

A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life, Part 9: Discerning the Guidance That Comes From God - posted by Yodi (), on: 20

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Part 9: Discerning the Guidance That Comes From God

Now you have begun the life of faith. You have given yourself to the Lord to be completely His. You are now entirely in His hands to be molded according to His own divine purpose, into a vessel unto His honor. Your most earnest desire is to follow Him wherever He may lead you. You want to be pliable in His hands. You are trusting Him to "work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phillipians 2:13). But you find a great difficulty here. You have not yet learned to know His voice, and you are in great doubt and perplexity as to what really is His will for you.

You find yourself plunged into great doubt and uneasiness. The fully surrendered soul has a way out of all these difficulties. I would repeat that the soul must be *fully* surrendered because if any part of the will is held back from God, it is almost impossible to find out the mind of God in reference to that point. Therefore, you must first be sure that your purpose is truly to obey the Lord in every area of your life. If this is your purpose, your soul only needs to know the will of God in order to consent to it. Then you surely cannot doubt His willingness to make His will known and to guide you in the right paths.

"He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him: for they know His voice" (John 10:3-4).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

"Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord" (James 1:6-7).

Study these scriptures and do not let the slightest doubt shake your firm faith that divine guidance has been promised. If you seek it, you are sure to receive it.

Next, you must remember that our God has all knowledge and all wisdom. Therefore, it is very possible that He may guide you into paths where He knows great blessings are waiting for you. Men cannot see what God sees. God knows all. His ways are not as man's ways. His thoughts are not as man's thoughts. He alone knows the end of things from the beginning and can judge what the results of any course of action may be.

He reveals His will to us in four ways: through the Scriptures, through providential circumstances, through the conviction of our own higher judgment, and through the inward impressions of the Holy Spirit on our minds. It is safe to say that God speaks where these four are in harmony. I present this as a foundation principle. His voice will always be in harmony with itself, no matter how many different ways He may speak. There may be many voices, but there can be only one message.

Look first to the Bible. If you are in doubt about any subject, you must first consult the Bible and see whether there is any law there to direct you. Until you have found and obeyed God's will as it is revealed in His Word, you must not expect or ask for a separate, direct, personal revelation.

It is true that the Bible does not always give a rule for every specific course of action, and in these cases we need and must expect guidance in other ways. But the Bible is more clear about details than most people think, and there are not many important things for which the Bible does not give clear direction.

The matter of dress is presented in 1 Peter 3:3,4, and in 1 Timothy 2:9. The matter of conversation is presented in Eph

[sians 4:29](#) and [5:4](#). The matter of vengeance and standing up for our rights is presented in [Romans 12:19-21](#), [Matthew 5:38-48](#), and [1 Peter 2:19-21](#). The matter of forgiving one another is presented in [Ephesians 4:32](#) and [Mark 11:25,26](#). The matter of conformity to the world is presented in [Romans 12: 2](#), [1 John 2: 1 5 17](#), and [James 4:4](#). The matter of anxieties of every kind is presented in [Matthew 6:25-34](#) and [Philippians 4:6-7](#).

If you find yourself confused about something, first search and see what it has to say on the subject. Ask God to make clear to you what is His mind by the power of His Spirit and through the Scriptures. You must obey what is clearly taught in the Bible. No special guidance will ever be given about a point on which the Scriptures are clear, nor could any guidance ever contradict the Scriptures.

It is important to remember that the Bible is a book of principles. We must be careful not to isolate Bible verses which may, in fact, go against Bible principles. Remember in the fourth chapter of Luke, Satan used isolated Bible verses to tempt Christ, while Christ resisted Satan by stating Bible principles... (to be continued)

I am still reading through Hannah Whitall Smith's classic [A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life](#) and have been sharing the treasures I have found in this book with you. I hope you will be blessed as I have been. Your comments are welcome and encouraged.

Read the previous 8 articles in

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id6535&forum45&12) A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life (article series)

Re: A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life, Part 9: Discerning the Guidance That Comes From God - posted by Yodi (), on

(... continued)

Impressions In Guidance

Remember, it is not enough to have a "leading." We must find out the *source* of that leading before we give ourselves up to follow it. Be careful not to be deceived!

So we must first test our "leadings" by seeing if they agree with what the Bible says. When we study and meditate on God's Word, His laws are written on our hearts. Thus our judgment and common sense will be based on Biblical concepts. We must also test our "leadings" by this judgment and common sense that is enlightened by the Holy Spirit. This is "conviction".

Our impressions must also be tested by providential circumstances. If a "leading" is of God, the way will always open for it. The Lord goes before us to open a way, and we are to follow in the way opened to us. It is never a sign of a divine leading when the Christian insists on opening his own way, riding roughly over all opposing things. If the Lord "goes before" us, He will open the door for us. We will not need to batter down doors for ourselves.

A Desire Of The Heart

That God *cares* enough about us to desire to regulate the details of our lives is the strongest proof of love He could give. He lets us know just how to live and walk to please Him. We never care about the little details of people's lives unless we love them.

His suggestions will come to us, not so much as commands from the outside, but as desires springing up within us. They will originate in our will. We will feel as though we *desired* to do something not as though we *must*. *"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts"* (Hebrews 8:10).

Therefore, the way in which the Holy Spirit usually works in a full obedient soul, in regard to this direct guidance, is to impress upon the mind a wish or desire to do or to not do certain things. Our affection and understanding embrace God's laws and we are drawn to obey, instead of being driven to it.

If He seeks to bring you out of the world and into a very close relationship with Him, do not shrink from it. It is your most blessed privilege. Rejoice in it. Embrace it eagerly. Surrender all to the Lord so it can be yours.

Re: Be Still... - posted by Yodi (), on: 2005/9/30 15:50

Quote:
-----If He seeks to bring you out of the world and into a very close relationship with Him, do not shrink from it. It is your most blessed privilege.

The call, that deep inward desire, that gentle whispering voice, to draw away from people, tasks, things, and spend alone time with the Lord has been getting more persistent in me. The voice has come more often, and a bit more louder and clearer. Last weekend I really struggled to just sit still. And every time I busy myself with other things, I'm always let down that I didn't heed that inward call. This past weekend it became undoubtedly apparent that I had been running from that quiet, still time with the Lord. I had to humble myself and apologize in prayer.

It seems to be what I call a "reoccurring theme". Whether a verse comes to mind, I read it in a book, someone teaches it, or God simply speaks it to my heart, over and over again the message, the plead is "Spend time with Me. Sit with me my daughter. Spend time with your Father." Here are some quotes I wrote down in my journal recently from Greg's last two "Old Paths" newsletters that have really just pressed the importance of this discipline of solitude, that even our Lord, Jesus set an example in doing Himself, on my heart:

"If your heart takes more pleasure in reading novels, or watching TV, or going to the movies, or talking to friends, rather than just sitting alone with God and embracing Him, sharing His cares and His burdens, weeping and rejoicing with Him, then how are you going to handle forever and ever in His presence? You'd be bored to tears in heaven, if you're not ecstatic about God now!" - Keith Green

"Live near to God, and so all things will appear to you little in comparison with eternal realities... God will either give you what you ask, or something far better." - Robert Murray M'Cheyne

"All practical power over sin and over men depends on maintaining closet communion. Those who abide in the secret place with God show themselves mighty to conquer evil, and strong to work and to war for God. They are seers who read His secrets; they know His will; they are the meek whom He guides in judgment and teaches His way. They are His prophets who speak for Him to others, and even forecast things to come. They watch the signs and the times and discern His tokens and read His signals." - A.T. Pierson

"It is not that God is stingy and must be coaxed, for He "giveth liberally and upbraideth not." It is that we ourselves are so shallow and sinful that we need to tarry before Him until our restless natures can be stilled and the clamor of outside voices be deadened so that we can hear His voice. Such a state is not easily reached, and the men God uses have paid a price in wrestlings and prevailing prayer." - Vance Havner

Back to discerning the will of God, I know in my heart if I keep close to Him, I will clearly hear His voice and there will be no confusion as to what He wants. I want to be *that* close to carry out and live His purposes for my life.

Re: Hearing God's Voice - posted by Yodi (), on: 2005/10/6 12:52

I am pleased to share that God is giving me the desires of my heart to be close enough to Him to hear His voice clearly. Yesterday I came to quite a realization! It's the still, small, subtle voice that God speaks to me through. And due to my pattern of impatience and lack of wisdom, I've always ignored it, thinking God would show me His will by drastic intervention in the beginning. Of course, when I've made a mess of things, He does graciously intervene before things get worse, and then I blame Him for the hurt that I could have been spared at the start. But it was at the start that He spoke to me in a small voice. God's finally helping me recognize His voice, and *this* time I will heed the warnings, practice patience, be willing to sacrifice the things I want in the moment, and trust that if I wait upon the Lord and trust Him, that I will receive His better plan for my life in the future.

Oh man... I can't stress enough how important patience is. How impatience rips us off of God's better and higher plans for us. How impatience causes us to use people to please ourselves at their expense. How impatience hinders us from demonstrating the love and grace of God to our unsaved family and friends. How impatience causes us to pray amiss. How destructive impatience is! We must discipline ourselves to be still and know God! We must practice the love spoke

n of in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, "Love is patient...". I don't know who needs to read this, but I trust that God will penetrate your heart with His truth, set you free and encourage you, whoever you are.

Re: - posted by _Disciple_ (), on: 2005/10/6 14:13

Quote:

-----Yodi wrote:

"If your heart takes more pleasure in reading novels, or watching TV, or going to the movies, or talking to friends, rather than just sitting alone with God and embracing Him, sharing His cares and His burdens, weeping and rejoicing with Him, then how are you going to handle forever and ever in His presence? You'd be bored to tears in heaven, if you're not ecstatic about God now!" - Keith Green

"Live near to God, and so all things will appear to you little in comparison with eternal realities... God will either give you what you ask, or something far better." - Robert Murray M'Cheyne

How is our closet?

Is it like the doors with all those signs who shout "keep out", "do not disturb", "busy" etc.

How is our closet?

Is it an open door for Our Lord? or is it like that door which is shut with all those shouting signs of do not disturb, which all so means "i am living here, i make the rules".

How is our closet?

Yodi

thank you so much for posting this

be blessed and encouraged, stay close to Jesus, and you are growing more to Him (Phi 1:6)

your bro in Christ

-William

Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2005/10/6 20:37

Yolanda,

these are are great thoughts. I am so encouraged to see what you're learning from the Lord lately.:-)

Grace and peace, Chanin

Re: - posted by Yodi (), on: 2005/10/30 16:59

I'm sorry I didn't see this reply. And... I haven't picked up this book for awhile. There's been a lot going on in my life. I've wanted to post so many things on here, things that I've learned, but I've had a lot of work to do here in the office lately and not much free time to spend on SI. I hope to finish what I started though, and if I do, I hope it will continue to bless the readers.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2005/10/30 19:43

Quote:

----- We must discipline ourselves to be still and know God!

I was about to shut off SI for a while because I have been feeling a strong calling to spend more time alone with God - and his word. I thought I'd take a quick peak at this thread before turning off the computer. I'm sure glad I did! How timely to see it brought up here. What a great read!

It is great to chat with fellow Christians, like those on SI, and I feel that God is in it, but there is nothing that can compare with being alone with God - letting him speak to me, be with me and draw me into deeper awareness of his involvement in my life.

For quite some time I have been noticing a trend. When I'm too absorbed in something in this world - even if it is Christian related, I get a let-down feeling after a while. I feel that it pulls at me and burdens me down - hard to explain, maybe you can relate. And then, when I am with God and his Word, I sense his strength, his joy, and his peace return to me.

May God bless you, Yodi as you rest in his presence. And may he keep distractions at a distance.
Diane

Re: - posted by Yodi (), on: 2005/10/30 21:53

roadsign (Diane)

Your reply really blessed me. What fruit God produces every time a prayer is said over a post. It's so simple it actually feels stupid doing it, praying over a post, but God proves that it's not stupid at all.

It's encouraging to read when people feel that God is calling them to take a break from something, even a good thing, like you said, to spend alone time with Him. We can never forget Who and What is truly the priority in our lives. Acts of obedience always encourage me.

And maybe, if I can encourage you guys who are blessed by my posts, to keep me in prayer, if you feel led. Yeah, I can write good things and share what God's been doing in my life, but I have struggles of my own. I have to fight in this spiritual war like everyone else, I just might get attacked in a different way from the rest of you. And if you ask me to pray for you, I am always glad to. God bless you all.