



REAL WOMEN!

Led or Driven?

R. E. A. L.
Women!
R. elevant
E. ncouraging
A. live
L. ionhearted

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Standing in a Sunday service, the communion table set before us, the worship team wonderfully leading us into His Presence with beautiful words and music, friends all around—when my mind and spirit were assaulted by this overwhelming sense of failure, worthlessness and torment. Tormenting thoughts of why aren't you doing more for the Kingdom began to swirl around in my mind, making me feel so bad that I wanted to run from the service. I began to fight these thoughts by praying in the Spirit, deliberately focusing my mind on Him and rebuking Satan. The struggle was quite real and the feeling of being a disappointment to our God was so strong. I began to cry out "help me, Lord"—as my mind began racing trying to defend myself against these thoughts by going through all the things I had "done" for Him while immediately counteracting it with "it's not all about me" or how much I've accomplished, it is solely about obedience and accomplishing His assignments for my life.

What was going on? Finally His Spirit cut through this mental chaos with the question "How much would you have to do for me each week to feel good about yourself?" I immediately knew that these tormenting thoughts were from Satan and are never satisfied. I said, "Lord, you and I both know I am worthy only because of Your finished work on the Cross". The siege lifted and I was able to enter into worship.

Later on, reflecting on the situation, I realized that God had allowed me to experience demonic forces at work. These forces use guilt, condemnation and comparison to hook into our soulish pride, selfish ambition and desire for approval.

As I continued to pray—asking the Lord for further revelation, I began to understand that this was an extreme attack of something that can happen much more subtly and therefore is even much more insidious. The goal of these mental attacks is to move us from being led by the Spirit to being driven to try and win approval, acceptance and appease and satisfy this god substitute.

This is not like our God. Yes, He does expect obedience and conformity to His Spirit. He does expect us to submit to His Lordship, but this all happens in the context of being led by His Spirit.

The definition of the word "driven" has a compulsive or urgent quality. The Bible refers to God driving out His enemies, or to Jesus driving out demons. Being driven compromises our peace. In an effort to "feel" valued and worthy a driven person often adds more busyness to their schedule. Since those things may be "good" things, but not God things little or no fruit is born and the cycle intensifies. People who are driven instead of being led usually exhibit little or no joy in their activities. Driven people are driven back into the law, not into life.

So what does being led by the Spirit of God look like?

1. People who are led by the Spirit of God will be led into His Truth, which results in freedom.

Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. Psalm 25:5

And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 8:32

2. The Spirit leads us besides still waters where our soul is restored.

He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. Psalm 23:2,3

3. The Spirit lead us in the paths which will glorify the Lord and cause us to walk uprightly and righteously.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Psalm 23:3

4. The Spirit does not lead us into temptation.

For the honor of your name, lead me out of this danger. Psalm 31:3

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one Matthew 6:13



Be like a little child

(Continued from page 1)

4. We are led by His Hand no matter where we may be.

If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea,

Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. Psalm 139:10

5. His Spirit leads us in safety and confidence.

But God led his people out like sheep, and he guided them like a flock through the desert. He led them to safety so they had nothing to fear, Psalm 78:53

Some people had wandered in the desert lands. They found no city in which to live.

They were hungry and thirsty, and they were discouraged. In their misery they cried out to the LORD, and he saved them from their troubles. He led them on a straight road

to a city where they could live. Psalm 107:4-7

6. His Spirit will lead us to change our ways when they are not His ways.

Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? Romans 2:4

7. His Spirit will lead us to pick up our cross daily.

23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. Luke 9:23

We must prepare our mind for action against this other counterfeit spirit who would seek to drive us to do God's will by our own strength and for impure or mixed motives. God's Spirit has a plan and purpose for each of us in helping establish His Kingdom. He desires to use us in such a way that He is glorified. It is not that we will not be "busy about our Father's business", it is that His Spirit is operating within us, allowing us to rest in our busyness, to trust in His time table and to enjoy the journey along the way.

One last thought. Unfortunately, driven people, especially leaders, have a tendency to drive others. It is most essential that we are honest with ourselves as well as

Him if we have been influenced by this driving spirit.

Father, I ask that you impart upon the readers the ability, by your grace and Spirit to help them discern the difference between being led and being driven. Lead them besides the still waters, restore their soul so they can begin again following your leadership to accomplish your plan and purpose. This is a needed lesson. Please help us be aware when the enemy is lying to us about these things, that we may turn a deaf ear to Him, and listen only to your voice. We trust you, my Father.

Written by:

Martha Rodman

Statement of Faith:

We are becoming Relevant, Encouragers who are Alive to God and His Spirit, even to the point of Being Lion-Hearted!



Check out Impart Ministries Web site.

You can now download teaching and preaching messages at www.impart.org

All the back issues of Real Women are available as well. You can print specific articles to share as well.

Summer Fun!



How many cardinals can you find? (red birds)



Leadership Encouragement

The Tale of Two “Sisters” (sisters in the Lord)

2 I entreat and advise Euodia and I entreat and advise Syntyche to agree and to work in harmony in the Lord.

3 And I exhort you too, [my] genuine yokefellow, help these [two women to keep on cooperating], for they have toiled along with me in [the spreading of] the good news (the Gospel), as have Clement and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the Book of Life.

I came across this passage soon after publishing the last article on Conflict Resolution: A Necessary Skill. I feel there are a few leadership lessons we can learn from this small portion of scripture.

Let's examine the situation. These were two specific women. Paul knew these women and had actually worked along side them for the gospels sake. However, the news of the problem between these two women had made it from Philippi to Rome! (A distance by sea of at least 1200 miles!)

Euodia means prosperous journey. As one commentary puts it “she could be spoken of as one who has arrived.”¹

Syntyche means pleasant acquaintance, happy chance, good luck! With personalities to match their names we might assume they could have been great friends. Something happened between them, that Paul chose not to tell, but it was enough of a problem that he felt he had to intervene.

Here are some lessons we can learn from their situation.

1. Disagreements rarely stay just between the two people. We need to be aware of this, not only as individuals, but also in working with others in the church or region. Unless people are instructed in how to settle disputes quickly, the flame will grow.

2. We cannot take the settling of disagreements lightly. Paul used the words “entreat and advise” and in other translations

it is “beseech”. These are strong words. Beseech means “I exhort, I beg, please”. He is asking each of these women to become reconciled and let go of the dispute for harmony in the Lord. We need to understand the importance of settling even minor disputes before they grow into bigger problems.

3. Leaders must take a role if necessary in helping settle the problem. Paul exhorted the yoke-fellow to help these two women. Leaders need to learn how to help others resolve issues. Paul reminded this man that these women were valuable to him as well as the kingdom and he needed to get involved in the reconciliation. The Greek word for “help” means to take hold together with one, to assist, help, to succor. Many leaders

4. We cannot underestimate the need for unity and harmony in the body of Christ.

5. These two women were apparently great assets to the church at Philippi, but something went wrong. We need to guard our hearts and actions or the blessing we have been to the body can with an even small problem be negated by our attitude. All of us can become victims of this divisive attitude if we do not keep in mind that those we work with have their names written in the Book of Life as well as ourselves.

Other added insights:

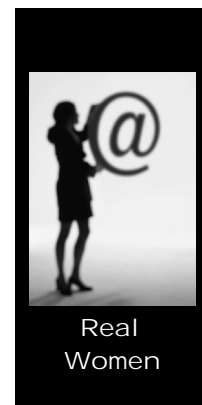
6. Paul does not mention that fact that they were “women” as a reason for this conflict, and neither should we, as women, allow our hormonal changes become an excuse for not acting Christ like. We need to help our women understand how to rely on the Holy Spirit to rein in those emotions.

¹Wuest, K. S. (1997, c1984). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English reader* (Php 4:2-4). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Food for thought

**‘People will forget what you said, People will forget what you did.’
‘But people will never forget how you made them feel!’**

**Think about it.
Do you agree?
Or disagree?**





Building Together Across Generations

Mommy, Teach Me to Pray

R.E.A.L.

Women

A few weeks ago Darryl and I were privileged to attend a production of “Snapshots” at Light-house Christian Center. This production is made up of individuals sharing “snapshot” personal stories of God’s involvement in their lives. Our daughter Elizabeth performed one of these snapshots based on a childhood experience.

She told of a time when she was three years old, playing behind a large recliner at a church member’s home, with the wife sharing with me how she didn’t think she could stay in the marriage. This very new concept of married people not staying together shook her to her core. It brought fear and panic into her little heart. It was a tipping point to cause her to cry out to God, praying that He would always take care of her. She committed her life to Him that day, alone behind that chair and He heard her heart cry.

I cannot tell you what “routine” or formula we used to teach Elizabeth about prayer, so that in this very critical time of her young life she would cry out to Him so completely, because in all honesty we didn’t have one!

What we did do was pray around her, with her and for her. I know we also prayed many “rote” type prayers—meal time grace, bedtime protection and thanksgiving for answered prayers. We prayed for boo boots and pets.

When difficult times would come, we would pray. When we needed wisdom, we would pray and somehow it was transferred to our children that prayer works!

A few days ago, I talked with a big brother (who is 11) of a little girl who has two types of leukemia. He has some hard and big questions he wishes God would answer. Why not him? Why did it have to be his sister? And other such questions.

We talked for awhile about the blessing of talking to God about all the things that upset and bother us, and how God likes it when we talk with Him about things we don’t understand. He knows how to pray. He knows how to talk to God about these hard things. He doesn’t like it that his sister has to go through all the things she does. He doesn’t like the fact his mom has to be away so much caring for her. But at the end of our conversation he said, “I guess, I just have to trust Him”. What a precious gift his parents have given him. The ability to know God is with them during this hard time and that he can talk to God about it- and does!

The children of today hear about the wars that take mommies and daddies away, soaring gas and food prices and like Elizabeth, marriages failing and other very scary things. We need to teach them they have a God to whom they can turn. Life can be challenging enough, for us, as adults—how much more for children? Encouraging them to talk with their Heavenly Father helps add stability and grace into their lives.

Please understand, I do not think we taught our children perfectly about prayer. Do I wish I had do-overs? (You, know, the ability to turn back the clock and do a season of life over). Of course, here are some of my do-overs in regards to prayer.

1. Taking the time to really pray *with* our children more. I remember feeling the mama tireds: You know, if I can just get through bath time, story time and prayer time I can finally get some time of my own. My do-over would try not to rush through those precious times and take the time to pray with them and encourage them to pray aloud for whatever was on their hearts—no matter how long it took!
2. I would have spent more time allowing God to show me the special differences in each child’s relationship to Him and pray for greater insight on how to help them grow in the way He made them.³
3. If I knew then, what I know now, I would trust the Holy Spirit as He drew my children to Him in His ways. I would try to be more sensitive to His moving in their lives.
4. I would encourage them to pray large. Even larger than they did! To believe God could lead them to see mighty things done for His Kingdom.
5. I would celebrate more with our children all the answers to prayer we received.

We do not have to live with regrets, nor do we get “do-overs”, but we can begin today to teach others by our own example how to pray.

Encouraging

Enthusiastic

Enduring

Examples

Eager

Sign up for

The Email Version of

Real Women!

Email your request:

Martha@impart.org

