

The Prompting of The Holy Spirit

If you ask my kids what is one thing your dad says all the time, they'd probably say, "Do what you're told, when you're told". Today we are going to talk about the prompting of the Holy Spirit and being obedient to it.

Today we are going to talk about watching and listening for the prompting of the Holy Spirit and then following through with what the Holy Spirit is prompting us to do. When we are paying attention to the Holy Spirit and doing what he asks us to do when he asks to do it, amazing things can happen.

We are going to go right into a passage of scripture found in Acts 3:1-10.

Acts 3:1-10

(1) One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer--at three in the afternoon. (2) Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. (3) When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. (4) Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" (5) So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. (6) Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." (7) Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. (8) He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. (9) When all the people saw him walking and praising God, (10) they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

This is an amazingly powerful passage of scripture which describes Peter and John performing a miracle in Jesus' name. In fact if we kept reading we would read how they were taken into custody and had to stand before the Sanhedrin (The Hebrew Council) and answer for what they did. But that is for another message on another day.

Here, we read how Peter and John reached out and spoke healing to a man who had been lame since birth. That is great and a great moment to teach about praying and ministering in Jesus' name, but there is so much more to this when you start to look more closely at the verses.

The first thing we want to point out, is that it is doubtful that this is the first time Peter and John had seen the man. This gate to the temple was where the women and children waited while the men went into the temple. It was one of the main entrances and many people would sit there on the steps and beg for alms, or a few coins to live.

There was no government assistance. When people needed help, they turned to the community going to and from the temple. These steps leading up to this gate into the temple would have been full of people asking for help. This was nothing new. We read in the gospels of the man who was at the pools in Bethsaida waiting to be healed along with a great many others, and Jesus came along and healed him.

We can surmise that Peter and John had walked past this man many times as they went to and from the temple daily for morning and afternoon prayers, as was the custom of all believers at the time. But this



time, something was different. The Holy Spirit prompted them to notice this man; this one man, out of all the others.

Undoubtedly, feeling the prompting of the Holy Spirit, they moved to the man who would be sitting there with his hand out for anyone to drop a few coins in it, along with everyone else there begging.

The Holy Spirit directed them to this man on this day. Fortunately for the man, they listened and obeyed and ministered to the man. They did what they could, but first, they had to get his attention.

Peter says to the man, "Look at us!" He wanted to make sure the man was paying attention. He wanted to be sure the man knew what was happening. Then they gave what they could. They did not have money. They did not have medical training or a doctor with them to examine the man. What they did have is the power, equipping, and direction of the Holy Spirit. So Peter said to the man, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

The man was asking for money or at least some food, but he got what God wanted him to have, not what he wanted. Peter commanded him to stand up and walk, in Jesus' name. Not only did the man stand up and walk, but he leaped and he danced. Everyone around had to notice. He had been being brought here every day to beg for years. People had to have known him. They had to know this was real. He was not planted by Peter and John to show off, or make a false claim. This was real and undeniable.

I am sure many prayers were said for those that were outside the gate begging. It is still like that today. We get many requests each day for help. People call, email, and message asking for resources for one thing or another. We do not have the resources to rescue everyone. We must do what the Holy Spirit prompts us to do. You must do what the Holy Spirit prompts you to do.

Peter and John did not go to each person there begging and lay hands on them and heal them or provide for all their needs. They listened to the Holy Spirit and went to this one man and did what the Holy Spirit equipped them to do. They healed him, in Jesus' name. All Christians must do the same.

We cannot minister or serve in our own power. There will never be enough resources, money, or time to meet all the needs this world has. We must do exactly what the Lord leads us to do, and we must do it when he asks us to do it. Not too early, and not too late.

When Peter and John were prompted to notice this man and bring him a healing touch, they were being the Church. They were acting in the name of Jesus Christ. They were doing what the Holy Spirit equipped them to do, and they were doing it for God's glory, not their own. It provided a witness to the love and power of God. It was not just to heal this man.

We can apply this to our lives today. We must be watching and listening for the prompting of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit points someone out to you, you will know. When the Holy Spirit equips you to meet the need of someone, I guarantee you will know it, and you will know when to use it. Do not be afraid of it. Do not be worried. Do what the Holy Spirit says when he tells you to.

The other thing we learn from this is Jesus' name is not just something magic to said to make what we want to happen. We must minister in the power of the Holy Spirit and the name of Jesus Christ and for



His glory, not our own. The only way speaking, praying, and doing anything in Jesus' name produces any results is when all the glory is going to Jesus and the Holy Spirit has prompted us to it.

When we see something in our own eyes or feel it with our own heart, we do a disservice to the person we are trying to help when we promise what the Holy Spirit has not told us to promise. Let's face it, we are still in this sinful, dying, fallen world. We come up with plans and solutions in our own wisdom, or in the wisdom of what is popular, and it does nothing to bring glory to God, or what He has asked us to do.

Those ventures will fail. That is building the house of God with human hands. God wants us to build His Church his way, not our way. Commit Proverbs 3:5-6 to your heart.

Proverbs 3:5-6

(5) Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; (6) in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Don't lean on your own understanding or wisdom. Trust what the Holy Spirit leads you to.

The difficult part of all this is you will see people in need. You will see people needing medicine or hungry, and you won't have the means to provide for them. God has not lost sight of them. He knows who they are, where they are, and what they need. He also already has a plan to provide for their needs. They need to turn to Him for that. He will send the person or resources to meet their need.

We do more harm trying to be the hands and feet of God, where He has not asked us to be.

The only way a body functions is for all the parts to do what they are supposed to do when they are supposed to do it. Ears don't try to be mouths and fingers don't try to be eyes. Our hand doesn't close our fingers shut until our arm has lowered our hand down next to what we want to pick up.

We all need to do our part at the right time and the way the Lord asks us. Ultimately, we serve to further Jesus' Church, not our own local group or denomination.

So trust the Lord. Each day, ask him to help you see the opportunities He wants you to see and ask him to equip you and provide the resources and power necessary to meet those opportunities and needs.

