. Whole fellowships are doing this. Still praising the Lord with heavenly smiles on their faces, but they've stopped moving.

The Spirit is trying to wake them up, - but they slumber on. Destruction is only a short while away, - but they slumber on. Emerging from the park minutes before it blows, your guide leads you along the railroad tracks behind some warehouses which haven't caught fire yet. At the door of the largest building you notice a man arguing with his guide. "Look, I've had enough of your crazy direction. You don't know any more about what's going on than I do. Three times in the last hour you almost got me killed.

I'm going in here and wait it out in the basement. Why don't you get lost?" You haven't traveled another 300 yards before that building explodes. The Holy Spirit cannot guide a person who always knows better. And that's a problem for many of us. We really think we have the answers. And when the Spirit calls us to walk a road that doesn't coincide with our idea, we take our own road. "It seems like the Spirit of God has just been taking me around in circles for the last six months!

I've had it! I'm going to do things my own way for a change." And off we go. The railroad tracks lead between two buildings that are all in flames. Bricks and burning fragments of roof keep plunging to the tracks in a shower of fire. But the guide keeps right on going. "Don't be afraid! Come we'll make it," he says. At the entrance to this canyon of flame a man and his wife have halted and are disputing with their guide. "We'll never get through here!" says the man. "It's the only way" answers the guide.

"Let's not waste time." And how often the Spirit leads us into situations which look impossible. If we're listening we hear him warning us. "Don't try to go around this. The only way is through the fire. Come!" We have to trust him. It may be that some of us are at this moment stalled at the threshold of one of those impossible corridors of flame. Stalled because we will not trust. "I cannot guide you if you won't trust me. Trust me!" Somehow your guide gets you through the flames without a scratch, and you find yourself standing on the edge of a river.

A ladder extends down a wall. There a small boat, already crowded with people, is waiting. "You must get in that boat," says your guide. "But Sir, that boat has too many people in it already! Look, it's beginning to sink. Let me wait for the next boat." "There won't be a next boat. You must get in this boat. It will be moving in a few seconds. Go!" Another reason why the Spirit can't guide us: We balk every time he directs us to fit in with others. We don't want to sit in that crowded boat where we all have to learn together and help each other bail out the water.

We want a boat of our own. But to cross the river there are no private boats. We have to fit in. It's the only way. This is precisely why the Spirit has drawn us together into a fellowship. And the only ones among us who will make it across to the other side will be those who truly fit in with brothers and sisters, no matter who. "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said....he will guide you into all truth."

We come from many backgrounds. We are very different from each other in many ways. Yet God has seen fit to bring us together because we have one thing in common: our sin. - To every one of us he offers the cleansing blood of his Son to cover our sin. - To every one of us who accepts the blood of the Lamb, God sends his Spirit to be our guide. Now. Today. Then begins the final awesome division (which only God can see) between those who follow their guide and those who refuse.

Don't say God hasn't sent the Spirit. He has. Who do you think brought you to the light you now have? And, don't say the Spirit isn't guiding you. He is, if you are willing to be led. Of course, the Spirit can't guide you, - if you're forever looking back, - if you're listening to all voices, - if we insist on sleeping, - if you always know better, - if you refuse to trust, - if you won't fit in with others. But the Spirit of God will indeed guide you this very day, - if you will follow the light you now have, - if you will do the thing you already know he told you to do.

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

He will lead - if you will follow.

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