

009 God Guides the Faithful

by David Servant

God guides us through his Bible and scripture, and requires obedience and faithfulness before giving us specific guidance.

Duration: 7:43

Scripture: Psalm 32:8, Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 16:9, Ephesians 2:10, James 1:5

Topics: "God's Guidance", "Faithfulness"

Description

This sermon delves into the topic of God's guidance using the story of Joseph in Matthew chapter 2 as an example. It emphasizes the importance of obeying God's general commandments before seeking specific guidance, highlighting the principle that God first gives general guidance even in specific situations. The sermon encourages faithfulness and obedience in small things as a pathway to discovering and walking in God's specific will for each individual's life.

Transcript

All right, let's continue in Matthew chapter 2. I want to read once again what we read previously, verses 19 and 20, because in this segment I want to talk about God's guidance. God led Joseph on this occasion through a dream, and that is one way that God leads us, but that's not the only way God leads us. I would say in my experience over the years trying to determine God's guidance, more than any other way, God guides us, of course, through his Bible and through the scripture.

I've got a copy of the Bible on my computer here in case you're wondering why I'm pointing to my computer. God's looking for people who are going to obey his general commandments to everybody, and it would make sense, wouldn't it, that before he begins to give us specific guidance, he'd want us to be following his general guidance that applies to everybody. When people are looking for specific guidance, they first need to ask themselves, am I already following the guidance God gave me? Why should I expect God to give me more guidance if I'm not following the guidance he already has given me? God gives his guides, listen closely, to people who are obedient, to holy people.

Come on, isn't that just borne out in scripture as well as in our own experience and so forth? People that are going their own way, God's not apt to give them specific guidance because they're not listening to the general guidance anyways. Then here's something else to learn, that same principle applies. Even in his specific guidance, God first gives general guidance.

For example, anyone who has been called by God to serve in vocational ministry, now everybody's called to serve in ministry, but vocational, that is, you're going to do this for a living every day of your life, or you might take the weekends off, sure. God gives them that calling, but they don't know exactly what he wants for them yet. You start off doing something for the Lord, that's it.

God calls you, you know you're called, so you take whatever opportunity he gives you first. You prove your faithfulness in small things. God has given you some general guidance beyond just the scripture now.

He's calling you to vocational ministry. You do whatever your hand finds to do to prove your faithfulness, and then God begins to hone you in to what he has prepared for you from the foundation of the world. It's absolutely lovely, and it takes years, let me tell you, and anyone who's been in vocational ministry can tell you the same thing.

He hones you and hones you down as you prove you're faithful, and again, we all are unfaithful at times. We blow it. Yours truly, I'm a perfect example of the person who's blown it, but God's mercy is new every morning.

Thank God for that. You get up when you fall, and you get back in the race, and then he gives you more guidance, and eventually you get right into that niche that he's been preparing for you for a long time. We're going to see that today in how God guided Joseph.

Verse 19, but when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, get up, take the child of his mother, and go into the land of Israel for those who sought the child's life are dead. What was the guidance? You're in Egypt right now. You're going to go to Israel.

Israel's a pretty good-sized place. Go there. Okay.

Well, if he gets there, he knows he's in the right country, and is it optional where he lives? Well, actually not, as we continue to read this story. So Joseph got up, verse 21, took the child of his mother, and came into the land of Israel. So now he's followed the initial guidance that God has given him.

He's in the right country, verse 22, but when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, who died a few verses ago, he was afraid to go there. Okay? So he's trying to figure out where he's supposed to go in Israel, and then after being warned by God in a dream, so here's another dream, he left for the regions of Galilee. So Israel was divided north and south, Judea and Galilee, and he's getting a little bit closer now.

It's a little bit more specific, and he's warned by God in a dream. We don't get the specifics there, but as a result of that dream, and as a result of his fear of Herod's son, he heads toward the regions of Galilee. And of course, Galilee was where ... Did I ... Yeah, I made one mistake.

Galilee is just a region that is in the northern part of Israel, and that's where Jesus spent a lot of his time in ministry. And he came and he lived in a city called Nazareth, and so we can be sure, although it's not said to us in the previous verse, that that's the city where God directed to him to go in Galilee. Okay? And this was to fulfill what was spoken to the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene.

So it's nailed right there that it was God's will for him to go to Nazareth. But can you see, that's not what he told him at first, no sir. He told him first of all, get out of here, go to Israel, general guidance.

He makes the step of faith, he begins moving in the right direction, he gets across the border into Israel, and now it becomes more specific, I want you in the region of Galilee, I want you in a town called Nazareth. And apparently that is the town where Jesus Christ spent quite a few years of his childhood growing up. Okay? Now, again, let's bring it home in application to our own lives.

It doesn't matter whether you're called to vocational ministry or not, everybody, this means you, has, God has prepared good works from the foundation of the world that you should walk in them. Specific things, not vocational ministry necessarily, but specific things. Well, you can be praying for God to give you that guidance, but he probably isn't going to get you right into that perfect niche that he had planned for you until you start doing what scripture says, following the general commandments, right? And then as you seek his guidance, doing whatever your hand finds to do to prove that you'll do anything, Lord, I just am your obedient servant, I want to follow you.

And as you take those steps of faith, the guidance, month by month, sometimes it's year by year, you slowly, slowly, slowly, as you prove your faithfulness, get closer and closer to God's perfect will for you. Okay? Good lesson to learn. And if you know that, wow, you are indeed blessed.

Okay? Well, thanks for joining me. See you next time.

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