

THE BIG IDEA: When God loves, God leads.

The Take-Off

This morning we're tackling the 6th sign of life - the 6th evidence or proof that we've passed from death to life, and we're going to jump right into it by taking a look at **Romans 8:14** to find that...

Children of God are LED by God.

Now we can be led by a lot of things - some good, some bad - and before we make some notes about what it really means to be led by God, let's talk about some things that we shouldn't be led by.

Fads.

I could show you all kinds of examples of why being led by what's trendy is dangerous, but let's just stick with this latest fad as a warning: rompers for men - called romPHIMS.

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What else shouldn't we be led by?

How about our emotions?

What about popular opinion?

They're great indicators, but poor leaders.

No, we need to be led by something much more solid and reliable than fads, emotions, and opinions, and this 6th sign of life is just that: because we're alive in Christ, we're led by God - by YAHWEH who is now FATHER.

Why? Because He loves us, and because we're His children, He doesn't leave us alone as orphans.

When God loves, God leads.

A 5-word Big idea!

Let's read some of the vessel before and after our key verse to get the context.

Again, if you're looking for devotional material for this week, spending 7 days in Romans 8 wouldn't be a bad idea.

Let's read **Romans 8:9-17**.

Right in the middle was our verse - verse 14 - and it clearly states that the children of God (whom He loves) are led by God.

When God loves, God leads. Which is always.

Here are 3 observations about being led by God.

1. Sons are led; slaves are dragged

- a. Listen to the different flavors of meaning for the greek word translated "led" here: "to take with one, to bring to the point of destination, to lead with one's self, to guide, direct, lead through"
- b. God doesn't point - He partners, He pursues
- c. Being dragged is about possession; being led is about permission
- d. If we're to be led, we must be willing participants, and that requires relationship
- e. Leadership happens in relationship, and that's why Paul points out that we are no longer slaves, but children of God - of our Abba, Daddy, Papa, Father
- f. All parents know that you can bully your children into moving, but that's not the same.
- g. We are led as children of the best Father, and we would be wise to willingly place our hands in His.
- h. Our second observation reveals why this is so important...

2. When we're led by the right person, we'll be led to the right places

- a. If we have the wrong leader, we will more than likely end up in the wrong places
- b. Story about being led to Lana Bowling's house in Joplin, MO, by a Tom Tom GPS
- c. That was funny, but for a couple of Italian tourists in Rio, the end result was far more serious when they were led by faulty GPS directions into a dangerous favela and one of them was shot in the head and killed
- d. **Proverbs 13:20** says that a companion of fools suffers harm.
- e. In **Matthew 15:14**, Jesus said that when the blind lead the blind, they both end up in a pit.
- f. But when we're led by the right person, we'll be led to the right places.
- g. It doesn't mean that every stop along the way will seem or feel right or enjoyable, but that the final destination will be right.
- h. Just look at some of the tough places we can find ourselves being led by God:

- Luke 4:1 / Jesus into the wilderness
- Daniel 3 / Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego into a fire
- 1 Samuel 17 / David into a fight with a giant
- i. Those aren't enjoyable, but **sometimes God has to lead us THROUGH in order to get us TO**
 - Psalm 23:2 / to still waters
 - 2 Corinthians 3:18 / to greater glory by way of transformation
- j. 2 Corinthians 2:14 / no matter what it looks like now, you are being led in victory because you are being led by a victorious King

3. When we're led, the only thing that matters is staying close to the leader

- a. Let me boil all of this down for you - when we're being led, the only thing that matters is staying close to the leader
- b. If being led is a sign of life, then follow like your life depends on it
- c. Stay close to Jesus like a country boy following a car in New York City traffic!
- d. Galatians 5:25 / keep in step - Greek means to follow as a soldier
- e. How do we do that? Prayer, worship, community (remember that "walking with the wise" verse?) are all part of that.
- f. John 16:13 says that the Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth - He does that through His word
- g. Let me suggest that the best way to stay connected to your leader is by staying connected to His word
- h. It's easier to be led by God when we've been fed by God
- i. A simple way to start is by reading the Proverb that matches the day of the month - that simple practice would fill you with 12 months of daily wisdom from God's word every year, and you'd find yourself closer than you've ever felt to Him
- j. It's impossible to feel close to someone when you only think about them once or twice a month
- k. Lean in, and allow Him to lead you

The Landing

What could this look like?

Let me share what happened just this past Friday during Popsicles and Prayer
(Wearing jeans and meeting Bernice)

The greatest evidence to her of a change in us was the fact that we simply served her, and we were able to do that because we were led by God down a road we don't normally travel

I didn't hear an audible voice; I simply trusted that He was leading where I was going because I'm His son, and He's my Abba, and **when God loves, God leads.**

He can do the same for you.

Let's pray.