



The
FLOW
Adult CURRICULUM

#34

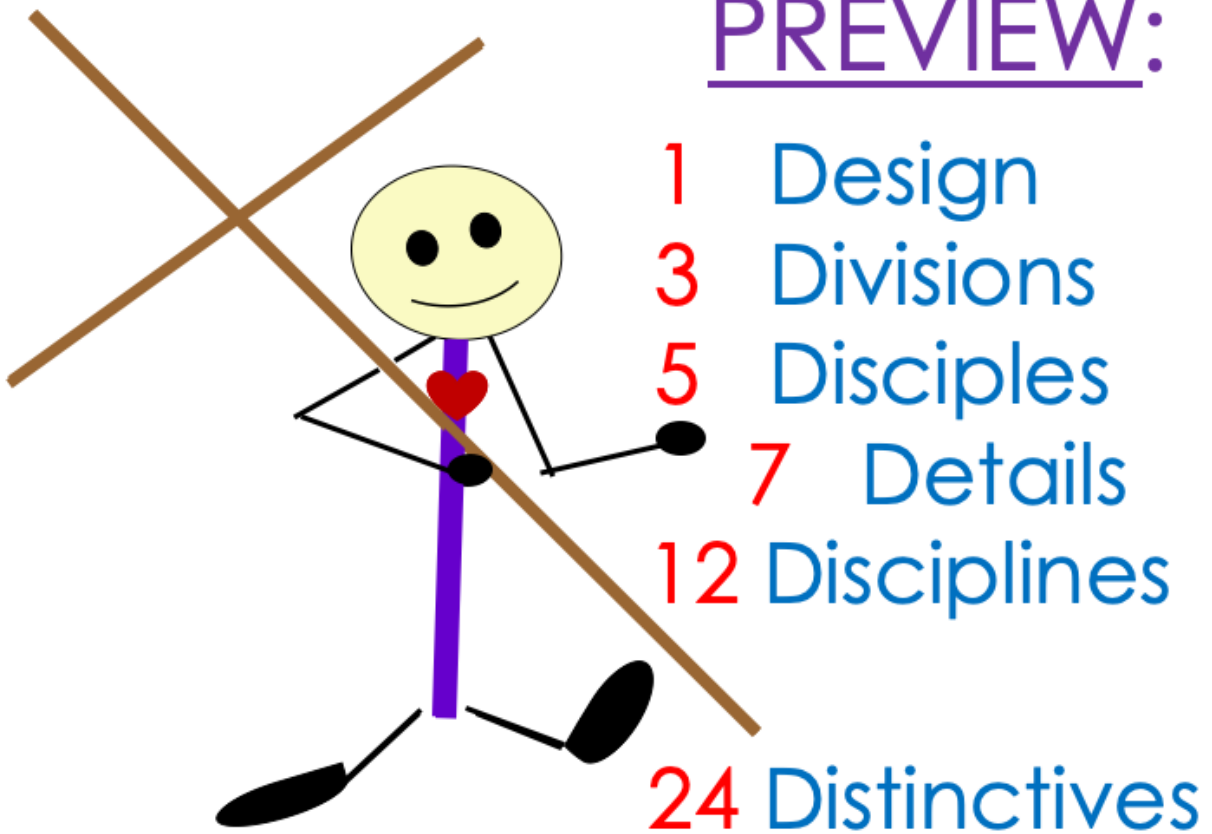
Living Spirit-Led

Acts 15:36 – 16:10

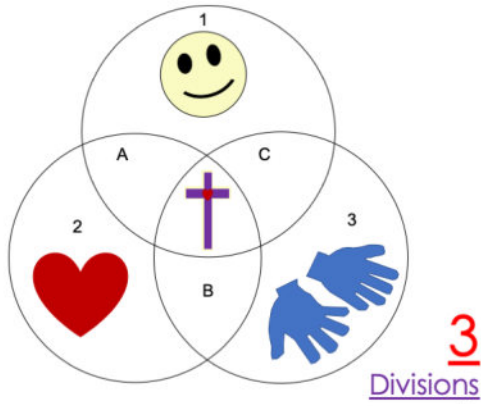
(Come And See Christianity book pages 97)

The FLOW

PREVIEW:

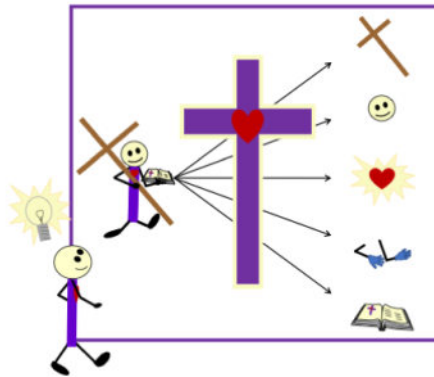


SECTION SIX: 12 Disciplines



The Disciple's "Hands" put into **action** the **truth** & **love** of God's Word, God's will, & God's ways. In short, when **each Christian's Head, Heart, & Hands** are united in purpose & power, the family of God is **living** as the **Body of Christ!**

24 Family Distinctives:



24 DISTINCTIVES:

The “distinctives” are a family portrait... When you add God’s Word, God’s Spirit, God’s Truth, God’s love, and God’s people all together, the distinctives are what we look, love, & live like :-)

We are...



INTRO:

As we begin to **see the beautiful, biblical portrait of Christ's faith-filled family** defined and described by God's Word, will, and ways, it is critical to remember that the Holy Bible is to ALWAYS BE our ultimate source, authority, and interpreter in ALL things pertaining to one's understanding of reality and application of truth in love.

Remember,
The biblical Church is Christ's missional family...
Moreover, God's Word reveals our Father's will and His family's ways.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Here are **24 defining & describing HANDS-on DISTINCTIVES of Christianity:**

True Christians are biblically, miraculously, intentionally, missionally, and imperfectly...

1. *Responding to grace*
2. *Repenting of sin*
3. *Trusting the Bible*
4. *Obeying God's Word*
5. *Growing in Christ*
6. *Living Spirit-led*
7. *Praying for guidance*
8. *Following by faith*
9. *Dying to self*
10. *Carrying our cross*
11. *BE-ing The Church*
12. *Loving one another (truly loving one another)*
13. *Equipping the saints*
14. *Exemplifying supernatural unity*
15. *Ministering as ambassadors*
16. *Discerning matters shrewdly*
17. *Worshipping God vertically*
18. *Experiencing Him horizontally*
19. *Proclaiming the Gospel (no matter what)*
20. *Fishing for men*
21. *Making disciplined warriors*
22. *Winning spiritual warfare*
23. *Loving our King*
24. *Serving His kingdom*

PRAYER:

LORD, we seek to bless You with all that is within us. Help us here, we pray, to be that blessing as we come to better understand You and Your eternal truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Help us to see with Your eyes and love with Your love, all that You would reveal to us through Your Word, Your will, and Your ways. May we grow in our grasp of Your realities, Your means of restoration, and Your mission of reproduction. In the holy name of Jesus, we pray. Amen and Amen

CONTEXT:

Macro

This lesson marks another major transition point in our curriculum's eye-opening explanation of Christianity. By way of review, we began in Section One with the reality of Almighty God having 1 Divine DESIGN (also known as a biblical worldview and the eternal application of Jesus Christ's Gospel). In Section Two, we addressed the 3 DIVISIONS (Head, Heart, and Hands) that make up the "being" in every human being. Next, in Section Three, we demonstrated how Christianity accounts for, defines, and describes all of humanity, every person, past, present, and future. We noted that all people can be identified as one of the 5 DISCIPLES – Lost, Lover, Learner, Leader, or Lifer. Moving forward, Section Four revealed, engaged, and explained the 7 fundamental DETAILS of God's Divine DESIGN... because **we all need to know what we need to know**. To be more specific, those seven truths are: The Foundations, The Framework, The Facts, The Fight, The Faith, The Family, and the truth about Forever.

Then, in Section Five, which we just completed, our focus shifted from HEAD based truths to 12 HEART shaping exercises or disciplines - each having the potential to strengthen one's personal relationship with Christ, His Church, and their collective mission: bringing God glory by finding & growing more glorifiers.

We used the acronym **J.E.S.U.S.'S. P. S.W.O.R.D.** to outline and harmonize a biblical, missional, and intentional methodology for growing in God's love - & His loving witness. The 12 HEART DISCIPLINES are: **J**ournaling... **E**ating-nothing (fasting)... **S**cripture-intake... **U**nderstudy of Scripture... **S**tewardship... **S**olitude... **P**rayer... **S**erving... **W**orshipping... **O**utreach... **R**elationships... and **D**evelopment.

Now, our curriculum and study will transition to The HANDS. This is where **Christians demonstrate to the world that Christ is in their worship & witness**. Whereas our time spent in the HEAD sections (1-4) focused on the truths that Christians need and seek to LEARN, and our concentration on the 12 HEART DISCIPLINES of section 5 helped us to grow in God's LOVE, our sixth and final section will **walk through the 24 DISTINCTIVES, which explain & exemplify how Christians are to faithfully LIVE... and fully BE The Church... together** – all by God's grace & ALL for His glory!

God's Word puts it this way:

"Let us not love with word and tongue but in action and truth." – 1st John 3:18

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, [47](#)praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. – Acts 2:46-47

I. **DISTINCTIVES are FRUIT:**

It is important to realize that God’s miraculous and authentic **Christian DISTINCTIVES are the FRUIT of saving grace and faith** (Ephesians 2:1-10). As Jesus described in John 15, people can do nothing outside of their abiding in Him and obeying His Word, will and ways. In short, there will be no fruit unless one remains attached to and provided for by the true Vine and divine Root. With that said, a cautionary note is worth sharing here, beware the counterfeits that abound around the world. ***Plastic fruit is deceptive vs. DISTINCTIVE!***

Galatians 5:22-25

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

II. **DISTINCTIVES are FAMILY:**



DISTINCTIVES, by definition, are those “distinguishing characteristics that are notable for having a special quality, style, and/or attractiveness” (Dictionary.com).

When it comes to God’s family, the true Church, each Christian and their individualistic DISTINCTIVES are as unique as their potential. At the same time, in the same way that a billion unique snowflakes can be combined to make a single snowstorm, or countless swatches of scrap fabric can be sewn together to make a single quilt, so it is with God’s family. The LORD creates His Christian family with a both/and combination of DISTINCTIVE uniqueness, as well as DISTINCTIVE love and defining unity.

Christianity’s DISTINCT family (ecclesia) has a DISTINCTIVE unity (koinonia).

“By this all people will know that you are My disciple, if you have love for one another.”
– John 13:35

“The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

III. **DISTINCTIVES are WITNESS:**

The most biblical and healthy understandings of Christianity will include an embrace of two overarching and DISTINCTIVE purposes. Namely, per God’s Word, will, and ways, every Christian has received miraculous, saving grace, as well as the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to:

1. Bring glory to God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do all to the glory of God.*

2. BE Christ’s witness.

Acts 1:8

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, **and you will be My witnesses** in Jerusalem (locally), and in all Judea and Samaria (regionally), and to the end of the earth (globally).”*

God’s DISTINCTIVE people have been filled with His Holy Spirit for the express purpose of living DISTINCTIVE lives. When the world sees the LORD’s loving family living out their divinely empowered and God-honoring worship, work, and warfare, the resulting fruit will serve as a faithful witness, built with supernatural, grace-based, and missional DISTINCTIVES.

“God created me—and you—to live with a single, all-embracing, all-transforming passion—namely, a passion to glorify God by enjoying and displaying his supreme excellence in all the spheres of life.”

- John Piper

The Christian Distinctive

What distinguishes Christianity from all other religions is that it is a *revealed* religion. Christianity is not about our search for God or our means of finding him. Christianity is not a religion that works its way upward. It is all about God coming to us — God in grace making himself known to us and making a way for us to enjoy fellowship with him.

And so, at the very heart of Christianity is, simply, a message — a message from God to us about what he has done to bring us to himself.

If Christianity is distinctively revealed religion, then it is also uniquely *authoritative*. It does not offer itself as the best and highest of human thinking about God or even the best or most successful of human efforts to know God. It professes to be nothing less than the unique word from God, his very own self-disclosure and the record of the actions he has taken in Jesus Christ to bring us into fellowship with himself.

One of Rudyard Kipling's characters declares, "The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone; He don't obey no orders unless they is his own." That is to say, human religions lack authority — they form their own ideas and "discover" their own beliefs.

By contrast the Christian is "under orders," because unlike human religions, Christianity is a revealed religion — divinely revealed. We Christians are not our own touchstone of truth, and we do not confuse our ideas about God with His own self-revelation. We learn truth about God not from "inner lights" within ourselves but from God's own objective Word.

And apart from this external authority, there is no Christianity. This, at bottom, is Christianity's leading distinctive.

And so, we **Christians prize Scripture as God's Word. We joyfully submit to it. And we enthusiastically proclaim its message of grace in Jesus Christ to the world.**

- Dr. Fred Zaspel

What Does It Mean to Be "Led By the Spirit"?

*The following is an excerpt from The MacArthur New Testament Commentary on Galatians 5. **For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.** (Galatians 5:17-18)*

*Along with many others in the New Testament, these two verses make it obvious that walking by the Spirit is not simply a matter of passive surrender. The Spirit-led life is a life of conflict, because it is in constant combat with the old ways of **the flesh** that continue to tempt and seduce the believer. The flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.*

*A believer who is not actively involved in resisting evil and obviously seeking to do good is not being **led by the Spirit**, no matter how much he may think he is "surrendered." The faithful believer is not an observer but "a good soldier of Christ Jesus" who is engaged in the "active service" of his Lord (2 Tim. 2:2-4).*

*As a repeated warning to believers who were being influenced by the Judaizers, Paul added, **But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.** To live **under the Law** is to live by the flesh, even when one is not actually committing sin, because that is the only avenue available to the legalist. The flesh is powerless to fulfill **the Law**, and **the Law** is powerless to conquer the flesh...(Rom. 7:8-11).*

In his Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan describes Interpreter's house, which Pilgrim entered during the course of his journey to the Celestial City. The parlor of the house was completely covered with dust, and when a man took a broom and started to sweep, he and the others in the room began to choke from the great clouds of dust that were stirred up. The more vigorously he swept, the more suffocating the dust became. Then Interpreter ordered a maid to sprinkle the room with water, with which the dust was quickly washed away. Interpreter explained to Pilgrim that the parlor represented the heart of an unsaved man, that the dust was original sin, the man with the broom was the law, and the maid with the water was the

gospel. His point was that all the law can do with sin is to stir it up. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can wash it away.

“The power of sin is the law,” Paul declares; “but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:56).

*To be **led by the Spirit** is the same as walking by Him (vv. 16, 25) but carries additional emphasis on His leadership. We do not walk along with Him as an equal, but follow His leading as our sovereign, divine Guide. **“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God,”** (Rom. 8:14). The converse is also true: Those who are sons of God are led by the Spirit of God. Believers do not need to pray for the Spirit’s leading, because He is already doing that. They need to seek for willingness and obedience to follow His leading.*

When Christ enters a person’s life, the Holy Spirit enters simultaneously (cf. Rom. 8:9). And the moment He enters He begins to lead God’s newborn child in the way of freedom (Gal. 5:1), holiness (5:16), truth (John 16:13–15), fruitfulness (Gal. 5:22–23), access to God in prayer (Eph. 2:18), assurance (Rom. 8:16), witnessing (Acts 1:8), and submissive joy (Eph. 5:18–21).

No wonder Paul rejoiced that “what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:3–4).

Message

What Does The Holy Spirit Do?

The Bible is quite clear that the [Holy Spirit](#) is active in our world. The book of Acts, which sometimes goes by the longer title of “The Acts of the Apostles,” could just as accurately be called “The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles.” After the apostolic age, there have been some changes—the Spirit does not inspire further Scripture, for example — but He continues to do His work in the world.

First, the Holy Spirit does many things in the lives of believers. He is the believers' Helper ([John 14:26](#)). He indwells believers and [seals](#) them until the day of redemption—this indicates that the Holy Spirit's presence in the believer is irreversible. He guards and guarantees the salvation of the ones He indwells ([Ephesians 1:13; 4:30](#)). The Holy Spirit assists believers in prayer ([Jude 1:20](#)) and "intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God" ([Romans 8:26–27](#)).

The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews the believer ([Titus 3:5](#)). At the moment of salvation, the Spirit baptizes the believer into the Body of Christ ([Romans 6:3](#)). Believers receive the new birth by the power of the Spirit ([John 3:5–8](#)). The Spirit comforts believers with fellowship and joy as they go through a hostile world ([1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14](#)). The Spirit, in His mighty power, fills believers with "all joy and peace" as they trust the Lord, causing believers to "overflow with hope" ([Romans 15:13](#)).

Sanctification is another work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

The Spirit sets Himself against the desires of the flesh and leads the believer into righteousness ([Galatians 5:16–18](#)). The works of the flesh become less evident, and the fruit of the Spirit becomes more evident ([Galatians 5:19–26](#)). Believers are commanded to "be filled with the Spirit" ([Ephesians 5:18](#)), which means they are to yield themselves to the Spirit's full control.

The Holy Spirit is also a gift-giver. "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them" ([1 Corinthians 12:4](#)). The [spiritual gifts](#) that believers possess are given by the Holy Spirit as He determines in His wisdom (verse 11).

The Holy Spirit also does work among unbelievers. Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to "convict the world concerning sin & righteousness and judgment" ([John 16:8, ESV](#)). The Spirit testifies of Christ ([John 15:26](#)), pointing people to the Lord. Currently, the Holy Spirit is also restraining sin and combatting "the secret power of lawlessness" in the world. This action keeps the rise of the Antichrist at bay ([2 Th 2:6–10](#)).

The Holy Spirit has one other important role, and that is to give believers wisdom by which we can understand God. "These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God" ([1 Corinthians 2:10–11](#)). Since we have been given the amazing gift of God's Spirit inside ourselves, we can comprehend the thoughts of God, as revealed in the Scripture. The Spirit helps us understand. This is wisdom from God, rather than wisdom from man. No amount of human knowledge can ever replace the Holy Spirit's teaching ([1 Corinthians 2:12–13](#)). - **GotQuestions.org**

BIG IDEA: **LIVING SPIRIT-LED is an active, grace-based, supernaturally empowered, Christ-like witness of cross-carrying commitment to God's Word, will, and ways.**

PREVIEW:

1. LIVING
2. (HOLY) SPIRIT
3. LED

TEXT:

Acts 15:36 - 16:10

...[6](#)And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. [7](#)And when they had come up to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them...

1. LIVING

Illustration:

LIVING in and for Christ is a miraculous combination of joyous submission and victorious declaration!

Let us live & walk in a manner worthy of The Gospel (Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27).

A "walk" in the Bible is often a metaphor for practical daily living. The Christian life is a journey, and we are to walk it—we are to make consistent forward progress. The biblical norm for all believers is that they walk in the Spirit: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" ([Galatians 5:25, KJV](#); cf. [Romans 8:14](#)). In other words, the Spirit gave us life in the new birth ([John 3:6](#)), and we must continue to live, day by day, in the Spirit.

To walk in the Spirit means that we yield to His control, we follow His lead, and we allow Him to exert His influence over us. To walk in the Spirit is the opposite of resisting Him or grieving Him ([Ephesians 4:30](#)). Those who walk in the Spirit rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them in thought, word, and deed (Romans 6:11-14). **- GotQuestions.org**

Explanation:

*Every divine action begins from the Father,
proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit.*
- Basil

Were it not for the work of the Holy Spirit there would be no gospel, no faith, no church, no Christianity in the world at all.
- J.I. Packer

The human spirit fails, except when the Holy Spirit fills.
- Corrie Ten Boom

If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95% of what we do would go on & no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95% of what they did would stop & everybody would know the difference.
- A.W. Tozer

Nearly 60% of Americans who regularly attend Christian church say there is no such thing as the Holy Spirit – they say the Holy Spirit is just a symbol of God’s power or presence or purity.
- George Barna

*The less Holy Spirit we have,
the more cake and coffee we need to keep the church going.*
- Reinhard Bonnke

Two reasons why being led by the Spirit is so important:

1. It defines who you are.

"For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God."

– Romans 8:14

Being led by the Spirit identifies you as a child of God but this also means the opposite is true. ***If you are not led by the Spirit, you are not his child.*** Paul is making a very strong statement on the identity of a true child of God. ***The definitive marker of God's children is they are led by the Spirit.*** Notice he didn't define it by how much you read your Bible, pray, or go to church. All these things are wonderful and necessary, but people do these things all the time without the Holy Spirit being present in their life. What sets you apart as a child of God is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within you, which allows you to be led by him.

2. It defines whose you are.

"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."

– Romans 8:16

The Spirit does not just define who you are, it also defines whose you are. The presence of the Holy Spirit in your life comes into agreement with your spirit, allowing you to know that you belong to God. That's why you can be confident in your relationship with God and your eternal home in heaven, because of the Holy Spirit within your heart.

What are the benefits of being led by the Spirit?

1. He frees you from the curse of the law.

"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."

– Galatians 5:18

...Your greatest efforts to live right will always fall short of God's commands for your life. Not because your intentions are bad, but because your sinful nature is too strong. This is where being led by the Spirit comes into play. If you simply follow the lead of the Holy Spirit, he will help you to live up to the standards of the law...

2. He will help you make better decisions.

...There are great examples throughout the scriptures of men and women being led by the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts for example is filled with them. The Holy Spirit was directing where to go, what to do, and when to do it. He was actively engaged in leading every aspect of their life. This is what he desires to do in your life. If you will listen, he will help you...

3. He will keep you from falling into sin.

"...walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh."

- Galatians 5:16

...If you will live your life being led by the Spirit, he will keep you from falling into sin. The reason people fall into sin is not because the Spirit of God is not there to help them, it is because they neglect or reject his assistance.

How do you know the Holy Spirit is leading you?

"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

- 1 John 4:1

1. He (The HOLY SPIRIT) will lead you gently but firmly.

2. His leading will always be in alignment with God's Word.

The Holy Spirit will always operate within the boundaries of the Word of God. He will never lead you to do something that will contradict what is in the Word. You can be certain if the impulse to do something does not align with God's word it is not the Holy Spirit.

3. He will always glorify the name of Jesus.

When you are led by the Spirit the glory of your actions will always go back to Jesus. He will never lead you to do something that will not bring glory and honor to the name of Jesus.

If the action or decision you are considering would bring shame to Jesus' name, you are not being led by the Spirit.

If you are going to live a life led by the Spirit you must be rooted in [prayer](#), grounded in his word, and connected in fellowship with other believers. When these things are present in your life you are in the best position possible to be led by the Spirit and you can know God is leading you every step of the way.

- **CROSSWALK.com**
Clarence Hanyes Jr.

Application:

***“LIVING” is the active, fruit-producing witness
(for better or for worse) that is born out of one’s BE-ing & DO-ing.***

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be My witnesses... (locally, regionally, & globally).”

- *Jesus The Christ*

Those who walk in the Spirit follow the Spirit’s lead. They “let the word of Christ dwell in [them] richly” ([Colossians 3:16, ESV](#)), and the Spirit uses the Word of God “for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)). Their whole way of life is lived according to the rule of the gospel, as the Spirit moves them toward obedience. When we walk in the Spirit, we find that the sinful appetites of the flesh have no more dominion over us.

- **GotQuestions.org**

The true spirit of prayer is no other than God's own Spirit dwelling in the hearts of the saints. And as this spirit comes from God, so doth it naturally tend to God in holy breathings and pantings. It naturally leads to God, to converse with him by prayer.
- Jonathan Edwards

2. (HOLY) SPIRIT

Illustration:

Romans 5:5

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit...

If we think of the Holy Spirit only as an impersonal power or influence, then our thought will constantly be, how can I get hold of and use the Holy Spirit; but if we think of Him in the biblical way as a divine Person, infinitely wise, infinitely holy, infinitely tender, then our thought will constantly be, 'How can the Holy Spirit get hold of and use me?'"

- R.A. Torrey

Explanation:

At the onset, it is important to acknowledge the obvious... Any human attempt to comprehensively "explain" The Holy Spirit is going to fall far short of His divine fullness. At best, per God's Word, we can describe Him.

To that end, all of humanity would be well served to recognize three fundamental truths that offer a descriptive framework for understanding the Holy Spirit.

1. **His Person:** He is God. The Trinity's 3rd Person: Father, Son, Spirit
2. **His Power:** He has "omni-sovereign" power to apply and share.
3. **His Passion:** He is The living, personal God with perfect passions.
 - a. Anger – [Psalm 7:11](#); [Deuteronomy 9:22](#); [Romans 1:18](#)
 - b. Compassion – [Psalm 135:14](#); [Judges 2:18](#); [Deut. 32:36](#)
 - c. Grief – [Genesis 6:6](#); [Psalm 78:40](#)
 - d. Love – [1 John 4:8](#); [John 3:16](#); [Jeremiah 31:3](#)
 - e. Hate – [Proverbs 6:16](#); [Psalm 5:5](#); [Psalm 11:5](#)
 - f. Jealousy – [Exodus 20:5](#); [Exodus 34:14](#); [Joshua 24:19](#)
 - g. Joy – [Zephaniah 3:17](#); [Isaiah 62:5](#); [Jeremiah 32:41](#)
 - h. Pain – [per our sin] ([Psalm 1:5](#); [5:4-5](#); [Proverbs 6:16-19](#))

Many saints cannot distinguish inspiration from emotion. Actually these two can be defined readily. Emotion always enters from a man's outside, whereas inspiration originates with the Holy Spirit in man's spirit.

- Watchman Nee

*The less Holy Spirit we have,
the more cake and coffee we need to keep the church going.*

- Reinhard Bonnke

O Holy Spirit, descend plentifully into my heart. Enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling & scatter there Thy cheerful beams.

- Augustine

The Bible without the Holy Spirit is a sundial by moonlight.

- D.L. Moody

*Because we have shut out the Holy Spirit in so many ways,
we are stumbling along as though we are spiritually blindfolded.*

- A.W. Tozer

*When you educate without the Holy Spirit,
you only get a clever devil.*

- Adrian Rogers

*The Holy Spirit is the bond
by which Christ efficaciously unites us to Himself.*

- John Calvin

*It is time for us to seek again the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
Man's lordship has cost us too much.*

- A.W. Tozer

*If you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior,
you already have the Holy Spirit living within you.*

- David Jeremiah

We take what we think are the tools of spiritual transformation into our own hands and try to sculpt ourselves into robust Christlike specimens.

But spiritual transformation is primarily the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the Master Sculptor.

- Jerry Bridges

*We do not need to wait for the Holy Spirit to come:
He came on the day of Pentecost. He has never left the Church.*

- John Stott

Application:

The work of God's Holy Spirit begins with bruising. In order to be saved, the fallow ground must be plowed up, the hard heart must be broken, the rock must be split apart.
- Charles Spurgeon

Religion can reform a person's life, but it can never transform him. Only the Holy Spirit can transform!
- A.W. Tozer

3. LED

Illustration:

When it is a question of God's almighty Spirit, never say, "I can't."
- Oswald Chambers

Explanation:

Being Led and Transformed by the Holy Spirit

Being led by the Holy Spirit is at the heart of the Christian life. This is clear in the Bible and in the history of the church. If we let the Spirit lead us, our lives will blossom and flourish. But if we neglect or refuse His leading, our lives will languish. Strangely, many believers today seem to misunderstand the Spirit's leading and how it relates to personal transformation. A clearer grasp of what the Bible teaches about this vital truth will help us all as we seek to grow in grace...

Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is ..." In what follows Paul gives nine characteristics of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of a born again believer. Unlike the word works (of the flesh), fruit is singular, indicating that the nine characteristics are part of a unified whole and are not separable. In other words, a believer doesn't have some and not others, though their relative strength may vary.

- **Love**, by which Paul means the love of God poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). The Greek word is *agape*. This is a responsive love that evokes in us a love for God and a desire to please Him. Worship, wholehearted surrender, and obedience are at the heart of pleasing Him. God's love also produces in us a love for our neighbor, a servant love... In a very real sense, the other eight characteristics of the Spirit are expressions of this *agape* love.
- **Joy** flows out of the awareness of God's gracious favor to us and the hope of living with Him and His Son and all His children in the world to come. Hope for the future is a key part of joy and is an anchor that keeps us from being blown to and fro by the many and varied circumstances of life and the hard times that sometimes overtake us. Unlike happiness, its worldly and elusive equivalent, joy does not depend on favorable circumstances.
- **Peace** is not simply the absence of conflict, but the deep abiding peace of God, the sovereign and almighty King of creation. It is grounded in the assurance of God's rich mercy and personal love for us, shown supremely in His saving us by grace... This produces a tranquil heart that is at rest in God...
- **Patience / long-suffering**, is chiefly a matter of forbearance with other people and of not being easily offended. This particularly includes people... who persecute us. Steadfast endurance with difficult people and circumstances is the idea. Such patience illustrates the patience of God and is a powerful witness to others.
- **Kindness** is an attitude of graciousness and goodwill toward others, especially those who do not deserve it. Kindness is an expression of love...
- **Goodness** is love and kindness in action, an expression of moral excellence...
- **Faithfulness** is a matter of being trustworthy and reliable to God and to others, being dependable and true to one's word and commitments, someone in whom others can have confidence.
- **Gentleness** is not weakness but strength under control, rooted in humility. Jesus was gentle yet capable of expressing righteous indignation, when appropriate...
- **Self-control** engages both mind and body in the business of properly regulating one's life in all its parts...

Though not an exhaustive list, these nine characteristic traits that are the fruit of the Holy Spirit, taken together, form a beautiful portrait of Jesus as we see Him in the Gospels. In their Christ-centered selflessness, they stand in stark contrast to the self-centered life of the flesh. They are supernatural in nature and not a human attainment, though we have an essential role in their blossoming. They do not appear piecemeal but all together. Nor do they appear in full bloom but mature over time as we continue to walk in the Spirit and put sin to death. Not only do they have a personal dimension; they also have a community dimension that blesses and edifies fellow believers and strengthens the unity of the church.

***– C.S. Lewis Institute
President Thomas Tarrants***

Application:

I have a great need for Christ; I have a great Christ for my need.
- **Charles Spurgeon**

CLOSE:

The Spirit-filled life is not a special, deluxe edition of Christianity. It is part and parcel of the total plan of God for His people.
- **A. W. Tozer**

For What?

The Holy Spirit's main ministry is not to give thrills but to create in us a Christlike character.
- **J.I. Packer**

The indwelling Spirit shall teach him what is of God and what is not. This is why sometimes we can conjure up no logical reason for opposing a certain teaching, yet in the very depth of our being arises a resistance.
- **Watchman Nee**

Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Spirit, for such things as God has promised.
- **John Bunyan**

So What?

You are never left alone when you are alone with God.
- **Woodrow Kroll**

Now What?

God speaks through a variety of means. In the present God primarily speaks by the Holy Spirit, through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, and the church.

- Henry Blackaby

God knows what each one of us is dealing with. He knows our pressures. He knows our conflicts. He has made a provision for each and every one of them. That provision is Himself in the person of the Holy Spirit, indwelling us and empowering us to respond rightly.

- Kay Arthur

PRAYER

Dear heavenly Father, thank You so much for the Truth and Love of Your Word, will, and ways. Please help us to absorb and apply ALL that You have shared and commanded in the Bible. May our heads be infilled with Your defining Scriptures, for the express purpose of informing, inspecting, and inspiring our sanctified hearts and serving hands.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen and Amen

Support Sermon:

"Church Planting 201"

Acts 15:36 – 16:10

September 30, 2015

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