

## Being Led by the Spirit of God – Rev. Doug Jones

### 5-Day Devotional: Learning to Follow God's Leading

#### Day 1: The Steps of the Righteous

**Reading:** Psalm 37:23-24, Proverbs 16:9

**Devotional:** God orders the steps of those who trust Him, but He rarely reveals the entire journey at once. Like a ship that's easier to steer when moving than when docked, we must take steps of faith while listening to His voice. God doesn't always drop dramatic directions into our hearts; more often, He guides us as we move forward with the information we have. Gather the facts, pray for wisdom, and then take a step. If you sense peace, continue. If you feel a check in your spirit, pause and reconsider. God is faithful to redirect us when we're willing to move. Your responsibility is to walk in faith; His responsibility is to guide your path.

**Reflection:** What step have you been waiting to take? How might God be waiting for you to move before He provides clearer direction?

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#### Day 2: Recognizing the Inward Witness

**Reading:** Romans 8:14-16, 1 John 2:20, 27

**Devotional:** The Holy Spirit leads primarily through an inward witness—a knowing deep within your spirit. This isn't always dramatic or supernatural; it's often a quiet sense of rightness or wrongness about a decision. Paul experienced this when forbidden by the Spirit to preach in Asia but was then redirected toward Macedonia. He was moving, listening, and adjusting. The Spirit's guidance may come as peace that surpasses understanding or as a check not to go in that direction. Both husband and wife should seek this witness together, yielding to the one who senses caution. Don't despise the gentle promptings of God's Spirit.

**Reflection:** When have you experienced a "check" in your spirit? How did you respond, and what was the outcome?

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#### Day 3: The Rare "Go Ye" Moments

**Reading:** Acts 9:1-19, Acts 16:6-10

**Devotional:** Most believers will experience very few "go ye" moments—those dramatic, life-altering calls that redirect everything. Paul had only two: his Damascus Road encounter and the Macedonian call. These moments are sovereign interventions when God radically shifts our direction. However, most of our lives consist of faithful obedience in the ordinary, gathering information, taking steps, and listening for God's leading. Don't spend your life waiting in a prayer closet for a dramatic vision while ignoring the practical steps before you. God may give you a "go ye," but more likely, He'll guide you step by step as you faithfully walk with Him. Both are His leading; both require obedience.

**Reflection:** Are you waiting for a dramatic sign when God may be asking you to take a practical next step?

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#### **Day 4: Heeding Divine Warnings**

**Reading: Acts 27:9-11, Proverbs 3:5-6**

**Devotional:** The Holy Spirit doesn't only lead us forward; He also forewarns us of danger. Not every negative impression is the enemy's attack—sometimes it's God's protection. Paul warned the ship's crew of impending danger, and when they ignored him, disaster followed. A mother's persistent concern about her daughter's broken arm led to discovering it was set incorrectly. A missionary's repeated thought about changing tires—ignored—resulted in tragedy. We must discern between fear and divine warning. If a concern persists despite prayer, if your spouse repeatedly senses danger, if you keep seeing a specific problem in your mind, don't dismiss it as negativity. God may be trying to protect you. Wisdom listens to these promptings.

**Reflection:** Is there a persistent concern you've been dismissing? Have you prayed about whether God is trying to warn you?

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#### **Day 5: Attitude Adjustments and Faithfulness**

**Reading: Philippians 2:5-8, 1 Corinthians 4:2**

**Devotional:** The Holy Spirit doesn't just guide our steps; He also corrects our attitudes. When we begin criticizing, complaining, or becoming cynical about the very things God has called us to, He lovingly intervenes. "Fruit is not the result of perfection; it's the result of faithfulness."

This truth transforms how we view ministry, work, and relationships. Nothing and no one is perfect, but faithfulness over time produces lasting fruit. When you're tempted to focus on flaws and imperfections, the Spirit may remind you of the bigger picture. God honors consistency, not perfection. He values a faithful heart over flawless performance. Let Him adjust your perspective, renew your commitment, and restore your joy in serving Him.

**Reflection:** What attitude needs adjusting in your heart today? Where do you need to choose faithfulness over criticism?

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**Closing Prayer:** Father, teach me to recognize Your leading in both dramatic and ordinary ways. Help me to move forward in faith, listening for Your voice, heeding Your warnings, and maintaining a humble, faithful heart. Guide my steps, order my path, and use my life for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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## Being Led by the Spirit of God – Scripture References from the Sermon

### Explicitly Mentioned or Directly Referenced:

1. **Acts 15:36** - Paul's proposal to revisit the churches from the first missionary journey.
2. **Acts 15:40** - Beginning of Paul's second missionary journey.
3. **Acts 16:6** - Forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in Asia.
4. **Acts 16:7** - The Spirit did not permit them to go to Bithynia.
5. **Acts 16:9** - Vision of the Macedonian man calling for help.
6. **Acts 9:1-19** (alluded to) - Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus.
7. **Psalm 37:23** (alluded to) - "The steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord."
8. **Romans 8:14** (implied theme) - Being led by the Spirit of God.
9. **Acts 27:9-44** (alluded to) - Paul's warning about the dangerous sea voyage.

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## Relevant Verses Aligned with Sermon Themes:

### On Being Led by the Spirit:

- **Galatians 5:18** - "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law."
- **Proverbs 3:5-6** - Trusting in the Lord with all your heart.
- **Isaiah 30:21** - "Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it.'"

### On God's Guidance:

- **Proverbs 16:9** - "A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps."
- **James 1:5** - Asking God for wisdom.
- **Philippians 4:6-7** - Peace as a guide in decision-making.

### On Discernment:

- **1 John 2:20, 27** - The anointing teaches you about all things.
- **Colossians 3:15** - Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

### On Faithfulness:

- **Matthew 25:21** - "Well done, good and faithful servant."
- **1 Corinthians 4:2** - Stewards must be found faithful.

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## Being Led by the Spirit of God – Personal and Small Group Study Guide

### Opening Prayer

Begin by asking God to guide your discussion and help each person hear His voice more clearly in their daily lives.

### Icebreaker Question

Share a time when you had to make an important decision. How did you go about making that choice?

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### Key Takeaways from the Sermon

1. **Go-Ye experiences are rare** - Most people will have zero to one "go-ye" moments (when God dramatically drops a new direction in your heart out of nowhere). Don't expect this to be the normal way God leads.
  2. **God leads moving vessels** - It's easier for God to direct you when you're taking steps forward rather than waiting passively for a sign.
  3. **The Check System** - Gather natural information, take a step forward, and listen for an inner check or hesitation from the Holy Spirit.
  4. **The Spirit forewarns** - God will sometimes warn you about danger or problems ahead. Not every negative impression is from the devil.
  5. **The Spirit tweaks attitudes** - God uses His still, small voice to correct our perspectives and attitudes.
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### Discussion Questions

#### Understanding Being Led by the Spirit

1. **Have you ever expected God to give you a dramatic "go-ye" experience?** How has this sermon changed your perspective on how God typically leads us?
2. **Read Acts 16:6-10.** What do you notice about how Paul discovered God's direction? What did Paul have to do, and what did the Spirit do?
3. **The speaker said: "Fruit is not the result of perfection. It's the result of faithfulness."** How does this statement apply to hearing God's voice and following His leading?

#### The "Check" System

4. **Describe a time when you felt a "check" or hesitation in your spirit about a decision.** Did you listen to it? What happened?
5. **What are some practical ways to "gather natural information" about a decision you're facing?** How do you balance natural wisdom with spiritual sensitivity?
6. **For married couples: How do you navigate decisions when one spouse has a check and the other doesn't?** Why is it important to yield to the "weakest vessel" (the one with the hesitation)?

### Forewarnings and Attitude Adjustments

7. **Share an example of when you received a forewarning from the Holy Spirit** (or wish you had listened to one). How can we distinguish between the Spirit's forewarning and fear or anxiety?
8. **The speaker shared how God tweaked his attitude toward his workplace.** Is there an area in your life where God might be trying to adjust your attitude? What might He be saying?

### Practical Application

9. **What decision are you currently facing?** How can you apply the principles from this sermon to that situation?
10. **What steps can you take this week to position yourself as a "moving vessel" that God can direct?**

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### Practical Applications

#### Individual Action Steps

Choose one or more of these to practice this week:

- **Create a Legacy Document:** Following the speaker's example, start writing down times when God has clearly led you. This will encourage your faith and bless future generations.
- **Take a Step:** Identify one decision you've been waiting on God about. Gather natural information and take one practical step forward this week, Keeping yourself aware of any checks from the Holy Spirit.

- **Practice Listening:** When you feel a negative impression or warning, pause and pray. Ask God if this is a forewarning from Him or just fear/anxiety.
- **Attitude Check:** Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any attitudes that need tweaking. Write down what He shows you and commit to change.

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### Group Action Steps

- **Accountability Partners:** Pair up with someone in the group to share decisions you're facing and pray for each other's sensitivity to the Spirit's leading.
- **Testimony Sharing:** Next time you meet, share stories of how God led you (or gave you a check) during the week.

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### Memory Verse

**Proverbs 16:9** - "A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps."

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### Closing Reflection

**Silent Reflection (2-3 minutes):** Ask each person to quietly consider:

- What is one area where I've been waiting for a "go-ye" instead of taking faithful steps?
- What is God saying to me right now about a decision I'm facing?

**Sharing (Optional):** Invite anyone who feels comfortable to share what God spoke to them during the reflection time.

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### Closing Prayer

**Pray together:**

- For sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's checks and forewarnings.
- For courage to take steps of faith.
- For unity in marriages and families when making decisions.
- For specific decisions group members are facing.

### **Before Next Week**

Journal about one time this week when you sensed the Holy Spirit's leading—whether through a peace, a check, a forewarning, or an attitude adjustment. Be ready to share your experience with the group.