



02TheLoveRelationship

0:00:00.3 Sonja Corbitt: Are you dissatisfied with your spiritual progress, feeling stuck without knowing why, even after deliverance prayers or years of therapy, recover your dignity, find your purpose and discover the thrill of walking with God once again, explore spiritual consultations with Sonja at biblestudyevangelista.com. Click go deeper on the home page and then one-on-one and find out how to cooperate more deeply with the Holy Spirit's action in your life for the spiritual consultation. If you like having Bible study in your pocket and you have an iPhone or iPad, Why not leave a review search Bible study Evangelista in iTunes and tell everyone how you're loving and lifting all you've been given, here's Sonja.

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0:00:50.0 S2: It's the Bible study Evangelista, show and I'm Sonja Corbitt Your Catholic of evangelista this is our second episode. In our Holy Spirit series, when God breathes the mystery of the Holy Spirit, the interior of God. And last week we ended on love, the Holy Spirit is the gift of love, he is all gift, he is all love, He is the intelligent love that connects everything in the universe. He is always active, always creating, always revealing, always incarnating in us and always resurrecting. But where is he? The wind blows where it wills. And you can hear the sound it makes... Jesus says, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. And so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit. So the Holy Spirit is mysterious, he's unpredictable. And you only see him by his effects. So then what are his effects? What does the Holy Spirit do? And this is the whole reason I wanted to do the series. So we can clearly discern the holy spirit's activity and work, and so we can work with him, because when the Holy Spirit shows you what he's doing around you, that is his communication to you from a person, the person of God himself, he's not preparing you to hear from him, that is hearing from him.

0:02:17.0 S2: When you see what he is doing, you are hearing from the Holy Spirit, and that is his invitation to get involved with what he is doing. That's why he reveals it. So I want you to know how to discern the Holy Spirit's activity in your life and around you. So you will get involved. This is how the holy spirit renews the face of the earth as the Holy Spirit prayer says. Now, we already know he works through pop quizzes, and I've spent a whole lot of time on how the Holy Spirit works through the suffering that we experience in our habits in our relationships in our circumstances. And now I'm gonna come at it from a different angle. The rest of this series, we're really gonna look at two texts that Jesus offers us in John 14 and John 16, specifically about the Holy Spirit, where he says, the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I've said to you. And then he says in Verses 15 through 18, in that same chapter, if you love me, you will keep my commandments, and I will pray to the Father, and He will give you another counselor.

0:03:23.7 S2: Or another advocate, to be with you forever, even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you desolate, I will come to you. So the rest of the series, we're gonna unpack a couple of things that Jesus says in chapters 14 and 16 about the Holy Spirit, because there's not a whole lot that there's nothing systematic about the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, it's more a compilation of different verses and their context, which give us the information that we need to understand how the Holy Spirit works and the things that he does, so that we can cooperate with him, and part of that is hearing him speak so many people, that's probably the one question that I get more than any, how do I know when God is speaking to me? How do I know that he is speaking? What does he say? And so I spend a lot of time showing people how the Holy Spirit works through our pop quizzes, and I spend a lot of time talking about how He speaks through His word, which we'll talk about that a little bit today.

0:04:41.2 S2: And a lot of this is really gonna be review for so many of you who are walking with the Spirit daily and deeply, and you probably feel like you don't need any of this information, but I promise some of it's gonna be new, because it's coming from a different angle, first of all, but secondly, because we don't hear this stuff very often, the things that Jesus says about the Holy Spirit, like the fact that He convicts the world of righteousness and judgment and those kinds of things, so that's what we're speaking about for the rest of the series, but today, I really want to focus on Jesus's teaching about this advocate, who is the advocate? The Holy Spirit. But He says something really interesting about how he himself operates in the Holy Spirit. He says in John 5:17 through 20, my father is working still and I am working. Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the father doing. For whatever he does, the Father, that the son does likewise, for The Father loves the Son and shows Him all that he himself is doing.

0:06:02.8 S2: God has tried many times to get your attention by showing you where He's working, and you see it, but you don't immediately realize that it's the Holy Spirit's finger pointing at his work, and so often we say, Well, even if we do see it, we'll say, Well, I'm not sure I should get involved here or not, I better pray about that, and then by the time we leave the situation and we pray the opportunity is gone and we've missed it, but if we know the things that only the Holy Spirit does and can do.

0:06:34.8 S2: And we know that that revelation of his activity is also an invitation to get involved, then we're far more likely to take the next step in following and obeying Him and experiencing the thrill of walking with the Holy Spirit, but so many times our spiritual lives go like this, Lord, I really wanna know your will. Stop me if I'm wrong and bless me if I'm right. And another version of this is, Lord I'll proceed in this direction, close the door if it's not your will. The only problem with this is, we don't see this example anywhere in Scripture, you can't be guided by your experiences alone, because the Bible says that the heart is deceitful above all things who can know it? So you cannot allow yourself to be guided by a traditional method or formula, and people trust in those kinds of things because they're easy, they do as they please, and they put the whole burden of responsibility on God, and if they're wrong, then he has to stop them and jump in, and if they make a mistake, then they start to blame God, but if you want to know the will and the voice of God, you have to give the time and the effort to cultivate a relationship with him.

0:07:53.7 S2: If you'll notice what Jesus says In that verse, he says, The Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing, for whatever he does that the son does likewise, for The Father loves the Son, and therefore shows him all that he himself is doing. We get

upset that we've tried Jesus and it didn't work, but that's not love, that's self-centered self-sufficiency. When we say, Here's what I think I'm gonna do. Here's a neat thing that I think the church needs, or Here's something that the parish needs, and I'm just gonna do that, and if I'm in the wrong... On the wrong path. God, just show me. We start out on a path without asking first, and then when it doesn't go like we think it's supposed to go, we get upset and we blame God, we're in the middle of a mess, because most times we're operating in the flesh, we see things that are messed up, and we jump in with what we think needs to be done, we put a plan in place, or maybe we don't even have a plan, we just... We gotta say something, we gotta say something, or We gotta do something, and we expect then the Holy Spirit to follow us rather than us discerning where the Holy Spirit is working and what he wants and how he's already active in the situation and cooperating with what he's already doing.

0:09:28.0 S2: Now, a lot of times, this is because we don't realize, first of all, that he's already active, and secondly that He does want our cooperation, but we need to find out what it is he's already doing, and we don't realize that there are some things that only the Holy Spirit can do. And when we see him doing those things that that is an invitation to get involved with him, he shows us what He's doing through this love relationship, for The Father loves the Son and shows Him all that he himself is doing. Jesus has a love relationship with God, and because of that love relationship, God shows the son what he's doing, and the son sees it, understands it, and cooperates. Truly truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing... For whatever he does, the son does likewise, this is our model. My Father is working and I am working. Jesus said, the first key is to realize that the Holy Spirit is working, he's always working, he's always creating, always revealing, always incarnating, always resurrecting, he's always working, and he does that out of love and through love and with love.

0:10:58.1 S2: Now, we'll talk about love and what it is and isn't shortly, but that is a main thing that we really have to understand, we don't do first, and then ask the Holy Spirit to follow us. We find out what the Holy Spirit is doing, and then we cooperate with him, but we cannot see or know what the Holy Spirit is doing unless we have a love relationship with Him. Throughout the readings this week, we've seen this passage, if you love me, Jesus says, you will keep my commandments, and I will pray to the Father and He will give you another counselor. Or another advocate to be with you forever, he's speaking about the Holy Spirit here, and he says, If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and then I will pray to the Father.

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0:12:23.5 SC: Sonya created the love the word Bible study method just for you, based on Mary's personal practice and formulated for your personality and temperament, get your love the word meditations every Monday morning by signing up at biblestudyevangelista.com Now, here is Sonya.

0:12:50.2 S2: In the break, I heard you say to yourself, but I already have the Holy Spirit, 'cause I'm baptized and I'm confirmed. And I have the Holy Spirit. And that's absolutely true. But I want you to listen to what he says, If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray to the Father and He will give you another counselor. So this is very personal. Yes, we have the Holy Spirit by virtue of our baptism and our confirmation, but how many of us love Him? How many of us obey Him. If you have an obedience problem, you have a love problem, what is the Holy Spirit doing? He will show you, but only from a love relationship, Love the Lord God with all your soul, all your mind and all your strength. Do you love God? Love the Holy Spirit like this. Most of us do not, and some of us are disturbed by that, and some of us have no intention of working to change it. We say, I obey Him, I serve Him, I worship Him, I fear him. But no, I cannot say I love him. Now, just the saying of that probably does disturb many of you, but I want to tell you that this is actually normal.

0:14:23.4 S2: The Book of Romans in Chapter 3, Verses 10 through 12 says There is no one righteous, not even one, there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God, all have turned away. There is no one who does good, not even one. Now, we hear that and we say, Well, now wait a minute, I do understand some things. I do try to seek God. Right, the context here is, before God, no one seeks God on his own, whether we are Baptized and confirmed or whether we aren't... No one seeks God on his own. And you did not choose God. God chose you. Jesus says, You did not choose me, I chose you to go and bear fruit. He chooses us, he takes the initiative. No one is righteous on their own, no one understands spiritual things on their own, no one seeks God on their own, no one does good on their own, no one, sin has affected us so deeply and we're so wounded. Nobody seeks after God on his own initiative. So if we're gonna have a relationship with him or the Holy Spirit, then God has to take the initiative. And that's what he does.

0:15:44.3 S2: He draws us to Himself. John 6:44, Jesus says, No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. This is why I told you that, no one can come to me unless the Father enables him. So who comes to Jesus without being drawn by the Father? No one. What does a person do? Who listens to the Father and learns from him? He goes to Jesus, and what is the only way a person can come to Jesus if the father enables him? So the first thing we have to do when we acknowledge that we don't love God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength, is to ask God to draw us to Himself, to enable us. God takes the initiative and he draws us. He draws us to Christ. So if we are being drawn, then we know that God is active, if you look around yourself in your family and you see children perhaps who have fallen away from the church and you're worried about them, none of your... Speaking to them about church stuff, or church teachings, or what they ought to do, or what they should do or whatever, none of that is going to make a...

0:17:08.9 S2: A hill of beans. To quote a southern expression, if God is not already drawing them, if he's not already active, so to jump in that situation and drag the Holy Spirit with you is going to be unfruitful, we have to wait until we see that God is drawing them. We wait until we are drawn by God the Father, you would not be listening to this podcast, if you were not already drawn to God, if God were not already active in your life, and if you are baptized and if you are confirmed, then you do have the Holy Spirit, the issue though is, we quench the Spirit. Paul talks about not quenching the spirit, not resisting, not squashing, and we do that so often 'cause we're ignorant, we don't know what he's doing, what he does, and so we don't know how to cooperate with him, and we shut down these impulses because they're intuitive and not very logical, because he is like the wind. Right, and he can't be mapped... We can't map his activity unless he's helping us do so... Right, unless he's

revealing. So it's normal that we don't love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and honestly, that's technically impossible until we actually stand before Him and we're unable to actually sin anymore, but it's all a matter of measure...

0:18:47.0 S2: I like to think of the spiritual life or the spiritual heart as having that main artery that the organ, the physical organ of the heart has. And when we have all kinds of noise, when we have all kinds of weeds, when we have all kinds of sins and distractions and all that stuff, it clogs the artery. And so we need to ask God to take the initiative, to draw us, to enable us. And in fact, that's part of the role of the Holy Spirit as advocate, is to comfort us in the realization that we cannot do anything on our own. We have not chosen Him, He chose us first. Now our will obviously does choose Him, but the point is, where is the initiative? It's not ours. None of us is righteous, no one understands, no one seeks, all have turned away, and there is no one that does good without the Holy Spirit's movement. So if you see evidence of any of those things, then there is your evidence that the Holy Spirit lives in you and is active in you and through you. And if you don't, you must ask Him to do that. Jesus says, I reiterate, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." So here is a second question. If you say you love Him, but you don't do what He says, then you don't really love Him. It's as simple as that.

0:20:29.5 S2: If you have an obedience problem, then you have a love problem. We must obey. If we love Jesus, then we will obey. I remember telling the story, and my editor was like, "Do we really want to tell this? This is not very complimentary." But I told the story in *Unleashed*, and also I think in *How to Pray Like Mary*, of trying to get one of my sons to brush his teeth. And he would just forget. You know, he was a child, he would forget. And I finally appealed to my relationship to him, and I said, "Honey, do you love me? Yes, Mommy, I love you. Are you sure? I do, Mommy, I love you. If you love me, please brush your teeth. If you love me, do what I say." And I felt comfortable saying that, because this is what God says to us. "If you love Me, obey Me." Now this is a huge body of stuff, right? And we say to ourselves, "Oh my gosh, you know, there's so much that I have to obey, so much that the church teaches me, let's just make it very simple. What in your life, right now, do you know that you should be doing, and God has asked you to do, and you have not done it? What is the last thing He asked you to do, and did you do it?" Because ultimately, to obey means to hear. Hebrews 5:8 through 10 says, "Son, though He was, Jesus learned obedience from what He suffered, and once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him."

0:22:14.4 S2: So the key here is obedience, and the word there, He learned obedience, it means to hear. To learn obedience means to hear. It's got this context of leaning forward to listen closely. We don't hear or see the Holy Spirit unless we obey, and we're not loving Him if we're not obedient. And there's a huge warning in John 8: 42 through 43, where Jesus is talking to the Pharisees, and He says, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded and came forth from God. I came not on My own accord, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear My word." You cannot bear to hear, you cannot bear to obey. And if we make this very personal, we see, "If God were your Father, you would love Me." Because love equals obedience. And if we're not hearing, and if we're not obeying, if we're not understanding, then we're not loving. If we have an obedience problem, we have a hearing problem. We have a love problem. Many, many times, when we can't discern the action of the Holy Spirit, it's because we haven't been obedient to what we know He already has said He wants us to do.

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0:25:23.4 S2: It's been a few months because I took a break between the last couple of series, and I want to shout out to my friends of the show. Laura B, Dana G, Mandy W, Karen P, Barbara C, Cynthia C, Samantha L, Jill E, Jennifer H, Morgan J, Monica H, Savannah A, Jessica S, Alicia G, Jessica S, Savannah A, Catherine P, Yolanda J, Celeste C, Carmen L, Lynn A, Anna B, Angelica A, Karen C, Margaret J, Glenn McD, Arlene R. Thank you all for being friends of the show, and I hope that you will avail yourselves of the community because every month we have a Bible study. Right now we're in the book of Romans. We're about to finish it, but we're going to start a new one, and I hold that every single month for my monthly friends of the show. If you donate once, that's actually it's for the monthly friends of the show, but if you donate once, you have access to all of the previous series that are premium content, and all of my monthly supporters, my monthly friends of the show, we always meet every month for a Bible study together, and those are a lot of fun. I love being able to see your faces and to be able to talk to you, and you talk to me, and we share insights from the scriptures, and it's fun.

0:26:42.8 S2: It's a lot of fun, so I invite you to go over to the community and join there so that you can be part of that Bible study, particularly if you are a monthly friend of the show, which I appreciate so much, and I know it's a sacrifice for many of you, and I do not take that lightly. I am deeply, deeply grateful for you. So when we're talking about obedience, there are many, many areas in which we can be disobedient. We can, you know, the seven deadly sins, that's just one area, but I want to specifically talk here about two areas that I see the most as being blocks to hearing from the Holy Spirit on a daily basis and to growing in the Holy Spirit in all of the things that He does, which I promise we'll get to, but we want to look at obedience very, very closely right here because it is so important that if we're going to cooperate with what the Holy Spirit is doing in and around us, we have to be able to hear Him, and if we can't hear Him, then we have a problem at the very

basis of our Christian life. We have to be able to hear where Jesus is directing us, and He says, "My sheep hear My voice."

0:27:53.7 S2: We are His sheep, and in the beginning, it takes some practice, right? But we have the Holy Spirit living in us by virtue of baptism and confirmation, and so we embark on the process of learning to hear Him by obeying. And we do so if we look at the examples in the Scriptures, we can, gosh, everyone, right? But Abraham, he was called, and God communicated to him what he wanted to do in the world. He revealed that to Abraham, or who was Abram at the time, and he called him to obey. Now if Abram had said, "Well, that's just too hard. I don't know if I can do that right now. What about my family?" because he was called to leave everything he knew and go travel to a whole new area, and if he had said, "Well, I don't know. I can't just, you know, I can't just pack up and leave." God doesn't usually ask us to do something that drastic. He did so with Abraham because Abraham was going to be the father of all faith, okay? But it is true that when God wants to do something, He tells His people, He says so in the Scriptures that He always tells His friends what He is doing. So how do we become friends with God? How do we love God? How do we hear Him?

0:29:10.1 S2: And if we look at these examples in the Scriptures, what we see is that God takes the initiative, He reveals what He's doing, He invites His people to join Him in what He's doing, which is the example Jesus gave us, but they must obey. And obedience takes an adjustment in our lives. It almost always, well, it always does. It always requires us to do something differently than we have done it before. And so we have to decide. We come to this, I believe it was Henry Blackaby years ago, back in like 1995 or '8 or something like that. My husband and I did a Bible study called "Experiencing God," and the tenets of hearing God and that kind of thing, the basics, we'll say, were laid out in that Bible study. And I never forgot this phrase, "the crisis of belief." When God reveals what He is doing, and He tells us how to cooperate with Him, it creates this crisis of belief. It creates this almost a sense of panic, like, oh my gosh, look at what I have to do to be obedient here. And it calls us to make a decision. We have to decide, am I going to do what God has revealed, or am I not? And sometimes that does take time. And I have often prayed, Lord, I just can't do it now, but help me, draw me, enable me, and I will. Make me want to.

0:30:33.3 S2: I have laid the onus back on God. And that's the owning of our poverty, our smallness, right? And that in itself is very pleasing to God because it's a sign of humility. But it always requires our action. It always requires our obedience and the knowledge of the change that we're going to have to make, the adjustment that we're going to have to make in our lives or our perceptions or whatever. It causes this moment and sometimes a prolonged period of time of, oh my gosh, can I do this? Will I do it? A crisis of belief. So we have to decide. And a lot of times people say, well, I don't even know if God loves me. I don't know if I can follow him if he's trustworthy. I don't know if I should risk it. I don't know if this crisis of belief is going to be worth it. Well, you're not going to experience him in your own life. You're not going to learn how to follow him and hear his voice if you don't obey. So we must obey as best we know how. And we have to settle in our minds that God loves us. I realize that we don't always feel it and people say this to me all the time. I've never felt God love, God's love for me, but he has already demonstrated his love. The book of Romans says, in we were, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

0:31:53.7 S2: We were God's enemies. You were God's enemy before you ever were drawn by the Holy Spirit. You were God's enemy and he died for you anyway and he forgave you anyway. Now the reconciliation with God requires that we make him our Lord, that we obey him. But the fact that

he loves you is absolute and we have to at some point just settle in our minds. He loves me and I will obey him because he loves me even though I can't feel it yet. And I have said over and over that emotions should be the caboose of the train and not the engine. We obey because it's the right thing to do and because we want to learn to hear and discern the Holy Spirit's activity in our lives and the lives of the people around us so that we can cooperate with what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world. And many of us who do hear from the Holy Spirit and are hearing from the Holy Spirit, I'll get to this in another show, but so many people that I know, that I know to be holy, that I know to be saints in the making, that I know to be following God and hearing from him, we're all seeing and all saying the same thing. And that unity is a sign of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the whole world. And that's a big picture, right?

0:33:17.3 S2: But for today, all I want to do is bring it down to you and your obedience. So let's look at two areas that I see all the time as being stumbling blocks to hearing God and to growing in the Holy Spirit. The first is forgiveness. Well, I just can't forgive it. If I forgive it, that means I have to forget it. If I have to forgive it, then that means I'm saying it's okay. That means I can't be mad about it. That means I have to have a relationship with them. That means I have to reconcile with him. The problem with that is that is not what Jesus said, I'm sorry, forgiveness is. Jesus says in Matthew 18 that forgiveness is simply the cancellation of a debt. What does that person owe you? Do they owe you being a good parent? Do they owe you being a good friend? Do they owe you an apology? Because at the very least, when someone hurts us or offends us or does something to us, they owe us an apology and we walk around resentful and bitter with unforgiveness in our hearts expecting to hear God and it's not going to happen. The only thing you're going to hear in that situation is you need to forgive. You need to forgive. You need to forgive. And here I am saying it again. You need to forgive.

0:34:34.3 S2: Cancel the debt. Yes, they owe you. Yes, it's just and fair that they owe you what they owe you. They owed you then and they owe you now. But forgiveness is the cancellation of what they owe you. They don't owe you anymore. You are laying that at the foot of the cross. You are bringing that person and what they owe you to the foot of the cross. You're laying it there and you're leaving it there and you forgive that person. You can even say it out loud and it's not a feeling. It's not an emotion. We say to ourselves, well, I'm not going to treat them well until I get that apology or until they do so and so, but that's not forgiveness and we're not saying it's okay. We're not forgetting it. We're not getting over it. We're not refusing or pretending to not be angry. We're not allowing them to continue to sin against us. We're not forgetting it or never remembering it again and we're not necessarily reconciling or having a relationship. We're simply canceling the debt. In order to hear God, you must forgive the sins that were sinned against you because hearing God requires love and hearing God requires obedience. Obedience is love.

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[music]

0:36:40.7 S2: Ultimately, unforgiveness leads to another big issue that prevents us from hearing God speak, prevents us from discerning the activity of the Holy Spirit, prevents us from being obedient because we refuse to forgive and therefore we refuse to obey God and that is authority issues, namely God is our authority. If Jesus is not Lord, if he is not the boss, if we're not listening to what he says and doing what he says, we have an authority issue. We have a love issue. God is our authority, but all of us also are placed in hierarchies of authority as well and unforgiveness takes us out from under the proper hierarchy of authority of God first. That's the first way that we have authority disorders, but the second way is in those authority structures that God has placed us under, we don't like what people do. We don't like what leaders do and so we rebel against those things and we refuse to do what they say or we refuse to follow them and ultimately God is the author of all authority. Now we're not supposed to follow an authority in sin, of course, and so we have that civil disobedience which, I mean, that's a civil thing, but we have a duty to follow God rather than men, the book of Acts says, and when we do that, of course, there will be consequences and we trust God in those.

0:38:20.8 S2: But most of the time, and I'm asking you to look at your own life, most of the time when we are not obedient to God's authority through the authorities that are over us, it's simply because we're rebellious. We don't like the way they're leading. We don't like what they want us to do. We think we can do it better and we don't allow the authorities to do things the way they want to do them or the authority doesn't do it at all and so we jump in to do it for them, right, and that is a way that we step out from under the proper authority structure. There are times when an authority won't do what they're supposed to do and that automatically pushes us to step in and try to do it for them or to do it instead of them rather than stepping back under God's authority and allowing God to work through the situation, which means we're gonna have to suffer with some consequences of the authority not doing what they're supposed to do or doing it at all or doing it badly. So those are areas in which we get out from under obedience because ultimately God is the author of all authority and human authorities are not ever going to do it perfectly. Most of them aren't even trying to follow God.

0:39:52.5 S2: So why in the world would He put us under such poor authority figures? He does it first of all to teach us obedience. He does it to teach us how to hear Him in those situations, how to trust Him through the people that are over us and that is a hard thing and buddy I'm telling you it is a sacrifice of humility and that's exactly why He does it. If you look in Genesis chapter 3, He says to the woman, "Your desire will be for your husband." And that means a desire to control. But then He goes on to say, "But He will rule over you." Now there's a lot I could say about that and I won't except to point out the fact that it was God's will that she be ruled over because her desire is to control Him. There's a lot we could say about that, isn't there? But this is true of every human being, not just women in marriage or at work or whatever. It's true of every person, right? Men don't want to follow either. None of us does. We are all proud. We want to do things our way. We want them done our way. And when people don't do them our way or they don't do them at all, we jump in and show to prove that we can do it and we can do it better or we can do it period rather than allowing God to work through the situation and finding His voice in it and finding the right thing to do in the situation that is charitable both for the person who is trying to learn how to be a leader and you who are trying to be a follower.

0:41:35.9 S2: What does it mean to follow well? Well, first of all, it means to obey well, which means to love well. And ultimately we are obeying God through authority. It's not the person, you know, because those people, they're human. They make mistakes. They don't even try sometimes. And yet God has placed them over us for some reason. What is that reason and what does He want you to learn in that situation? These are two areas of disobedience that I see all the time in one-on-one consults and it causes people to be stuck. They despair because they've tried Jesus and I pray all the time and I go to mass and they do all these things and they cannot figure out why they're stuck. And these are two areas of stuckness, of blockages that keep people from hearing God and following Him and experiencing Him and the thrill of following Him every single day of their lives. These are two of the main areas of stuckness that I see. So I am being asked to call you to a deeper obedience, to a deeper obedience to God in forgiveness and in authority. And then we can start attempting to hear God speak through His Word because He is always speaking. The Holy Spirit is speaking every single day. We need to be loving the Word every day.

0:43:07.5 S2: We get the readings from the church that are given to us every day, particularly the mass readings, and we listen to the Word of God every day. L-O-V-E. L is listen, O is observe. We take that Word that we're reading every day, we're listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit in an application to our relationships and our circumstances. That's the O step. We're observing our relationships and our circumstances. Then we verbalize back to God what we believe He's saying, and that takes some practice of observance, doesn't it? We verbalize back to Him what we think He's saying, and then we entrust Him with the outcome. We entrust Him with what we have verbalized. We entrust Him with our relationships and our circumstances. We entrust Him with what we've heard or thought we heard. We just trust Him. We just trust Jesus. I trust in You. And this is prayer. Listening. It starts with listening. Prayer is listening first. Mary shows us that. If you want more information on that, you can get my book, How to Pray Like Mary, in which I share her method of prayer that goes like this. L is listen, O is observe, V is verbalize, E is entrust. So we're praying to God, not at Him. This is a main area of how we listen and how we obey. God speaks through His Word every single day to the church through the readings. And this is how we pray with them.

0:44:53.5 S2: And this helps us to pray to God and not at Him with a bunch of rote, fixed prayers. I'm not saying those are bad. Pray them anyway. But do this. Love the Word every single day. We operate on the basis that God loves us even though we don't feel Him. We settle that in our hearts from the outset. God loves me. I will obey. Then we sit with the Word of God every single day listening for His Word. I shared in this month's monthly Bible study for my monthly Friends of the Show that there was a quote that I intended to add to this series, and this is it. There's a Trappist monk named Eugene Boylan who wrote a book called Difficulties in Mental Prayer and he said, "If anyone try the experiment, if one may call it such, of refusing the Holy Spirit nothing for a period of, say, six months, he will be amazed at the transformation in his spiritual life." So here is your main action item for this week and indeed throughout the entire series. Resolve to refuse nothing from the Holy Spirit. Now automatically we say to ourselves, "Well, how do we even know if it's the Holy Spirit?" Well, you're gonna make mistakes, but just do everything.

0:46:22.5 S2: Everything you think might be a prompt from the Holy Spirit in His Word every day through the teachings of the church, in forgiveness, in obedience to authority, whatever you feel that the Holy Spirit is prompting you to do in the moment, do it. Throw caution to the wind, the wind being the Holy Spirit, and risk it for 40 days. Risk it throughout at least this series and watch what happens, watch how you begin to discern what is the Holy Spirit and what isn't and this series will

help you to discern. Next week we're going to start looking at the things that the Advocate does for us, but we can't even get to that until we have settled the matter of love and obedience because Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments and I will pray to the Father and He will give you another Advocate." So we have to love Him by obeying Him first, and so that is why we started with love and obedience.

[music]

0:47:51.8 S3: Thank you for listening to The Bible Study Evangelista Show. Find out more at biblestudyevangelista.com.

