

## 137 Guidance on Guidance - Part 2

In last week's Reflection, the first in this series about God's guidance, we recognised two key features at the heart of the process. First is our need, having sought the Lord carefully, to have the maturity to take decisions ourselves, for Christian living is not about our remaining as spiritual one-year olds, expecting God our Father to do everything for us! Second, any decision we do take, no matter how carefully we have considered it, will always involve us in an act of faith: we have done our best to know the Lord's guidance, and then we have acted, under Him, in good faith.

This time we come on to real, practical steps we can take to become more consistent in our understanding the Lord's guidance over the many situations and decisions we face in life, be they great or small. When we consider all our decisions together, they are an accurate indicator of what our lives are really all about. Truly, knowing the Lord's guidance, whatever the level of our decision-making, is crucial. So here are the first four guidance-suggestions from a list currently standing at fourteen! ....

1 We need to be ABIDERS! We are far, far more likely to hear the Lord's guidance aright if we are already walking steadily with Him (eg John 15.1-11). C S Lewis likens this to a game of tennis between a top professional and a total novice: the novice might just win the occasional point with a tremendous shot, but he is far more likely to do well if he is already "in the groove" as a tennis player. Just so with guidance: How is my "spiritual walk" with the Lord? How is my prayer life, my time spent with Him in His Word, my involvement in the local "body of Christ", my lifestyle, my relationships, and so on? If I just "drop by" with the Lord once in a while asking Him for a quick dose of guidance over something, my chances of hearing Him aright are pretty small.

2 We come to Him with a RIGHT ATTITUDE. Our need to know the Lord's guidance is actually far more about seeking His interests rather than our own interests! We are in His service, rather than He in ours; we orbit around Him rather than He around us. This keeps us humble before Him, courteous, patient, grateful. Let there be no hint of our "summoning the waiter" when we are seeking the Lord's guidance.

3 Having said that, we can come to Him as GRATEFUL EXPECTERS! The Lord wants us to know Him, His thoughts and His ways. "Ask, seek, knock", He tells

us (Matthew 7.7); He is waiting to bless us with His guidance, for it is far better for Him, and for us, when His children are following Him truly.

4 WE SEEK THE LORD'S GUIDANCE THROUGH HIS WORD: "In this question I am facing, what has the Lord already given us in His Word?". This is where the "P-Rs" play their part.

We begin by PRaising the Lord for all He is, and then PRaying for His guidance in His written Word, through Christ the Living Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in this particular matter. As we turn to the Bible, to set our own concern in its proper context we first ponder His overall PROgramme concerning His creation and all that is within it. Then we look for relevant PRecedents / PROMises / PRinciples; perhaps also for PROphesies or PROverbs. All this will help us understand the Lord's PROMPTING of us, and we can turn to Him again in PRAISE.

By taking care with these P-Rs we are obliged to be thorough in the Word, and it will soon be no surprise to see how often the Lord speaks all too clearly through His Word regarding the most contemporary of issues today. Lack of space here prevents any detailed scriptural example of the P-Rs "in action", but you can apply them yourself right now in your own situation, or explore some of these topical examples: wealth / ambition / Facebook and Twitter / cohabitation / rest / non-Christian Faiths / immigration / old age.

Next time God willing, we shall continue with the guidance-suggestions (to be put into a pdf book when complete). Meanwhile nothing has changed - Psalm 119.105 is as true as ever!

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