

4 Ways the Holy Spirit Does Not Lead You—and 1 Big Danger

How you ever missed it? Have you ever resisted God thinking it was the devil?

Sometimes when our emotions get wrapped up in a thing, it's more difficult to discern His leading—especially when the flesh or soul doesn't like the way He is leading. Sometimes our flesh wars against the Spirit (Gal. 5:7). When we surrender ourselves to God's will, it becomes far easier to discern His leading.

That said, there are ways Holy Spirit absolutely does not lead. Wrong teaching, ignorance of His ways, spiritual laziness and a failure of the five-fold to equip the saints for the work of the ministry have led many to follow the world, the flesh or the devil thinking it was Holy Spirit—and that has brought plenty of heartache into the lives of many. Here are four ways Holy Spirit does not lead—and one warning of a current danger.

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1. Holy Spirit doesn't control, manipulate you or twist your arm.

An apostle I worked with once pressured everyone in his church to get into flipping houses. I personally lost about \$100,000 under that controlling mandate. Another woman in the church went bankrupt. Many others lost small fortunes and saw their credit ruined. It wasn't the will of God at play! That was man's will hoping for the tithe that came off the flip!

John 16:13 says Holy Spirit will lead you and guide you. Leading and guiding is different than controlling,

manipulating and browbeating. If God was going to manipulate and control people to do anything, it would be to join His family. But we have a choice. Now, the Spirit's conviction may feel like pressure. Holy Spirit will stretch you. Holy Spirit may allow you to feel His grief, but ultimately He won't force you to do anything.

2. Holy Spirit will not lead you into sin.

I once heard of a man say God told him to divorce his wife and marry a younger woman. That's a sin, according to Scripture. Holy Spirit leads us away from sin, not toward it. He convicts us of our sin rather than sanctioning it.

Consider these verses: John 16:8—"When He comes, He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." Galatians 5:16—"I say then, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." And James 1:13-16—"Let no man say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither does He tempt anyone. But each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed. Then, when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin; and when sin is finished, it brings forth death."

The church needs to stop blaming its sin on the devil—and on Holy Spirit.

3. Holy Spirit does not lead us through fleeces.

In the Old Testament, people put out fleeces, but in the New Testament, God speaks to us through His Son (Heb. 1:2). There's only one time in the New Testament we see believers putting out a fleece, of sorts, and it was before they were filled with Holy Spirit. We see the apostles cast lots in Acts 1:26 to determine who would take Judas' place in the apostolic ministry Jesus commissioned.

We shouldn't follow signs; signs should follow us. Jesus

rebuked the Pharisees for asking for sign. God may answer fleeces from time to time in His mercy, especially for unbelievers. But even Gideon knew he was risking the Lord's anger when he asked for a second fleece (Judg. 6:36-40). Again, God wants a relationship with you. The devil can confirm a fleece.

4. Holy Spirit will not misuse Scripture.

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, Satan twisted Scriptures to try to get Jesus to violate the Father's will. He took Psalm 91 out of context, hoping Jesus would cast Himself down from the high place. But Jesus understood the whole counsel of God and responded rightly, "It is also written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God'" (Matt. 4:7).

We need to be students of the Word so we don't justify our wrong decisions based on a false leading from a false spirit or our own soulish desires and carnality. God does not contradict Himself.

5. Addressing the overdependence on prophets

Romans 8:14 says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." Please notice it does not say that as many as are led by the prophets of God are the sons of God. I am not against personal prophecy. It is a valuable gift in the kingdom. But when we rely more on prophets than we do on God, we're tapping into idolatry and perhaps spiritual laziness.

In the New Testament, prophets are to equip you (Eph. 4:11-12), not lead you and guide you. That's the Holy Spirit's job. If you could see the number of emails, Facebook messages and other letters I get demanding, begging and offering to pay for prophetic words, you'd understand where I am coming from. If you need a word from a prophet, God will send you a prophet with a word. But please seek Him. He wants to speak to you directly. You are your own best prophet.