

On Being Led by the Spirit

Part II - What is the Nature of Our Relationship to Christ?

If one truly desires to be led by the Spirit, and is not merely assuming a religious pose, or game-playing with the Deity, it is essential that one know the nature of one's being—what we humans are all about—and the nature of the relationship of humans to Christ.

As to the nature of our being, we have determined in Part I, that we are, as redeemed humans, essentially spirit. Therefore, guidance must always be consistent with eternal spiritual values. That is to say, anything that would interfere with, or jeopardize spiritual growth, would be questionable.

If for example, one is experiencing blessing and growth in a given fellowship, and is confronted with a choice that would interfere with it, the chances are that it would be a poor choice, unless there is an acceptable alternative for fellowship.

So, the nature of our being dictates that guidance be consistent with our ultimate spiritual destiny.

Furthermore, guidance must be seen, not only in terms of the essential nature of our being, but also in terms of the nature of our relationship to Christ. We will consider five characteristics of that relationship, as follows:

- 1) SPIRITUAL—oneness with God.
- 2) ETERNAL—never ending life with God.
- 3) FAMILIAL—paternal and fraternal.
- 4) CONGENIAL—full of patience and grace.
- 5) PRACTICAL—based on workable realism, and not theoretical idealism.

We will now consider each of these items separately.

1. SPIRITUAL—oneness with God. A most essential element in our relationship with Christ, is that we are one with Him in the spirit. Jesus established this truth in His intercessory prayer to the Father—*“That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us”* (John 17:21). There is, thus, a capacity for communication that goes beyond the external and circumstantial. *“The Spirit, Himself, bears witness with our spirits, that we are children of God”* (Romans 8:16). We will spend eternity in communion with God. According to the Scripture, such communion starts here on the earth. So, enter into it.

But how do we ordinary Christians, ever hope to achieve Such communion?

You don't achieve it; you live it. In fact, you are living it, now, without realizing it. In many ways, the Spirit of God is ministering to your spirit, day by day. Your prayers, for example, are a part of that communion. Every desire you have for God, is part of that communion, and every cry for help. We are, actually, surrounded by the Spirit of God. It is like the ether waves, which are constantly in the atmosphere around us. We have only to “tune in” on the right frequency.

But how do we know it is God who is addressing us?

In the first place, the sheep know the voice of the Shepherd (if they will only be still long enough to listen).

In the second place, if one really wants to hear the Shepherd, the Shepherd will find a way to get through.

However, sometimes, confusion comes, when we try to tune in on too many “Frequencies,” at once. We listen to too many amateurs—friends, neighbors, media “gurus,” as well as inadequate (if earnest) religious leaders. Confusion also comes when we, often inadvertently, drown out the voice of the Spirit with the cacophony of worldly input.

What, then, should we do to develop an ear for the Spirit?

There are some important suggestions.

- (1). Open the mind to the Spirit. Anyone who wants to hear from the Spirit, will hear from Him, ultimately. Wait for Him! Don't be in a hurry!
- (2). Spend time in communion with Christ. Who communes often with Christ, will often know what He wants.
- (3). Nourish the spirit by hearing the Word of God and fellowshiping with His people.
- (4). Trust the Spirit of God. Go in quiet confidence. When you have committed a matter to Christ, and are willing to do what He wants, be assured that He will see to it that you know what to do. Don't panic! The chances are, you won't really know till the time comes. When it comes, you will do the right thing.
- (5). Don't confuse your communion with the Spirit, either by advice from unqualified sources, or too much input from the world.

But who is qualified?

The only people you ought ever to listen to are shepherds whom you trust as responsible servants of Christ, and those who may be sharing with you in prayer. No one, however close to you, or professionally qualified, who is not praying with you, is qualified to advise you. Many a Christian with a fairly clear idea of what Christ wants, has become confused by input from well-meaning, but unqualified, advisors.

Remember—IF YOU WANT TO DO WHAT CHRIST WANTS, AND YOU COMMIT THE MATTER TO HIM, YOUR SPIRIT WILL KNOW WHAT HE WANTS.

2. ETERNAL—never-ending life with God. All matters of guidance should be viewed in the light of the endless nature of our relationship to Christ. Remember, it is He, with whom we will be involved, for eternity. Any temporary indulgence, that would jeopardize, in any way, the quality of that eternal destiny, would be unsound. A good question to ask, in any situation, is in the

light of eternity, what does it matter?

3. FAMILIAL—paternal and fraternal. *“Like as a father pitieth [has mercy on] his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust”* (Psalm 103:13,14).

In the Deity, we have both father and brother. This puts the matter of guidance, not on the level of despot, who insists on slavish, and whimsical obedience, but father, who has only the welfare of his children in mind; and brother, who empathizes with the human condition. Fear not the guidance of God; it can only work for your good.

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Part II to continue

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