

Study Notes - Divine Guidance

by Walter Beuttler

Divine guidance is the leading of God in the personal life and experience of man, and it involves the transformation of our mind, the recognition of our need, and the cultivation of the spiritual faculty of hearing.

Scripture: Romans 12:2

Topics: "Divine Guidance", "Gods Will"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the importance of divine guidance in the life of a believer, emphasizing the need to know and follow the will of God. He explores the transformation required in our thinking, the hindrances and requisites for divine guidance, and the various means through which God guides His people. Beuttler delves into the principles of guidance by the word of God, the Holy Spirit, and divine providence, highlighting the characteristics of a surrendered will and the conditions for experiencing the peace of God.

Transcript

A. FACT OF DIVINE GUIDANCE

1. What is meant by "divine guidance?" The leading of God in the personal life and experience of man
2. Concerning the possibility of knowing the will of God, what may be seen from:
 - (1) Col. 1:9? That we should know the will of God in all wisdom and spiritual understanding
 - (2) Col. 4:12? That we should aim for all the will of God
 - (3) Rom. 12:1-2? That we can know the will of God by meeting the necessary qualifications
 - (4) Rom. 12:2? That the ability to discern the will of God necessitates the transformation ("transfiguration" as in Matt. 17:2) of our mind
 - (5) Isa. 55:7-9? That the thought processes of the renewed mind are based upon a new point of reference
3. What does this transformation of our thinking involve according to:
 - (1) Rom. 12:2? Negatively - a refusal to have our thinking fashioned, or patterned, after the thinking of those who know not God

(2) Rom. 12:2? Positively - an enlightening of our mind with spiritual understanding by the Spirit, Eph. 1:17-18

(3) Rom. 12:1? Practically - a surrender of the body to the demands of God in order to enable the Spirit to accomplish this renewing within us

(4) Luke 16:15? Socially - that this renewal of our manner of thinking will bring us most assuredly into conflict with those whose thinking may be diametrically opposite to that of God

4. Wherein do we see the need for divine guidance in the light of:

(1) Jer. 10:23? In the inability of man to direct himself in the ways of God

(2) Psa. 32:8? In the provision of God as the guide to direct in his way

(3) Psa. 32:8? In the divine promise of his willingness to guide us

(4) Psa. 32:8? In the provision of effective means of guidance

(5) Psa. 106:13? In God's complaint because of man's failure to wait for his counsel

(6) Psa. 106:13-15? In the results of the failure to wait for the counsel of the Lord, Joshua 9:3-16

(7) Deut. 28:65-68? In the possible symptoms (not necessarily proofs as there may be other causative factors) of being out of the will of God, namely, uneasiness, restlessness, grieve of mind, uncertainty, fearfulness, lack of assurance, discontent, and spiritual bondage

5. Point out two aspects concerning divine guidance as seen from Psa. 32:8:

(1) God instructs, i. e., he imparts the knowledge of his will by precept

(2) God teaches, i. e., he imparts the knowledge of his will by experience

B. REQUISITES FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE

1. Note a fundamental difference concerning divine guidance from:

(1) Isa. 45:1-5 - There is an unconditional guidance in which God acts in sovereignty without any requisite for such guidance, and regardless of man's attitude, Isa. 45:9-13 (R. S. V.)

(2) Isa. 58:10-11 - There is a conditional guidance in which the leading of God is contingent upon man's compliance with certain conditions

2. Enumerate some hindrances to divine guidance as seen from:

(1) Prov. 3:5-6 - Self-sufficiency

(2) Isa. 58:10-11 - Selfishness

(3) Psa. 32:9 - Stubbornness

(4) Jer. 42:20 - Insincerity

(5) Zech. 7:1-7 - Disobedience

(6) 2 Kings 6:33 - Impatience

3. Enumerate some requisites for divine guidance as seen from:

(1) Jer. 3:4 - Recognition of our need

(2) Psa. 25:9 - Meekness of spirit

(3) John 7:17 - Willingness to obey

(4) Isa. 58:10-11 - Compassion for others

(5) Prov. 3:6 - Acknowledgment of God

(6) Deut. 32:12, 9-11 - Sole dependence on, and an attachment to, God

4. Point out some characteristics of a surrendered will from:

(1) John 6:38 - It does not regard its own will as the purpose of life

(2) John 5:30 - It does not seek its own will as the desire of life

(3) Luke 22:42 - It resolutely sets aside its own will for that of God

(4) John 4:34 - It embraces the Father's will as the very sustenance and joy of life, Psa. 40:6-8

C. MEANS OF DIVINE GUIDANCE

1. Enumerate various means which God uses in guidance as seen from:

(1) Psa. 119:105 - The word of God as the supreme criteria "until the day dawn," 2 Peter 1:17-21

(2) Rom. 8:14 - The Holy Spirit in the diversity of his mysterious working, John 3:8, whether in action, Luke 4:1, or in active inaction, Num. 10:12

(3) 1 Sam. 9:1-17 - Divine providence, i. e., the ability of God to make all events perform his will and accomplish his purpose, Dan. 4:35; Psa. 75:5-7

(4) Prov. 11:3 - Personal integrity based upon the principles of the word of God

(5) Acts 8:26 - Angels, "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation," Heb. 1:14

(6) 1 Sam. 10:1-7 - Signs, such as a supernatural phenomena, Ex. 3:1-4, an event, Luke 17:26-30, or a person, Isa. 8:18, ordained of God to be a token or symbol of some message he wishes to convey

(7) Acts 16:9-10 - Visions, whether as revelation for ministry, 1 Sam. 3:1; Prov. 29:18; Lam. 2:9; 1 Sam. 3:21; or for personal revelation, Gen. 15:1-21

(8) Matt. 1:20 - Dreams, whether to an ungodly person to preserve a people, Gen. 41:1-57, 45:7-8; or to a godly man to warn of danger, Matt. 2:12-13, 22

2. What may be inferred from the fact that there is only a bare New Testament mention of dreams in Acts 2:17?

(1) Since dreams are mentioned among the results of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, it suggests that there is some place for them in the New Testament economy

(2) The fact that there is only one bare mention of dreams, suggests that they should be regarded as an inferior means of divine communication

3. Which means of guidance predominate in the Word?

(1) The written word of God with all of its principles and precepts

(2) The Spirit of God in the various forms of his leading

(3) Divine providence exercised in the circumstances of our lives

D. PRINCIPAL MEANS OF GUIDANCE

1. Point out principles of guidance by the word of God from:

(1) 2 Tim. 3:16 - The word of God guides in that it gives "instruction in righteousness," e. g., 1 Thess. 4:3, 5:18

(2) 2 Tim. 3:16 - The word of God guides in that it reproves for wrong doing, e. g., Gen. 4:6-7

(3) 2 Tim. 3:16 - The word of God guides in that it corrects, e. g., Zeph. 1:1-6; 3:2

(4) 2 Tim. 3:16 - The word of God guides in that it teaches man the ways of God, e. g., Psa. 103:7, 25:9

2. In what manner may the Holy Spirit be guiding as seen in:

(1) Col. 3:15? By the peace of God witnessing within us for or against, an intended course of action or state of being

(2) Acts 8:29? By speaking distinct words within or without one's own being

(3) Acts 16:6? By forbidding to take an intended course of action

(4) Acts 16:7? By restraining from an intended course of action

(5) Acts 11:27-30? By an utterance of the Spirit through the gift of prophecy

3. Enumerate the specific characteristics of the nature of the peace of God:

(1) Negatively - It is not a mere absence of disturbance because of favorable circumstances

(2) Positively - It is a conscious rest, independent of circumstances, favorable or unfavorable

(3) Experimentally - It is a supernatural rest in the midst of unrest and therefore passes "all understanding," Phil. 4:7

(4) Positionally - It is the peace OF God, Phil. 4:7, for all those who have made peace WITH Gods Rom. 5:1

(5) Judicially - The peace of God is to "rule," (lit. "arbitrate") in our hearts, Col. 3:15. That is to say, he is to act as an arbiter to settle the disputes in our course of action

4. How does the peace of God "rule" or "arbitrate?" By giving a conscious rest or assurance in our hearts concerning a matter, or else an unrest, a disquiet, or an uncertainty

(1) Isa. 48:18 - Righteous conduct

(2) Isa. 48:22 - Obedience to God

(3) Psa. 119:165 - Love for the law of God

(4) Phil. 4:6-7 - Prayer and supplication

(5) Gal. 5:22, 25 - Walking in the Spirit

5. Point out the conditions for having the peace of God as seen from:

(1) Isa. 48:18 - Righteous conduct

(2) Isa. 48:22 - Obedience to God

(3) Psa. 119:165 - Love for the law of God

(4) Phil. 4:6-7 - Prayer and supplication

(5) Gal. 5:22, 25 - Walking in the Spirit

6. What may be said of divine providence in the light of:

(1) Matt. 5:44-45? That the providence of God is exercised unconditionally, i. e., without requiring anything by man as a condition for that exercise, Matt. 5:45

(2) 2 Kings 18:4-7? That the providence of God is exercised conditionally, i. e., contingent on the meeting of certain conditions by man, 2 Chron. 26:5

7. Point out examples of the power of the providence of God from:

(1) 1 Kings 22:29-37 - The arrow at a venture (by chance)

(2) Esther 2:21-6:13 - The promotion of Mordecai from the king's gate to the office of prime minister, Esther 10:1-3

(3) Esther 6:14-7:10 - The hanging of Haman on the gallows made for Mordecai, an example of Prov. 26:27

8. Concerning providential leading, what may be observed from:

(1) Num. 22:20-33? That there is a negative aspect in which God restrains from a certain course of action

- (2) Jer. 32:6-12? That there is a positive aspect in which God confirms a certain course of action
 - (3) Jonah 1:3? That favorable circumstances are not necessarily a sign of being in the will of God
 - (4) Mark 4:35-38? That unfavorable circumstances are not necessarily a sign of being out of the will of God
 - (5) Gen. 24:1-27? That providential leading may be found in the path of duty
9. How can Gen. 49:6 be applied to providential guidance? In that it is possible to break down a wall of circumstantial restraint by our self-will, but to our own hurt

E. OTHER MEANS OF GUIDANCE

1. Give examples of guidance by personal integrity as seen in:

- (1) 2 Sam. 24:24 - David's integrity 'guided' him not to give God an unrighteous offering
- (2) Gen. 14:21-24 - Abram's integrity 'guided' him to refuse the unwise acceptance of a gift
- (3) Ruth 3:11-13 - By his integrity Boaz was 'guided' to respect the rights of someone else
- (4) Gen. 39:7-10 - By his integrity Joseph was 'guided' to refuse an improper offer

2. The use of angels for guidance included what according to:

- (1) Acts 27:21-24? To bring a message to a servant of God in a crisis
- (2) Acts 5:17-23? To bring deliverance from prison of a servant of God
- (3) Luke 1:5-19? To announce an important event at the time of incense
- (4) 1 Kings 19:1-8? To strengthen a discouraged servant for a lengthy journey

3. Give the purpose of visions from:

- (1) Acts 16:9-10 - To direct in missionary activity
- (2) Acts 9:10-16 - To direct an individual in personal work
- (3) Acts 10:9-16 - To receive instruction for ministry
- (4) Acts 18:9-11 - To encourage and reassure a servant in ministry

4. Give the purpose of dreams from:

- (1) Gen. 37:3-11 - To reveal God's plan concerning the individual
- (2) 1 Kings 3:5-9 - To reveal God to an individual
- (3) Gen. 31:11-13 - To reveal God's presence to an individual and to direct him
- (4) Jer. 23:28-32 - To impart the word of God to the prophet

5. Give the purpose of signs in:

- (1) Ex. 4:1-9? To generate faith
- (2) Acts 2:22? To evidence divine approbation
- (3) Acts 2:19-21? To warn of judgment
- (4) Heb. 2:4? To witness to the truth

6. What do we learn concerning signs from:

- (1) Ex. 4:8? That they have meaning and speak
- (2) Luke 12:54-56? That insincerity may prevent the reading of a sign
- (3) Luke 2:34? That hostility may prevent the reading of a sign
- (4) Matt. 7:21-23? That signs alone do not necessarily indicate divine approbation
- (5) Matt. 12:38-40? That the desire for a sign arises from an evil heart of unbelief
- (6) John 20:24-29? That it is better to believe without a sign than because of it

7. What may be said of Gideon's fleece relative to divine guidance as seen in:

- (1) Judges 6:11-16? Gideon knew the will of God, therefore the fleece was not for divine guidance
- (2) Judges 6:15, 17, 36-40? Gideon wanted a sign because of fear and unbelief
- (3) Judges 6:37-40? The sign which Gideon asked involved supernatural intervention,
- (4) Judges 6:39-40? Gideon knew he incurred the risk of divine displeasure. The fleece, therefore, was not a divinely ordained means of guidance, but an accommodation to the weakness of man

F. MISCELLANEOUS PRINCIPLES OF GUIDANCE

1. What do the following passages suggest:

- (1) 1 Sam. 10:7? That we ought first to attend to opportunities at hand
- (2) Isa. 30:21? That walking in obedience reduces the necessity for special guidance
- (3) Acts 8:26-29? All the necessary guidance is not always given at once
- (4) Acts 9:1-7? The farther we are away from God, the louder he might have to speak
- (5) Num. 12:5-10? Hearing the audible voice of God is not necessarily a compliment, although it was in Ex. 33:11; 19:19
- (6) 1 Kings 13:11-26? Personal responsibility for guidance received

(7) Acts 8:29-30? Accomplishment of God's purpose may depend upon instantaneous, unquestioning obedience

(8) Num. 12:6-8? That our personal relationship to God is a factor as to whether God speaks more indirectly or directly

(9) Jer. 43:1-13? It is possible to be personally in the will of God, though out of the will of God as a group

(10) Gen. 33:13? The enemy, by overdriving us in the direction of the will of God can thus accomplish his nefarious purpose

(11) Gen. 33:13-14? As Jacob was considerate of his flock, so God takes into consideration our state of development and leads according to the "foot of the children," (lit.)

2. Concerning hearing from God, what may be said from:

(1) 1 Sam. 28:6? Failure to hear from God may be due to having incurred the divine displeasure

(2) John 8:43? The inability to understand the voice of God may be due to inability to hear with the inner hearing of the spirit

(3) John 8:47? Inability to hear from God may be due to a wrong relationship

(4) 2 Cor. 3:14-16? The "vail" of the lack of spiritual understanding may be removed by the turning of the heart to God

(5) 1 Kings 3:5, 9? God is pleased to respond to man's request for "an understanding heart," lit., a "hearing heart"

(6) Isa. 50:5? The cultivation of the spiritual faculty of hearing involves a responsiveness to God in submission to His sovereignty and the surrender of our own

3. Concerning the recognition of the voice of the Lord, what do the following show:

(1) 1 Sam. 3:1-7? The recognition of the voice of the Lord needs to be learned through experience and divine aid

(2) John 10:4? Its spontaneous recognition (which should be the norm) is cultivated by daily contact with him and obedience to him

(3) John 10:4-5? The recognition of a voice other than his is best obtained by knowing his. The counterfeit is best recognized by a knowledge of the genuine

4. Give the basic essence of John 21:18-19

(1) That there is a great difference between spiritual immaturity and maturity

(2) That a mark of spiritual maturity is a consciousness of one's helplessness and need for dependence upon God

(3) That there should come a time in our growth when the initiative of our lives passes from us to Him

(4) That this transfer of initiative involves the negation of personal choice consummated in a personal cross

(5) That the object of this cross is the glory of God--and with it the ultimate object of all guidance

5. Note the implication of Psa. 23:1: That only the fully guided life is a truly contented life

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