

Session 1: Who's Leading?

From the Singleness and Discernment Series

By Ellen Fox

The Shepherd of Your Singleness

Psalm 23 begins, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” That’s not just poetic comfort—it’s a directional truth. A shepherd doesn’t just comfort his sheep; he leads them.

Singleness isn’t a side trail. It’s part of the journey, and Christ is meant to be your Shepherd in it. If He’s not leading you, something else is. And that something might feel good... at first. But feelings can be misleading.

Like sheep, we wander. We chase affection, affirmation, distractions, and detours. But the Shepherd offers something steadier: guidance, rest, correction, and purpose.

“He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” —Psalm 23:3 (ESV)

Walking by the Spirit or Wandering by the Flesh?

Paul speaks directly to this tension in Galatians 5:16–25:

“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” (v.16)

“The acts of the flesh are obvious...” (v.19)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is...” (v.22)

Two paths are laid before us:

- One is ruled by self and leads to frustration, bondage, and regret.
- The other is led by the Spirit, marked by fruit: love, joy, peace, patience, and more.

This isn’t about trying harder to “be good.” It’s about walking with Someone, the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to live differently from the inside out.

Visualize the Paths

Picture it:

- One trail is wide and rugged, overgrown with temptations and distractions. It looks exciting... until it leads to dead ends and thorns. It’s the emotionally led, impulse-driven way, where feelings and desires dictate your pace.

- The other trail is narrow but steady. Sunlight streams through. Fruit-bearing trees grow along the edge. It's Spirit-led. You're walking with rhythm, not rushing or stalling. The Shepherd sets the pace. You are not tugged by impulse but paced by purpose.

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit." —Galatians 5:25 (ESV)

Biblical Example: Joseph

Joseph's story (Genesis 39–41) shows what Spirit-led singleness looks like:

- Alone in a foreign land, falsely accused, forgotten in prison.
- Yet he walked with God. He resisted temptation (remember Potiphar's wife), remained faithful, and lived with integrity.

Joseph didn't have the Holy Spirit as believers do today, but he lived with spiritual sensitivity and trust. His life bore fruit long before Paul wrote the book of Galatians. He waited well, not passively, but with quiet obedience.

Crucify the Flesh, Follow the Spirit

Galatians 5:24 says those who belong to Christ have "crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." That means identifying and rejecting the impulses that steer us off course—jealousy, people-pleasing, comparison, sensuality, and fear.

Instead, we follow the desires the Spirit gives. Not all desires are bad, but they must be filtered through God's voice.

"Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." —Romans 8:14 (ESV)

Reflection Questions

1. Who or what is currently leading you in this season?
2. Do your recent decisions reflect Spirit-led or self-led choices?
3. How do you experience the Shepherd's leadership—comfort, correction, redirection?
4. Which "fruit" of the Spirit do you sense God developing in you during singleness?
5. Are there areas where your flesh is still trying to drive the journey?

Closing Prayer

Lord, be the Shepherd of my singleness. Lead me not by impulse or fear, but by Your steady Spirit. Help me walk in step with You and let go of every desire that pulls me away, and embrace the fruit that comes from abiding in You. I don't want to wander. I want to follow. You're worth every step. Amen.

Join the Journey

This is Session 1 of the 6-part Singleness and Discernment study.
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