

What Does Being Led By the Holy Spirit Look like on a Practical, Day-to-Day Level?

1. Ask for More.
2. Think Outside the Box.
3. Acknowledge the Reality of Lust's & Deception's Hold On Your Thinking.
4. Stop Trying to GET...and Allow God to GIVE Through Your Surrendered Life.
5. Rethink Why You Have a Career; Why You Work...And Then Re-Purpose Your Provision.
6. Remind Yourself Every Morning: "God Decides/Chooses My Agenda Today."
7. When You Face Difficulty Circumstances, Catch Yourself Complaining & Stop

"The Connection I need you to make here is that God allows the circumstances – and in fact, often arranges the circumstances in your life..."

- Some of you struggle with this...and I very much understand.
- It the most common problem raised against the existence and goodness of God.
 - Particularly difficult because we experience suffering on all levels of our being.
- We need to understand more about suffering to be able to bridge the gap between *No Complaining and Thankfulness* during difficult circumstances...

No one can say for sure where the source of a specific circumstance originates, or the exact reason it arises...but we do understand some things about its origins and How God uses it...

Origins

- The Enemy

Job 1:8-12; 2:4-8

Then the Lord asked Satan, "Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil." Satan replied to the Lord, "Yes, but Job has good reason to fear God. You have always put a wall of protection around him and his home and his property. You have made him prosper in everything he does. Look how rich he is! But reach out and take away everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face!" "All right, you may test him," the Lord said to Satan. "Do whatever you want with everything he possesses, but don't harm him physically." So Satan left the Lord's presence...

He has maintained his integrity, even though you urged me to harm him without cause." Satan replied to the Lord, "Skin for skin! A man will give up everything he has to save his life. But reach out and take away his health, and he will surely curse you to your face!" "All right, do with him as you please," the Lord said to Satan. "But spare his life." So Satan left the Lord's presence, and he struck Job with terrible boils from head to foot.

- God Arranges It

Matthew 4:1-2

Then **Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil.** ² For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry.

Hebrews 12:5-6

"My child, don't make light of the Lord's discipline, and **don't give up when he corrects you.** For **the Lord disciplines those he loves,** and he punishes each one he accepts as his child." **As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children.**

- Residual Effects of a Fallen World

Luke 13:1-4

About this time Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple. “Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee?” Jesus asked. “Is that why they suffered? Not at all!... And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem? No...

Purpose

- Regardless of the origin, God allows it, and uses all of it...**none of it is wasted...**
- **The Cross is the one, essential and central theme of Following Jesus**
(1 Peter 2:19-21; Matthew 16:24-27)
 - **What else does the Cross mean other than a willingness to bear up under suffering in a broken world to facilitate God’s good and redeeming purposes...!?!**
- Training & Correction (Hebrews 12:5-10)
- Perseverance & Character (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 5:10)
- Increases Your Faith & Reliance on God (2 Cor. 1:8-9)
- Increase Your Intimacy with Jesus (Philippians 3:10)
- Learn Obedience (Hebrews 5:8; John 15:2)
- Produces Profound Peace (Hebrews 12:11)
- A Weapon Against Sin (1 Peter 4:1-2, Hebrews 12:4)
- Produces Profound Joy in a New Way of Living (Hebrews 12:1-2)
- God’s Redemptive Power Continues Through Your Suffering (Isaiah 53:5, 10-11; John 12:24)
- Points Others to God’s Goodness & Power (John 9:1-3; 11:4,40; 2 Cor. 12:7-9)
- Able to Profoundly Comfort, Encourage, & Strengthen Others (2 Cor. 1:3-4; Luke 22:31-32)
- Garners the Attention/Curiosity/Interest of the Hurting & Lost (Luke 23:40-47)
- Unbreakable Hope (2 Cor. 4:16-18; Romans 8:18-38)

If You Rob God of the Permission to Allow You, or Even Lead You Into Suffering...You Neutralize the Power of the Cross

#8 Allow & Embrace the Holy Spirit’s Use of Suffering in Your Life.

Of course it’s not popular...of course it hurts...so heavy...so difficult

- **Matthew 24:12** “Evil will spread, and so the love of many will grow cold...”
- **Genesis 50:20** “What was meant for evil, God used for Good...”

And we know that in **all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose...**³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² **He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?**

Romans 8:28, 31-32

Next Week...

#9 Be Relentlessly Intentional and Vocal in Your Thankfulness to God (Psalm 107)

#10 Look & Listen for What the Holy Spirit May Be Doing in your Difficult Circumstances