

The Familiar Stranger: Keeping in Step with the Spirit

March 22, 2026

²⁵ Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

— *Galatians 5:25*

¹ And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. ² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

— *Romans 12:1-2*

Discussion/Journal Questions

If you could learn one style of dance, what would it be and why?

Have two or three people read Romans 12:1-2 out loud slowly. After some time of reflection, ask each other what words, phrases, or ideas stand out to everyone. What questions come to mind as you meditate on this scripture?

In the sermon on Sunday, Pastor John compared following the Spirit's leading to a well-practiced marching band. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your ability to keep in step with the Holy Spirit?

In Romans 12:1-2, the Apostle Paul lays out two areas we must submit to God to keep in step with Him. What are they, and what does it look like to submit each area to God?

Which do you find more difficult: offering your body to God or offering your mind? Why?

John describes the type of person who keeps in step with the Spirit using the acrostic RARE.

- Remain relational
- Act like yourself
- Return to joy
- Endure hardship well

Reflect on these together. Does this sound like you? Why or why not?

Which of these four areas might God be calling you to grow in? How can you group help you?

Group Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not

so much seek to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.