

How to Receive Guidance from God.

Guidance, Following God, Prayer

Series Study Guide

HOW TO RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM GOD

A 3-Session Small Group Study Guide

SERIES OVERVIEW

CENTRAL THEME AND WHAT PARTICIPANTS WILL GAIN

God wants to guide His people -- not just in the big moments, but in every area of life. This series explores how to position yourself to actually hear and follow His direction. Over three sessions, participants will learn why guidance matters eternally, how to build a spirit that can reliably receive God's leading, and how praying in the Spirit unlocks the calling God placed on your life before you were born.

By the end of this series, participants will be able to:

- Understand the difference between being led by the spirit versus the soul or emotions
- Take practical steps to strengthen their spirit through the Word
- Approach prayer as a tool for discovering and fulfilling God's specific calling on their life

WHO THIS SERIES IS FOR

This series is for any believer who has ever felt uncertain about a major decision, wondered if they are living in God's will, or sensed there is more to their life than what they are currently experiencing. It is also a wonderful series for newer believers who want to build healthy spiritual habits from the start. No prior Bible knowledge is required -- just an open heart and a willingness to grow.

SESSION 1: HOW TO RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM GOD, PART 1

OPENING REFLECTION QUESTION

Think of a time you made a major decision -- a job, a relationship, a move. Looking back, how did you decide? What were you listening to?

Take a few minutes to share with the group before diving into the study.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- Romans 8:14 -- "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."
- Joshua 1:8 -- "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night... For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."
- Hebrews 4:12 -- "For the word of God is living and powerful... piercing even to the division of soul and spirit."
- Isaiah 53:6 -- "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way."
- John 14:6 -- "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Hufton said that receiving guidance from God is one of the greatest unmet needs in the Church today. Do you agree? Why do you think so many believers struggle to hear from God clearly?
2. He identified three categories of guidance: discovering your eternal calling, navigating major life decisions, and handling daily choices. Which of these three feels most challenging for you personally, and why?
3. The sermon teaches that God guides us through our spirit, not through our mind, emotions, or five senses. Does that surprise you? How have you typically tried to receive guidance in the past?
4. Hebrews 4:12 tells us the soul and spirit are distinct and must be separated by the Word of God. In practical terms, what do you think it looks like to confuse your emotions with your spirit?
5. Howard Pittman's story is a sobering one -- a man who served faithfully his whole life but was still rebuked for missing his true calling. What does that story stir up in you? Does it challenge or comfort you?
6. Isaiah 53:6 says we naturally turn to our own way. How do you see that tendency show up in how people make decisions, even well-meaning Christians?
7. Pastor Hufton said a strong spirit produces a life that tracks with God's perfect will. What do you think it looks like, day to day, to develop a strong spirit?

PERSONAL APPLICATION CHALLENGE

This week, before you make any decision -- large or small -- pause and ask yourself: "Am I responding out of

my emotions and reasoning, or am I checking in with my spirit?" Start a simple journal. Write down one decision each day and note honestly what guided your choice.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Ask your group leader or a volunteer to close in prayer using this prompt as a guide:

Lord, we admit that we often turn to our own understanding before we turn to You. We want to be people who are truly led by Your Spirit. This week, open our eyes to the difference between what we feel and what You are saying. Teach us to slow down long enough to listen. Amen.

SESSION 2: HOW TO RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM GOD, PART 2

OPENING REFLECTION QUESTION

Has there ever been a season in your life when you moved fast -- full of energy and enthusiasm -- only to realize later you had gotten ahead of God? What happened?

Take a few minutes to share before beginning the discussion.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- Ephesians 4:23 -- "...be renewed in the spirit of your mind"
- Hebrews 4:12 -- "For the word of God is living and powerful... piercing even to the division of soul and spirit."
- Proverbs 4:20-23 -- "My son, give attention to my words... Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Hufton shared the story of launching a business with sixteen employees, running on enthusiasm rather than wisdom, and learning hard lessons. Can you relate to a time when excitement outpaced discernment? What did that cost you?

- 2. The sermon's central point is that you cannot safely be guided by your spirit until your spirit is saturated with God's Word. Why do you think the condition of your spirit matters so much to receiving guidance?
- 3. Pastor Hufton warned that our spirit and our emotions are dangerously close to each other. What practical warning signs might tell you that you are following emotion rather than a Spirit-led conviction?
- 4. Proverbs 4:20-23 says to guard your heart above everything else, because everything in life flows from it. What are some things in daily life that can weaken or contaminate our inner life without us realizing it?
- 5. If a word-starved spirit is a weak, unreliable guide, what does a Word-saturated life actually look like in practice? What habits or disciplines feed the spirit?
- 6. Think about someone you know -- maybe a mentor or an older believer -- who seems to consistently make wise, Spirit-led decisions. What do you notice about their relationship with God's Word?
- 7. Pastor Hufton said, "Before you can be led by the Spirit, you must be rooted in the Word." Is there an area of your life right now where you are seeking guidance but have not yet gone deep into what God's Word says about it? What would it look like to start there?

PERSONAL APPLICATION CHALLENGE

Choose one passage of Scripture related to a decision or question you are currently facing. Spend at least ten minutes a day this week slowly reading, re-reading, and meditating on that passage -- not just for information, but asking God to let it sink deep into your spirit. Notice whether anything shifts in your sense of clarity by the end of the week.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Use this prompt to guide the closing prayer:

Father, we confess that we often try to hear from You without first filling ourselves with Your Word. Forgive us for running ahead. This week, slow us down. Make us hungry for Your Word in a new way. Let it go past our minds and into our spirits, so that what guides us from the inside is truly You. Amen.

SESSION 3: HOW TO RECEIVE GUIDANCE FROM GOD, PART 3

OPENING REFLECTION QUESTION

If you could ask God one question about your life's purpose, what would it be? Take a moment to share with the group.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- Galatians 1:15 -- "...God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace..."
- Jeremiah 1:5 -- "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you..."
- Romans 11:29 -- "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."
- Romans 8:26-27 -- "The Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us..."
- 2 Corinthians 5:10 -- "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body..."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Jeremiah 1:5 and Galatians 1:15 both teach that God had a purpose for us before we were born. Does that idea feel real and personal to you, or does it feel abstract? What would it change in your daily life if you truly believed it?
2. Romans 11:29 says the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable -- they cannot be taken back. How does it make you feel to know that no matter how much time has passed, God's purpose for your life has not expired?
3. Pastor Hufton shared that he resisted God's call to full-time ministry for nearly two years. He was successful by the world's standards, yet the more he prayed in the Spirit, the more uncomfortable he became. Have you ever experienced that kind of holy discomfort -- where God was clearly redirecting you but you weren't ready to follow?
4. Romans 8:26-27 teaches that when we don't know how to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us and aligns our prayers with God's perfect will. How does that change the way you think about prayer, especially in seasons of confusion or uncertainty?
5. The sermon raises the sobering question that every believer will one day face: "Did you do what I asked you to do?" How does that future accountability shape the way you want to live today?
6. Pastor Hufton said that praying in the Holy Spirit is a key that unlocks your calling. Whether or not your group has experience with this practice, what do you think it means to pray in a way that goes beyond your own understanding or reasoning?
7. Is there a calling, gift, or nudge from God that you have been avoiding or delaying? What is one step you

could take this week toward saying yes to it?

PERSONAL APPLICATION CHALLENGE

Set aside fifteen to twenty minutes this week in a quiet place with no distractions. Bring your journal. Ask God this direct question out loud: "What have You called me to do, and am I doing it?" Then sit quietly and write down whatever comes to your spirit -- impressions, scriptures, memories, or a sense of direction. Don't overthink it. Just listen. Share what you experienced with a trusted friend or your group leader.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Use this prompt to guide the closing prayer:

God, You knew us before we were born. You placed gifts and a calling inside each of us that You have never taken back. We ask You to make us brave enough to follow where You lead, even when it costs us comfort or convenience. We don't want to stand before You one day with a life only half-lived. Help us say yes to You now. Amen.

SERIES WRAP-UP QUESTIONS

Use these questions in a final conversation at the end of Session 3, or as a standalone fourth gathering for the group.

1. Looking back over all three sessions, what is the single most important thing you are taking away from this series? What shifted in the way you think about guidance?
2. We learned that God guides us through our spirit, not our mind or emotions -- but only a spirit saturated in the Word can be trusted as a reliable guide. How has your relationship with Scripture changed, or how do you want it to change, as a result of this series?
3. All three sessions pointed to the cost of missing God's guidance -- years lost, calling unfulfilled, a life built on good intentions rather than God's specific will. Is there an area of your life where you sense God has been waiting for you to pay closer attention? What has been holding you back?
4. Pastor Hufton's personal story of resisting his calling for two years is a powerful reminder that surrender leads to peace. As a group, how can you encourage one another to keep saying yes to God -- not just in big

dramatic moments, but week by week in ordinary life?

5. If someone in your life asked you, "How do I receive guidance from God?" -- what would you tell them now that you might not have said before this series? Practice answering that question with your group.

CLOSING PRAYER

This prayer can be read aloud together or led by the group facilitator to close the final session.

Father, thank You for being a God who speaks -- who has not left us to figure out life on our own. Thank You for Your Word, which goes deeper than our emotions and tells us the truth. Thank You for Your Spirit, who intercedes for us and aligns our hearts with Your will.

We leave this series with a deeper hunger to know You and to follow You. Where we have been running on our own wisdom, slow us down. Where we have been ignoring Your call, give us the courage to say yes. Where we have been too busy to listen, teach us to be still.

We do not want to reach the end of our lives with gifts unopened and callings unfulfilled. So today, we recommit to being people who are led by Your Spirit, rooted in Your Word, and surrendered to Your purpose.

We trust You with our futures. Lead us well.

In Jesus' name, amen.