

# Turn Up the Volume

Hearing and Following the voice of the Holy Spirit

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John 16:13-15 (NLT) “There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can’t bear it now. <sup>13</sup>When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. <sup>14</sup>He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. <sup>15</sup>All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, ‘The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.’

**Introduction:** Recently, I was in Pittsburgh for our MFI Regional Conference. I rented a car and was responsible for driving a team of speakers back and forth to the meetings.

Now, I’m usually pretty good with directions, especially in a new city, because I rely on GPS.

All I have to do is put in the destination and follow the voice. Simple.

But this time, it was a rental car. Everything felt unfamiliar, and there was a lot of conversation and laughter going on in the vehicle.

And let me be clear; this was not their fault. I was the one responsible for getting us where we needed to go.

But there was one problem: the volume on the GPS was turned all the way down, and I couldn’t figure out how to turn it back up.

So now I’m trying to keep my eyes on the road, glance at the screen, tune in to all the conversations going on in the car, laugh along with everyone, and every now and then, I miss a turn.

Then I look down and realize the GPS has already rerouted.

Before long, we’re driving down small, dark roads, my stress level is rising, and people in the car start saying, “I think we’re going the wrong way...”

And I’m saying, “No, I got it.”

But the truth is; I did not have it.

The problem wasn’t the GPS.

The problem was:

- I wasn't fully paying attention.
- I wasn't listening because the volume was down.
- And I was too distracted to follow the directions being given.

What should have been simple became stressful.

And just like with my GPS, when it comes to hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit, the problem usually isn't that God isn't speaking; it's that His voice is being drowned out.

The noise of distractions, competing voices, busyness, fear, pride, and self-reliance can make it difficult to hear Him clearly.

The Holy Spirit is never confused about the direction we should go, the life we are called to live, or the truth we should embrace concerning Jesus.

One of the greatest privileges we have as believers is that we do not have to navigate life alone.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would continue to lead, guide and direct and lead His people after He returned to the Father.

At the time Jesus spoke these words to His disciples, they had learned to depend on Him for everything. Wherever they went, whatever they did, and everything they experienced was under His direction and leadership.

But Jesus knew that difficult days were ahead. Soon, events would unfold that would deeply shake and challenge their faith. He also knew that His time with them in physical form was coming to an end. There was still much He wanted to teach them, but they were not yet ready to fully understand it.

So, Jesus gave them a promise: they would not be left alone. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, would come to guide them, reveal truth to them, and bring clarity to everything Jesus had taught. He would empower them to carry out their ultimate mission: spreading the good news of Jesus Christ to the world.

God has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us, lead us, and direct us.

But when our lives are filled with too much noise, we can miss His promptings and take unnecessary detours.

The issue is never His ability to lead.

The issue is whether we are listening and whether we are willing to follow.

But here's the challenge: Many believers have the Holy Spirit living in them, but they have not yet learned how to recognize His voice.

And recognition always begins with relationship.

Before you can follow the Holy Spirit, you must KNOW Him.

## **1. KNOW**

2 Corinthians 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

The Greek word for fellowship is *koinōnia*, which carries the idea of:

- communion
- participation
- sharing
- close relationship
- partnership

The Holy Spirit is not merely a force or influence. He is a divine being who knows, feels, speaks, and leads.

### **He is:**

- Our Helper (John 14:16)
- Our Teacher (John 14:26)
- Our Guide (John 16:13)

From salvation to transformation, He is involved in every part of our journey.

You cannot follow a voice you do not recognize.

### **Living It Out**

- Spend time in the Word so you can truly know Him
- Stop seeing the Holy Spirit as distant or impersonal
- Start building a daily, personal relationship with Him

But knowing the Holy Spirit is only the beginning.

I knew there was a GPS in the car, and I knew its purpose was to help guide me to my destination. But with all the conversations, distractions, and noise in the car and with the volume turned down, I became less aware that it was even speaking to me.

Spiritually, the same thing can happen to us. The Holy Spirit may be speaking, prompting, and leading, but if we are distracted by the noise around us, we can miss what He is trying to say.

So, after we KNOW Him, we must become AWARE of Him.

## **2. AWARE**

John 14:17 (NLT) He lives with you now and will be in you.

He is not just with you; He is in you.

If we are not spiritually aware, we can miss what God is saying even while He is speaking.

The Holy Spirit is always speaking:

- Through Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16)
- Through conviction (John 16:8)
- Through peace (Colossians 3:15)
- Through wisdom (James 1:5)
- Through promptings (Romans 8:14)
- Through godly counsel (Prov 11:14)

He speaks to guide us, correct us, strengthen us, and draw us closer to the heart of God.

A growing relationship with the Holy Spirit keeps us aligned with God's direction for our lives.

### **Living It Out**

- Slow down your life
- Remove distractions
- Acknowledge Him throughout your day

Whisper simple prayers: "Holy Spirit, I'm listening." "Guide me in this moment."

The more aware we are, the more sensitive we become.

But knowing His voice and becoming aware of His presence is still not enough.

At some point, we must choose whether we are going to obey what He says.

Because direction only helps when you follow it.

And every time I ignored the GPS, it led to another wrong turn.

So, after we KNOW Him and become AWARE of Him, we must FOLLOW Him.

## **3. FOLLOW**

John 16:13 (NLT) He will guide you into all truth.

If we don't follow, we'll end up off course. We must learn to trust His direction.

Even when I saw the directions on my GPS, I didn't always follow immediately. And every missed turn led to:

- Delays
- Frustration
- Stress

Romans 8:14 (NLT) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

Being led is evidence of relationship.

Galatians 5:25 (ESV) If we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Not ahead. Not behind. In step.

#### BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

- Philip obeyed - divine appointment (Acts 8:29)
- Peter obeyed - breakthrough in ministry (Acts 10:19)
- Paul obeyed - redirected mission (Acts 16:9-10)

Living it out

- When He convicts - repent quickly
- When He leads - follow immediately
- When He prompts - step out in faith

If I had:

- Known how to use the GPS system better in that car.
- Stayed aware of the directions by turning up the volume.
- Followed every instruction.

The stress would have been less, and the trip would have been smoother.

And spiritually: The more you know Him, the more aware you become of Him, the more aware you become of him the more you will follow Him.

**Conclusion:** Some of us are spiritually hearing: "Re-routing... re-routing... re-routing..." Not because God failed to lead us, but because we didn't follow Him.

You don't have to:

- Live confused
- Walk stressed
- Miss your purpose

God has already given you direction.

The Holy Spirit is already speaking.

- Turn up the volume.
- Pay attention.
- Follow His voice.

You don't need a new direction; you need a deeper relationship with the One who's already leading you.