

HOW GOD GUIDES

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye." Psalm 32:8.

Very definitely this is a promise of true guidance. As we study this verse, I would have you to observe three things.

I. The Guide.

Man needs a guide both in the every-day affairs of life and in the crises of life. Who then is offering Himself as our guide? "The Lord shall guide thee continually." Isaiah 58:11. "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Psalm 73:24. "But if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, Who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord; a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." James 1:5-8.

Two things beget confidence in the Lord's guidance: --

1. The perfection of His character.
2. The perfection of His love.

III. The Guided.

When Isaiah said, "The Lord shall guide thee continually," he made it very clear that the guided are a special class, namely, the Lord's people. This promise is made to believers only. You cannot expect to have the guidance of the Lord if you are still unsaved and following Satan.

1. Must realize incapable of self-guidance.

We are not able to decide for ourselves the way in which we should go. We sometimes interpret our own inclinations as being the will of God. Such a misinterpretation always means a hazardous enterprise. "If any of you lack WISDOM, let him ask of God." This promise is made to one who lacks wisdom, not to one who has it. Many fail just here. They have such implicit confidence in their own opinions, judgment and ability to decide on the course of pursue that they do not have any deep sense of their need of His guidance.

2. Must have a real desire to know the will of God.
3. Must have a thorough willingness to do God's will.
An absolute surrender of the will to God is the true secret of guidance.
4. Must pray definitely for guidance.
"Let him ask of God." Ask for God's guidance at every turn of life, and not merely in the great crises of life, but in the ordinary matters of every-day life. We need God's guidance, and we can have it, but we must ask for it.
5. Must confidently expect God to guide us.
"Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting." Many do not really expect God to guide them when they ask Him to do so.
6. Must follow Him a step at a time as He guides.

Many want to know the whole way before they take a step, but God's method is to show at

us a step at a time. We must take the next step that He shows us, and leave all further steps until the time comes to take them.

"I do not ask to see the distant scene,
One step, enough for me."

Let us lay hold on the glorious promise which God has made to us, "As thou goest thy way shall be opened up step by step before thee." Proverbs 4:12.

III. The Guidance.

1. The guidance of God is certain.

(1) He guides by His Word.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105.
"The entrance of Thy Word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Psalm 119:130.

His Word is His chief instrument of guidance. If any impulse, leading, prompting or vision is not according to the Book, it is not of God. The Bible is a revelation from the infinitely wise God, made in a reasonable way to rational human beings.

(2) He guides by His Spirit.

In this manner Philip was guided to the chariot in which the eunuch was riding. "And the Spirit said unto Philip, God near and join thyself to this chariot." Acts 8:29. Of Paul and his companions we read, "And they went through the region of Phrygia and the region of Galatia, having been forbidden of the Spirit to speak the Word in Asia." Acts 16:6. In one case He gave guidance, and in the other case He restrained them from doing something they would have done otherwise. But one thing is sure, namely, the Holy Spirit will never lead us to do anything contrary to the Word of God.

(3) He guides by circumstances.

He so shapes the events of our lives that it becomes clear that He would have us do certain things. Dr. F. B. Meyer said, "When we want to know God's will there are three things which always occur: --

- a. God in the heart impelling you forward.
- b. God in His Book corroborating whatever He says to the heart.
- c. God in circumstances which are always indicative of His will."

2. The guidance of God is personal.

"I will guide thee."

3. The guidance of God is continual.

He guides all the time and will guide all the way.

4. The guidance of God is satisfying.

"Thy will, not mine be done."