

Stephanie had just put the phone down. Whether she actually got it hung up or not, she wasn't sure. Actually, she wasn't sure of *anything* at the moment. The call had come from her seventy-six-year old mom, five hundred miles away, where her dad had just gotten the results of his latest medical test. Cancer. Everywhere.

Janeen had gotten through at the dentist earlier than she expected but not early enough to go all the way home before picking up her kids at school. She wasn't often in that part of town at this time of day. In fact, she'd been forced to reschedule her appointment from two weeks ago, and this had been the first opening she could take. But since she had a few extra minutes, she thought she might swing by and see her friend Stephanie and find out how her dad's doing.

Stephanie really needed Janeen that day. At exactly 2:18 in the afternoon. Needed a friend who could hug her close, cry with her, and start praying that God would do something about this.

The Holy Spirit knew it too. That's why Janeen was there. In Stephanie's neighborhood. Killing time. And believe it or not, following orders.

Read Acts 8:26-31, 35-36, 39

I absolutely love the way my friend Ken Hemphill interprets Exodus 19:5, a verse that listens in as God says to Israel, "You will be My own possession out of all the peoples." In his book *EKG: The Heartbeat of God*, he notes that the Hebrew word translated "possession" refers to property that could be relocated—like money or jewelry—as opposed to real estate or something.

This made Israel (to use Ken's term) a "movable possession"—an asset that God could reposition on his own terms in order to meet his desired purpose.

So pick your person in the Bible, and see if you don't see this happening with historic regularity. Joseph, sold by his belligerent brothers into slavery in Egypt (Genesis 37:28). Ezekiel, time after time, "lifted . . . up" and "brought" by the Spirit to a new place of revelation (Ezekiel 43:5). Peter sent "with no doubts at all" to the house of Cornelius, the Gentile (Acts 10:20).

Abraham. Jacob. Moses. Joshua. Ruth. Nehemiah. Esther. This is the pattern established by the Spirit throughout the Scripture—taking his people from one place to another, transporting all the investment he had made in them up to that point and planting it in new ground where its fruit was needed the most.

Travel Guide

We continue to see this happening in our lives today.

A man is offered a job two states away. He prays and prays about what to do, weighing all the obvious elements of salary expectations and professional opportunities. Yet at the same time, he's reminded by the Spirit to be consciously aware that the Lord may have much more involved in this move than the things that show up on a pro-and-con list.

A family begins badly outgrowing the two-bedroom, one-bath house they bought long before they discovered that child number three (on the way) will actually be numbers three and four. But whether they realize it or not, the best house for them won't merely be the one with the right square-footage and the place for a tire swing but the one that situates them next door to a couple who's also expecting twins. . .and in need of a Savior.

We could never figure this stuff out on our own. But that's what makes our walk with Christ so perfectly freeing—if we'll let it be—because his Spirit has already figured all this out for us. Our job is just to scoot over, let him drive, and enjoy the scenery.

Interestingly, in fact, the Spirit can even do this in reverse. In one particular travelogue portion from the book of Acts, Paul and Timothy were going ahead with every intention of working their way one by one through the various provinces of Asia. "When they came to Mysia," however, "they tried to go in Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them" (vs 16:7). The guiding hand of the Spirit that was moving them throughout the region was also *preventing* them from going to places where he didn't want them to go.

That's the kind of travel agent we need—one who not only knows the best way to move us from one place to the next but also knows which places would take us out of his will and, therefore, cause us nothing but trouble.

Hear Anything?

Some people who testify that the Spirit told them to go here or go there were more likely just a little too pumped up on caffeine. We know that happens. We do need to be careful before throwing the weight of God behind our own hunches.

But having said that, the Bible is clear that our relationship with the Spirit is one that invites his supervision.

In practice, I don't think it's as much as it is adopting a conscious, ongoing awareness of our availability to him. It means staying in constant contact, regularly reminding ourselves to be listening for his sense of direction, remembering from the outset who's really in charge of this day. Those are the kinds of practices that make us able to hear him.

Fasting. Praying. Occasionally choosing quiet conversation over another Blockbuster night.

And then when he speaks, we move it.

Acts 8:26 "Get up and go south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem"

Has the Spirit ever been that specific with you? Would you agree to disagree with whether he does that?

Acts 8:29 "The Spirit told Philip, 'Go and join that chariot'"

Philip was obviously aware of his surroundings. What kinds of things do we miss by not being spiritually observant?

Acts 8:39 "The Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away"

God seems to have seasons for his people. What are the implications of this? How does this change your life expectations?

The Spirit moves and repositions His people. "Moveable possessions." That's what we are in the hand of God. Don't think of it in terms of a chessboard. That's too dungeons-and-dragons feeling. Too militaristic. Besides, this isn't a game God's playing with us. This is his love for people, placing us in situations where we can both encourage and be encouraged, comfort and be comforted, share and be shared with.

Holy Spirit, I give you full authority to move me anywhere you need me to go, anytime you can use me there.