

## **The guidance of the scriptures**

An old sailor repeatedly got lost at sea, so his friends gave him a compass and urged him to use it. The next time he went out in his boat, he followed their advice and took the compass with him. But as usual he became hopelessly confused and was unable to find land. Finally, he was rescued by his friends. Disgusted and impatient with him, they asked, "Why didn't you use that compass we gave you? You could have saved us a lot of trouble!" The sailor responded, "I didn't dare to! I wanted to go north, but as hard as I tried to make the needle aim in that direction, it just kept on pointing southeast." That old sailor was so certain he knew which way was north that he stubbornly tried to force his own personal persuasion on his compass. Unable to do so, he tossed it aside as worthless and failed to benefit from the guidance it offered.

Psalm 119: 105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

### **1) God is our guide**

- Guidance is something that everyone needs in their lives.
- Guidance is generally placed into various categories:
  - Educational – what to study
  - Vocational – career or job choices
  - Personal
  - Financial matters
  - Emotional
  - Relationships
  - Morality
- The reason that we need external guidance is because we often don't know the way ahead or out of our present circumstances.
- Life isn't a simple matter of just doing the right thing.
  - There are choices to make that will affect us
  - There are voices calling from all sides and paths often have Y junctions, or even multiple junctions. Road signs always help to guide us which one to take.
- God is our guide and knows the end from the beginning.
  - He knows how he has made us.
  - He knows how we think, our passions, our gifts and talents.
  - He knows the purposes for which he made us – and each one of us has been made for a purpose
- God has always guided his people
  - He guided them out of Egypt by the hand of Moses and a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.
  - He guided them by the mouths of the prophets
  - Some he spoke some face to face, like Moses.
- Although God does guide us in various ways, he ultimately speaks to us through his word.
  - Deuteronomy 8: 3 He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.
- Three ways that God guides us:
  - He humbles us often causing hardship in our lives
  - He takes us out of hardship
  - He brings us back to his Word

## 2) The paths of life

- There are many paths of life, but not all of them are right.
- Jesus spoke of a broad road that leads to destruction and a narrow path that leads to life.
  - Matthew 7: 13 – 14 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.
  - According to Jesus there are only two paths – the narrow path and the broad path.
  - He uses the imperative to tell us to enter through the narrow gate, which leads to life.
- It is God himself who sets choices before us, but wants us to choose the right way under his guidance.
  - Deuteronomy 30: 19 – 20 This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.
- The first time that God had set a choice before man was in the Garden of Eden when he told Adam that he could eat of any tree in the Garden, except the tree in the middle of the Garden – the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
  - Along with the choices he stresses the consequences of our choices.
  - Blessings for the right choice and curses for the wrong choice
- He has left us his Word to guide us to make the right choices in life.
- His Word doesn’t tell us exactly what to do in life e.g. study teaching, go to China as a missionary, etc. but it does show us the way to know God’s will.
  - Romans 12: 1 – 2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is —his good, pleasing and perfect will.

## 3) He illumines the way

- We are told that his Word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.
- If we are walking in a very dark place at night and have one little light that shines the way ahead, we feel at ease, relaxed, because we can see where we’re going.
- God doesn’t always show us the exact details of what we should do, but through his Word we understand his ways
- You might have it on your heart to study teaching.
  - Proverbs 22: 6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.
- You might have it on your heart to go to China as a missionary
  - Matthew 28: 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- God will always guide us on the path that glorifies his name, according to his revealed will.
- God’s guidance is often based on morality.
- If a new job that you’re considering applying involves corruption then don’t apply for it.
  - Proverbs 17: 20 One whose heart is corrupt does not prosper.
- His Word shapes our consciences so that we know when we are on the right path or not.
  - 2 Corinthians 1: 12 Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God’s grace.